

V. b. b.

SPECIAL NUMBER

English Edition.

Unpublished Manuscripts - Please reprint.

- INTERNATIONAL -

PRESS

CORRESPONDENCE

Vol. 5 No. 88

21st December 1925

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

Communist Fraction Work.

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Bolshevisation and Work in the Trade Unions.

From the theses on the bolshevisation of the parties of the C. I.

Throughout the entire capitalist world, the trade unions represent the most important form of mass organisation of the proletariat. Other forms of mass organisation (factory committees etc.), are extremely valuable and have certainly a great revolutionary future; but these new forms of mass organisation are just beginning to win general recognition among the masses of the workers. New forms of mass proletarian organisations like Soviets, only become feasible just at the beginning of the revolution. To foster the belief that Communists will be able, under the capitalist system to devise mass labour organisations other than trade unions is to abandon the realms of reality.

One of the most important integral parts of the doctrine of Leninism is the axiom of the necessity for Communists to work even in the most reactionary unions. Communists have paid very dearly (the best example is Germany) for departures from this policy. Vacillation in this respect has resulted in the fact that the young Communist Parties throughout Europe have not yet properly commenced their work in the trade unions. One of the most important component parts of Bolshevisation consists in devoting to the work in existing Social Democratic and other trade unions (yellow, national-socialist, Christian and fascist) a hundred times more attention than they received hitherto. Only when this is done, can the monopoly in the hands of the reformist leaders (the labour bureaucracy) in the trade unions be really broken. Only if this is done will the trade unions really be freed from the corrupting influence of reformism which is striving to destroy the significance of the trade unions as reliable weapons in the class

struggle. The same argument of course applies to factory committees where they exist or wherever the possibility exists of creating them on a mass scale.

Communists will increase their influence and will gain authority over the workers by defending immediate demands; higher wages, defence of the eight-hour day, struggle against unemployment etc., and by conscientiously and boldly taking the lead in all conflicts against employers.

This attitude is all the more necessary since the Social Democratic trade union "leaders" systematically betray the interests of the workers in all countries and do not scruple to take sides with the capitalists to sabotage or make null and void strike movements begun in spite of them.

In order to be able to take up a correct attitude in all movements which bring the workers into conflict with capitalism, Communist Parties must make a careful examination of all the factors of the concrete conditions of all such struggles; the nature of the business of the factory or industrial groups, the size and importance of orders placed, the connection and mutual intertwining of the various factories, syndicates and trusts, the organised strength and capacity for resistance of the employers and also the strength of the trade union organisations and the readiness for the struggle of both organised and unorganised workers, the possibility of the strike spreading and its political consequences. All this is essential to enable Communists to be in a position to give exact directions and to ensure that they take the lead in all proletarian encounters with capitalism.

To All Party Organisations.

The second Org Conference of the C. I. will be held in Moscow in January 1925. In addition to the questions of factory nucleus work and Party structure, the formation and activity of fractions are also to be discussed.

This special number contains mainly material on trade union fractions. But the org conference will also discuss questions of fraction work in the other organisations and organs outside the Party (Cooperatives, Peasant Leagues, Red-front Fighters' Union, Householders' Organisation, Disabled Soldiers'

Organisations, Sport Leagues, Women's Organisations, Educational Leagues, etc.)

In preparation of these questions, the Org Department of the E. C. C. I. held an enlarged session of which we give the report. It is essential for the sections of the C. I. to discuss on the basis of this report, of the articles and of their own experience the questions of fraction work in the nuclei, fractions, Party Executives and conferences, in order that there should be a thorough discussion of all matters at the Org Conference.

Organisation Dept. of the E. C. C. I.

The Position and Structure of Fractions.

Comrade Ulbricht's Report in the Enlarged Session of the Org. Dept. of the E. C. C. I.

Hitherto the Org Department of the E. C. C. I. has concentrated its work on the factory nuclei and on the structure of the Communist Parties. It was first of all essential to develop the basis of the Party organisationally and to improve its structure. The next important task which must be systematically dealt with is the construction and development of the fractions, especially in the trade unions, in order that we may get into closer contact with the masses and may create a big opposition movement in all non-party workers' organisations. In one of his speeches, Comrade Lenin formulated the importance of this work as follows:

"The driving force is the Party. With its cog-wheels it penetrates into the machinery of the trade unions, sets it in motion and this machinery in its turn carries the masses with it.

The cog-wheels of the Party are the Communist fractions. Without the active work of the fractions the Party cannot bring under its influence the workers organised in the Trade Unions, that is to say it cannot carry on a victorious struggle for proletarian dictatorship, for there can be no victory without the masses.

Unfortunately this significance of our fraction work has not been properly appreciated hitherto. Congress decisions remained on paper.

The Opposition Movement in Non-Party Organisations.

In our fraction work, especially in the Trade Unions first place must be given to the creation of a strong opposition movement. In this respect we have already achieved considerable results in the **British Trade Union Movement**. But this opposition movement will not be able to carry on a correct policy until we have a strong kernel—the Communist fractions. In this respect the development in **France** is characteristic. The resolution of the French Party Conference which was held not so long ago points out that in spite of nucleus work the **Minority Movement** has not made any progress, because no work was done in the Trade Unions. This is what is said in this resolution:

"The slogans against the Morocco war were introduced into the Unity Committees through the workers organised in the nuclei. They did not receive any support in the Trade Union because the Trade Union fractions in these organs were not functioning and the Communists who were at the head of the Federations and the Unions failed to take the initiative in this matter."

Thus the inactivity of the Trade Union Fractions considerably weakened the campaign against the Morocco war and also the campaign for Trade Union Unity.

The C. P. of **Czechoslovakia** had the same experience. At the time of the Miners' strike in **Ostrau** the Party and the Red Union had done considerable preparatory work in the factories. Not only Communists but also Social Democratic and non-Party workers backed up our demands. But when time was ripe to take up the struggle the Red Trade Unions were unable to draw all the workers into it, because in the reformist trade unions we lacked fractions which carry on the struggle for proletarian interests and against the sabotage of the bureaucrats. The Trade Union report at the Party Congress of the C. P. Cz. referred to this matter thus:

"How was it then that the reformists could run away from their promises? Because of the lack of our fractions in the reformist trade unions. If we had taken the vote there also in the reformist groups the members would have compelled their leaders to submit to the will of their own organisations. Just in **Ostrau** where our comrades have captured the masses in the factories we saw that this is not sufficient, because comrades failed to do the same in the trade unions."

The trade union department of the C. P. Cz. has elaborated very adequate directions for the organisation of the opposition movement. These directions describe very fully how unity committees are to be formed. However, these instructions have hardly been put into practice anywhere.

The reason for our slight influence in the trade unions is not only due to the under-estimation of fraction work, but also partly to the fact that we look upon trade union work as the duty of a special department and as an addition to actual Party work. Only when the Communist Party Executives will realise that in connection with the entire Party work and especially with the intensification of factory nucleus work the construction of fractions in the trade unions must be carried out systematically as one of the most important tasks of the Party, will we be able to create a strong and firmly established opposition movement in the trade unions and in other non-party organisations.

The Position of Fraction Work.

Czechoslovakia. Trade Union fraction work is only in its initial stage in the C. P. Cz. There are still comrades who have not a clear conception of the fraction question. This is shown by the statement at the Party Congress of the C. P. Cz. of Comrade Hais, the Chairman of the Red Trade Unions:

"This is already the third year that the Communist Party has been engaged on fraction work. We have been waiting all the time for some thing to be done in the trade union fractions. Nothing was done for two years. This work is doomed to failure... This work must be done by individuals, not suspected in reformist unions of wishing to disintegrate their organisations, otherwise they would be thrown out of the factory. This work must be done by an intelligent individual and not by a crowd of workers who have no idea what a fraction is."

Behind this formulation there is the desire to get as many Communists as possible out of the reformist trade unions. It goes without saying that in that case more energetic fraction work and a successful campaign for trade union unity, with the few "intelligent individuals" is impossible. Comrade Hais went on to say:

"The fractions are our weapon against the reformists. Nevertheless we cannot tolerate that tens of thousands of workers should remain in reformist trade unions paying their contributions to them. We cannot stand this, a change must take place here."

Instead of giving first place to the struggle for trade union unity and thereby also first place to our influence on the large sections of workers organised in the reformist trade unions, Comrade Hais considers the payment of contributions more important. He is against **Amsterdam** trade union leaders receiving contributions from so many Communist and opposition workers, namely he is an advocate of their transference to

the Red Unions. We must oppose this formulation with the greatest energy, because the formation of fractions in the reformist unions would be prevented thereby and a successful campaign for trade union unity through pressure from below would be frustrated. Not only individuals, but all the comrades must do fraction work in the red and reformist trade unions. Fraction work is to draw every individual Party member into the work, for it is only through the Party membership as a whole that we will be able to influence systematically all the workers who are organised in trade unions.

How important fraction work is in Czechoslovakia is shown by the example of Tetenka who left the C. P. Cz. and endeavoured to get the union under the control of the reformists. It is only recently when the Party began at the last minute to form fractions that it was possible to isolate gradually Tetenka making it impossible for him to carry out with any success his tactics against the Communist Party and against the trade union organisation.

Germany. After trade union fraction work had been thoroughly neglected in the period intervening between the Frankfurt and the Berlin Party Congresses, now and after the discussion of the E. C. C. I. Letter and the establishment of the trade union departments in the C. C. and in the district executives of the Party, trade union fraction work is again on the upward grade. The main shortcomings of the fractions are — That only part of the Party members belonging to the respective trade unions have been got hold of, and that even they are not particularly active. Statistics on the number and strength of fractions have not yet reached us. At the Organisation Conference of the Erzgebirge-Vogtland district on 22. X. 25 comrade U. said:

"Trade Union work in the nuclei has begun. This is shown by the fact that the latter are elaborating their card index registration system. We have also ascertained that 1,800 comrades are organised in the metal workers' Union in Chemnitz. However, at the recent elections of representatives only 800 comrades voted in Chemnitz. This state of affairs cannot be allowed to go on."

Comrade Sch. said:

"We can also place on record that on the strength of our questionnaires we were able to ascertain the surprising fact that we are firmly established in the trade unions. It rests now with our comrades to show what they can do. Over one thousand comrades are at large in the trade unions; they are probably those in the smaller enterprises."

These examples show how necessary it is to have not only full information concerning the trade union membership of all Communists, but to have also systematic registration in order that all the comrades might be drawn into fraction work. How necessary this is, is further exemplified by the following communication contained in the circular letter of the Frankfurt district Executive:

"It is positively a scandal if from a metal workers' fraction of 209 comrades, only 9 come to the fraction meeting, thereby losing every favourable opportunity to make progress in the metal workers' union."

I am of the opinion that this state of affairs can be mostly explained by the fact that Party executives considered trade union work as a less important branch of Party work and that until recently neither central, district nor local Party Executives had trade union departments. Further, those comrades who were active in the Party as instructors paid hardly any attention to trade union work. Comrade Thälmann was quite right when he pointed out at the Party Congress that the cause of the inadequate trade union work of the Party lies mainly in the lack of understanding on the part of district and sub-district executives with respect to trade union work. Very characteristic is for instance the report of the Z factory nucleus in Munich which says that nucleus leaders spent days to find out from the competent Party Executive what opposition comrades were candidates for the trade union congress. Still they were unable to ascertain the names in good time with the result that some of the factories did not know who is the opposition candidate, so that neither Communists nor sympathisers were able to vote for the opposition candidate.

In this connection it is essential to point out that the Social Democrats have fully realised the importance of the capture of factories and trade unions. I could bear this out by many examples. At the National Conference of the Social Democratic Party of Württemberg the representative of the

national committee spoke for instance as follows on "Our Attitude to the Trade Unions":

"... Therefore, one has gradually come to realise in the Party that successful and continuous upward development requires a new form of agitation. This form is: Carry the agitation for the Party straight into the factories and trade unions in order to cover them in a systematic and well-organised manner with a network of Party representatives."

At present trade unions are the prop of the Social Democratic Party. Therefore, there must be systematic fraction work in the trade unions and creation of a strong opposition movement if large sections of workers are to be won away from the control of the Social Democrats. It is only with the help of very active factory nuclei and trade union fraction work that we can undermine the Social Democratic Party and take away the workers from under its control.

France. Of the nine million workers in France, only about 8% are organised in trade unions. According to the information received from our reporter of the 85,000 miners in the Lence district only about 2,000 belong to the miners' Union. Of all the workers employed in the Voisin works, 14 are in the C. G. T. U. and a still smaller number in the reformist trade unions. As we have not trade union fractions either in the reformist nor in the Red unions, the campaign for trade union unity could not achieve satisfactory results. It is characteristic that although unity committees were formed in a number of enterprises, this movement lacked the support of trade union fractions. This is a fact which has been quite openly admitted by our French comrades. This is what they say in point 4 of the resolution at their last conference:

"Communist fractions are lacking in almost all trade union organisations. Wherever there are fractions they function badly or insufficiently."

In this connection it is essential to deal with a point in the fraction question on which there is confusion of ideas. The resolution of the Party Conference, which lends itself to various interpretations, says in paragraph 5:

"Trade Union Commissions have also the important task to form fractions in all trade union organisations where Communists are active, and to increase the activity of the already existing fractions."

This formulation is correct, but the comrades have published a pamphlet which contains the following statement:

"A Communist fraction is the amalgamation of all Party members on the Executive (Bureau) of this or that non-party organisation."

In a similar manner Comrade Sauvage commented on the resolution at the Party Conference:

"Fractions are composed of Communists who have been placed at the head of various organisations (administrative co-operative council, trade union councils, householders', front fighters, etc.)."

Thus he speaks only of the fractions in the executives of the respective institutions and goes on to say:

"Every Committee is at liberty to convene the Communists belonging to one and the same organisation and to discuss the tactics; but they do not constitute a fraction meeting."

"The fraction does not embrace the whole membership of an organisation, but only the members of the Council (Committee) of this organisation. We want to avoid that a party should be formed within the Party."

This interpretation of the French comrades is not quite correct. Of course fractions are to be formed in the Executives in organisations outside the Party if there are Communists there. But we also want that in the minor organs of the respective organs all Communists be amalgamated into a fraction. The French comrades are quite right in emphasising that without systematic work in the factories there can be no successful trade union work. But some comrades think that the nucleus can do everything by itself and that there is therefore no need for fractions in trade union organisations. This is not so. All Party members who are also members of non-Party organisations must belong to the Communist fraction and do active work. Fractions concentrate only on the question of their special field of activity, they are not the basis but only organs of the Party and must submit to Party discipline. The danger that fractions might develop into an accessory organisation of the Party exists only when the Party Executive does not concern itself with the fractions, does not give them any directions, does not control their work and allows general Party questions to be discussed at fraction meetings. The fact that there are certainly

dangers connected with the construction of fractions should not make us neglect fraction work. Restriction of the formation of fractions to the leading organs and refusal to form fractions in the organisations are tantamount to weakening fraction work, for it is only with the help of the mass Party members belonging to the respective organisations that we can exercise influence on the rank and file members of the said organisations in a systematic manner. Our French comrades are right in emphasising that the centre of gravity of trade union work lies in the factories. The practical experience of trade union fraction work will soon teach them that it is also essential to summon the Communist members to a fraction meeting of the various trade unions as occasion arises, but at least before every trade union meeting.

It may be that our French comrades allow themselves to be influenced by the Russian example. They overlook the fact that the structure of trade unions in Russia is different from that in Western Europe. In Russia the basis of the Unions is the factory. The next superior grade is the trade union delegate conference in the districts or gubernias. In Western Europe we have between this the local group with its Executive, trade union members' meeting, etc. This is the lowest trade union unit. The French comrades must take into consideration this difference in the organisational structure.

We believe that the French comrades will by their own practical experiences soon realise the necessity of forming fractions in the organisations and organs outside the Party.

Italy. From the various reports to hand, one can see that the Italian comrades have done systematic trade union fraction work and that in some respects they have achieved considerable successes. At the Congress of the Textile Workers' Union for instance, reformists had 45.8% of the votes, Maximalists 23.2% and Communists 31%. This is a considerable advance since the last Congress, when the reformists had 70%, Maximalists 9% and Communists only 11% of the votes. Thus the Communists have increased their influence from 11—13%, whilst Social-Democratic influence was reduced from 70 to about 45%. We see the same picture with respect to the referendum and the re-election of the Sectional Executive of the metal workers in Milan. At the referendum of the metal workers in Milan, reformists received 36%, Maximalists 37% and Communists 30% of the votes. A short time after, at the re-election of the Sectional Executive of the metal workers' union in Milan, the result of the voting was as follows: Communists 39% and 6 mandates, Maximalists 36% and 5 mandates, reformists 35% and 4 mandates. If one takes into consideration the great difficulties under which the C. P. of Italy is working, one must admit that in spite of its illegality, the Party has established connection with large sections of workers, and is gradually extending its influence through its factory nucleus and trade union fraction work.

Great Britain. In the country with the strongest Minority Movement, Communist fraction work is in its initial stages. The British comrades admitted at their last Party Congress that insofar as there are any trade union fractions at all, they have as yet done very little work, and that the district committees of the Party have paid very little attention to trade union fraction work. In my opinion what is mostly needed in Great Britain is that Party Executives should carry on fraction construction and development more systematically, and should form active fraction Executives. Otherwise it will be impossible to lead the Minority Movement without serious vacillations.

In the C. P. G. B. there is still great confusion of ideas with respect to the question of factory nuclei and fractions. The organisational pamphlet of the C. P. G. B. contains the following statement:

"Difference between nuclei and fractions.

a) Nuclei are groups of Party members within other organisations who are only responsible to the Party.

b) Fractions are groups active in bodies consisting of delegates or elected persons, fraction members being responsible both to the Party and to their electors." (Retranslated from the German.)

It should be pointed out to the British comrades that factory nuclei (and street) which form the basis of the Party organisations should not be designated as groups, but as nuclei. These nuclei follow and discuss all Party questions. Fractions in the organisations and organs are on the other hand, only organs of the Party and must submit absolutely to Party discipline. They receive their directions from the Party Executives. This differentiation in the designation introduced by the British comrades

implies an objective differentiation to the effect that the fraction members in the Party organs are also responsible to their electors. This division of responsibility is inadmissible, and means a relaxation of Party discipline.

America. There are no concrete data to hand on fraction work. I want to point out that in America only 32.8% of our Party members are organised in trade unions. Of 2,080 Communist metal workers only about 480 belong to trade unions, of 1,165 Communist miners only 920 are organised in trade unions. These figures are taken from the official register of the Workers Party. Under such circumstances it is essential for the Party to carry on a campaign for the entry of all its members into trade unions, and for the formation of Communist trade union fractions.

Party and Fraction.

In discussing the various interpretations of this question by some of our French comrades, we could see that the question of the relation between Party and fractions has a decided influence on the development of fraction work. There is in fact the danger in West European Communist Parties that fractions become independent bodies which might assume the character of Party organisations. This danger is very apparent whenever there are tactical discussions in the Party. Frequently fractions take up a definite attitude to questions of Party tactics, to decisions of Party conferences, etc., without being entitled to it.

Fractions can only deal with questions appertaining to their field of activity. Every Party member belongs to a minor Party organisation, a factory or street nucleus. It is there that he can take up a definite attitude to Party questions, and can exercise his voting rights. In the E. C. C. I. instructions of February 1924 on Communist fractions, the relation between fractions and Party is clearly defined. It is definitely stated there that **Communist fractions, regardless of their importance, are subject to the respective Party organisations, and that in all questions under the jurisdiction of the said Party organisations the fractions must act in strict accordance with these decisions.** If Party Executives take up a definite attitude to questions belonging to the field of activity of the fraction, they must discuss the matter previously with the representatives of the fraction. If there are serious divergences of opinion on questions within the field of activity of the fraction, the Party Executive has to discuss the questions once more with the representatives of the latter before making the final decision which must be unreservedly carried out by the fraction. This dependence of the fraction on the decisions of the Party must on no account be interpreted as if petty interference on behalf of the Party Executive with the current work of the fraction is desired. On the contrary, **Party Executives are under the obligation to carry on and control fraction work in a manner that gives fractions the greatest possible opportunity for initiative.** I think it necessary to emphasise that at elections for Congresses, conferences, committees, etc., candidates are always to be nominated through the Party fractions in agreement with the competent Party Executive.

In order that the competent Party Executive be fully informed on the position of fraction work, fraction executives must report regularly in writing or by word of mouth to the competent Party Executive and also to the higher fraction executive. On the other hand Party Executives are under the obligation to keep the fraction executives regularly informed on all important questions. The Party instructors are not only to attend to questions in connection with nucleus work and Party structure, but also with the instruction and control of fraction work. This will ensure full information for the Party Executives on the real state of fraction work, and will direct this work into the right channels.

Practical Experiences of Fraction Work.

Although fraction work as a whole is still very faulty in the various sections, there are considerable numbers of examples of exemplary fraction work. In many factories and trade unions our comrades have shown their capacity to lead the everyday struggle of the workers in the light of the political tasks of the Party. The results of this work will take a long time to become apparent because it takes years of steady everyday work before the results of our work becomes apparent. We have for instance received the following information from the factory nucleus B.:

"The Social Democracy has still many followers among the workers because we did not understand how to carry on real Communist work within the trade unions."

This recognition of one's own shortcomings is the first step towards the improvement of our fraction work. That this fraction work must not only consist in the general abstract propaganda for the unions is clearly expressed in a report on the organisational conference of the Erzgebirge-Vogtland district of the C. P. G.:

"Although our comrades carry on trade union propaganda in the factory they frequently leave it to the Social-Democrat workers to do the organisational work — enrolment of new members, the filling of functions ect. In some factories our comrades have had satisfactory experiences through the formation of joint recruiting committees (recruiting members for trade unions) with the Soc. Dem. workers. Our comrades got into the practical trade union work which had also a very good effect on the work in the nucleus."

In the following report of the factory nucleus W. in Chemnitz, it is shown very clearly that it is essential for all Communists to be organised in trade unions, and that every Communist must recruit members for the latter.

"Our nucleus consists of 130 comrades. The first thing we did was — to get all the comrades into the union. This we managed to bring about with one exception after 4 weeks hard work. During the next fortnight our trade union work will consist in every comrade bringing a fellow worker into the union."

An example to be followed as far as fraction work and the activity of every fraction member are concerned was mentioned by the trade union reporter at the Party Congress of the C. P. Cz. He said:

"There is a group which I will not name in order not to provide the reformists with material, which has 108 members including 3 Communists. The latter have formed a fraction and their influence on the members has been so great that one of them has become chairman, another cashier, and yet another secretary."

Then there is another group with 650 members, including 63 Communists. The latter join the Committee, they provide 35 collectors of contributions and exercise influence over the entire membership in that part of the town.

This example shows the necessity to apportion to every fraction member fraction work through the fraction executives. It is only through every member doing his share of work that also fractions which are numerically weak can exercise considerable influence on the trade union members. Unfortunately there are still Party members who try to avoid trade union work. Communist Parties must discourage as much as possible any such tendencies. Party members will not be able to win the confidence of the masses unless they take up in all earnest the ordinary everyday work, unless they participate in the positive trade union work and gladly accept trade union official positions.

The factory nucleus should also exercise strict control over trade union adherence of the Party members. It must control the trade union membership cards to ascertain if the comrades pay their contributions regularly. We have occasion to see that Communists were not paying their contributions regularly, which gave workers an opportunity to say: "Nice Communist trade union members they are, they make fine speeches, but are always in arrears with their contributions." The nucleus must keep watch even on such small matters as this. How everyday questions of our trade union work can be connected with the international campaign for trade union unity is shown in the following report of the factory nucleus T.:

"In September there was a factory meeting and we had on the agenda: attitude to the wage movement. As the workers of the factory were on the eve of a strike we proposed to get into touch with the transportworkers in the locality, who were already on strike, and with all other organisations participating in the wage movement, for the purpose of establishing a common local fighting basis. This proposal was adopted by an overwhelming majority. The wage movement which lasted throughout August and September was used by us for energetic Propaganda for International Trade Union Unity. At a factory meeting in August we made the proposal to instruct the Managing Committee of the textile workers union to advocate at the A. D. G. B. Congress in Breslau, the convocation of an international trade union Congress at which both Internationals be represented on an equal basis. . . . Since August 1st, 3 nucleus newspapers were issued and 2 special numbers in leaflet form in connection with the wage movement for the other textile factories in the locality."

There are many other examples of exemplary trade union work. For instance, a factory nucleus in Thuringia decided

that by a definite date every member of the nucleus is obliged to enroll a member in the trade union, and that this work be strictly controlled. This is a very simple task which may be carried out by any Party member, and which should be placed before Party members in all the sections of the C. I. On this same question the factory nucleus No. 84 makes the following statement.

"In the first quarter of the current year two premiums were offered by our trade union committee. These premiums were to go to two of the members who enrolled the largest number of recruits. Both premiums were won by two of our nucleus comrades — the chairman of the nucleus, and a member of the Factory Council. Six hundred officials of the union competed for these premiums. These 2 comrades gained 158 fellow workers for the trade union. In October there was another recruiting week, and our nucleus chairman was the only one to win two premiums which consisted of valuable books."

In one of the departments of a factory there were 35 unorganised workers. Twenty of them were brought into the trade union through the nucleus members. Thereby a Communist obtained an official post. Another example: in G. the Union pays 50 pfennig for every new entry. One nucleus received 80 fellow workers into its ranks. With this money a duplicating apparatus was bought for the preparation of nucleus newspapers.

In one case a Communist was expelled from the Union. He nevertheless continued to work energetically for the trade union and has brought a considerable number of workers into the union, so that under the pressure of the rank and file members the trade union executive was compelled to reinstate this comrade.

A district representative at the Org. Conference of the C. P. G. gave the following example with respect to the attitude of factory nuclei to trade union work:

"By means of an excellent welfare policy, the Soc. Dem. was able to establish itself so firmly that we could not even succeed in holding one comparatively well-attended meeting. There was no other remedy for this but to change our methods of organisation. After eight weeks systematic nucleus work we begin to see that we are slowly gaining ground in the factories and trade unions. The results are beyond our expectations. In the very important enterprise K. about 15 comrades are employed. They never met. But after the comrades were formed into a nucleus we see that they have managed to bring 30 workers back to the unions. They have captured another seat in the trade union committee which is now compelled to convene meetings regularly."

We must not conceal the fact that the intensification of fraction work in the trade unions might be accompanied by deviations in the directions of economism. The "trade unions only attitude" prevalent among Communist trade union officials, especially in Czechoslovakia and Norway, constitutes a danger. Therefore Party Executives should do their utmost to provide fractions with political information and instructions and to educate them to the point of judging of trade union questions, not from the so-called "purely" trade union standpoint, but from the viewpoint of the political tasks of the Party. This can only succeed if nucleus and Party executives also draw comrades busily engaged in trade union work into active participation in the work of their minor Party organisation (factory or street nucleus).

Formation of Fractions.

Before going into detail about the structure of fractions I want to point out that we should not only form fractions in the Red and Free Trade Unions, co-operatives, and workers' gymnastic leagues, but also in the Christian and other trade unions. Fraction work is needed also in these organisations. With respect to this question there is still uncertainty in what cases one should form fractions in organisations affiliated to bourgeois unions (fascist and Christian organisations, Sport and Educational Leagues, etc.). I think that in these cases one must be guided by the social composition of the respective organisations and also by the role which these organisations play in the class struggles.

Another divergence of opinion is that frequently fractions are not formed in organisations where we have a majority. It has happened that our comrades serving on the Executive of such organisations prevent fraction work being done in order

not to be under the control of the fraction. But in spite of this resistance Party Executives must do their utmost towards the formation of fractions in all workers' organisations outside the Party, even at the risk of the displeasure of some comrades.

A third shortcoming is: that fractions are preferably formed in the less important trade unions, because fraction work there is often easier. Of course Party Executives must give every encouragement to Party members to use their own initiative in the formation of fractions, but the Executives must see to it that the construction of fractions be carried on systematically, that fraction work be expedited as much as possible in the most important organisations and be given the utmost support.

I will deal now with the question of the formation of fractions; it is not necessary to form fractions in the factories except in the Factory Council, as the factory nucleus copes with all Party tasks. The nucleus executive makes certain comrades responsible for the Party work which is to be done on various fields of activity. The leader of the trade union work should belong to the nucleus executive. Wherever several trade unions are represented in one factory, one comrade for each union is to be entrusted with the work among the members. Whenever meetings of the various trade unions are held in the factory, the Communist members of the union in question are to be convened by the nucleus executive to a preliminary consultation in order to decide how to proceed at this meeting. In large enterprises where there are many trade union officials, the nucleus executive should convene meetings of the Communist trade union officials at regular intervals. There is yet another point with respect to nuclei and trade union fractions which must be briefly dealt with. Here is a case in point: in a certain town our comrades have formed a factory nucleus of all tramway workers for the whole town. If the comrades belong to ten different tramway depots, they have only one nucleus, which is practically nothing but a tramway workers' trade union fraction. But it goes without saying that nuclei must be formed in all the ten tramway depots, each of them belonging to the nucleus group in the neighbourhood where the depot is situated. The nuclei executives should of course be connected with one another, because there are various measures which must be discussed in common. The same applies to builders, who have formed one nucleus for the whole of Vienna, which nucleus is in reality nothing but a trade union fraction. We observe similar tendencies in America.

The lowest unit for the amalgamation of Communists of the respective non-party organisation is the local fraction. The fraction meets whenever required, but at least before every trade union meeting. If the local organisation is still divided into branches, industrial groups, as for instance in the Factory Councils, fractions must also be formed there, which are in the form of sub-fractions. The local fraction executive is appointed by the fraction in agreement with the competent Party Executive. If there are Communists in the Executive of the respective organisation, they must also become members of the fraction executive. This is essential as these comrades are thoroughly informed on all questions, having to deal with them continuously. Thereby close contact is established between the fraction executive and the Communists in the executive of the respective organisation. There is of course the risk that these comrades might exercise too much outside influence on the fraction executive. Therefore, one should make sure that there be also other experienced Party comrades in the fraction executives. The chairman of the fraction executive must never be at the same time member of the executive of the non-party organisation, otherwise a critical appreciation of the work of the comrades in the non-party organisation will be well-nigh impossible.

It is essential to establish a trade union department in the local Party Executive consisting of one representative of the local Party Executive and 3-5 experienced Party comrades. In the enlarged trade union department there must be also Communist trade union cartel members and the leaders of the various trade union or industrial group fractions. In small localities, the trade union department is of course constructed on a smaller scale.

In the district there must be a district fraction executive for all the fractions in the non-Party organisations. There must be a district fraction executive for every important trade union or industrial group, but only a fraction leader for less important trade unions. In most cases, the fraction executive of the respective organisation at the seat of the district executive will

also be the district fraction executive. What I have already said with respect to the local fraction applies also to district fraction executives, and district trade union departments. Where the boundaries of the Party district do not coincide with those of the district of the respective organisation, the Party district executive in question must come to an agreement concerning the seat of the district fraction executives.

National Fraction Executives are to be formed for all organisations amalgamated on a national scale. As a rule, the fraction executive of the respective organisation of the capital of the country supplemented by the Communist members of the executive of the respective national organisation constitutes the national fractional executive. For less important organisations, the Central Committee entrusts a comrade with the management of fraction work on a national scale.

A trade union department must be formed in the Central Committee of the Communist Party consisting of one representative from the central organisation, his deputy and several Party comrades experienced in trade union work. The enlarged trade union department consists of the fraction leaders of the various trade unions or industrial groups, of representatives of definite special fields of activity (Factory Council movement, unemployed organisation, etc.), and of Communist members of the Federal Committee of the Trade Union in addition to the afore-mentioned comrades.

Wherever there is a special Co-operative or Sport department in the C. C. what has been said concerning the trade union department applies equally to them.

Wherever there are several trade unions in a trade or industrial group, a Communist Fraction must of course be formed in every trade union. These fractions have common fraction executives on a local, district and national scale. Generally they hold joint fraction meetings in the locality, but hold also separate meetings to discuss special questions of their organisation.

The structure of fractions here described cannot be mechanically transferred to every country, but must be adapted to the organisational structure of the respective non-party organisation.

Fraction liaison is of the utmost importance. Here too one cannot have one and the same plan for all countries. I will therefore limit myself simply outlining fraction liaison. General instructions concerning fraction work are sent to the local fraction executives through the Party apparatus, via the district and local Party executives. The national fraction executives which discuss all important questions with the C. C. of the Party can also send material dealing with the special questions of their field of activity direct to the local fraction executive via the district fraction executive. In such cases copies must be sent at the same time to the Party executive through the Party apparatus. In exceptional cases when important material must be sent very quickly to important fractions, this may also be done directly from the national fraction executive to the local fraction executive, the Party executives being at the same time informed through the Party apparatus.

The question of double liaison of the fractions, on the one hand liaison through the Party apparatus, and on the other hand direct liaison from fraction executive to fraction executive, must be thoroughly examined by the various sections to prevent encouragement being given to any existing tendencies to form a second Party apparatus. Those are dangers which we must bear in mind. But this must not, of course, interfere with the vertical liaison of the fractions among one another, for such liaison encourages the initiative of the fractions, as thereby delays through the protracted process via the Party apparatus may be often avoided.

Closely connected with this question of the formation of fractions, is the question of contribution. We are of the opinion that fraction work must be financed out of the regular Party contributions. There should be no special fraction contributions for trade union fraction work. Only in exceptional cases when there are great financial difficulties the competent Party Executive may empower certain trade union fractions to raise funds by means of collections or other suitable means. The levy of special trade union fraction contributions and also of opposition contributions creates the impression as if a separate trade union organisation existed and encourages split tendencies in the trade unions. It is for these reasons that we are against both fraction and opposition contributions. Subscription to the opposition newspaper is sufficient to keep the opposition together organisationally.

The Most Important Tasks.

In my report I limited myself to dealing very fully with trade union fraction construction and have shown in connection with this that generally speaking the same directions apply also to the fractions in other non-Party workers' organisations. There was no necessity for me to deal with fraction work in the representative bodies as this question has been almost entirely cleared up. It is quite clear that Communist Parties must have fractions not only in trade unions, but also in all non-party organisations, at conferences and congresses. But at present our main forces must be devoted to the construction and activation of Communist fractions in the trade unions. In this connection, the most important points are:

1. The organisation of a big and firmly established opposition movement in the trade unions and in other non-party organisations demands a systematic formation and development of Communist fractions, the best forces being concentrated on organisations which are of most importance in all workers' struggles.

2. Every Party member must be organised in his trade union and co-operative and must carry on energetic recruiting work for trade unions and co-operatives.

3. Fraction work is to be carried on systematically and persistently in the Red, Reformist, Christian and other trade unions. All Communists organised in the respective organisation, or its organs belong to the Communist fraction. Fraction executives must draw all fraction members into the work either directly or through the factory nuclei and must control their activities.

4. Trade union fraction work must not be considered a side issue, but one of the most important tasks of the Party,

which is to be carried on in connection with and from the viewpoint of the general political tasks of the Party. Party executives are under the obligation to instruct systematically and control all trade union fraction work. It is of the utmost importance to form capable and active fraction executives. With respect to the distribution of forces the competent Party executives must attach particular importance to the qualitative reinforcement of trade union departments and trade union fraction executives.

5. Trade union fractions are subject absolutely to Party decisions and cannot deal with any other questions but those appertaining to their field of activity. They should report at regular intervals orally or in writing to the competent Party Executive and to the superior trade union fractions. Within the framework of Party decisions fractions must be given every opportunity to display initiative.

There must be a regular system of instruction, control and support of fraction work through Party Executives if these tasks are to be thoroughly accomplished. We are fully aware that the tasks with which I have dealt cannot be solved in a few months, but it is high time for the sections of the C. I. to realise that it is their task to increase their influence on the workers organised in the trade unions by more intensive fraction work, for this is the only way to convert our Communist Parties into real mass Parties, not only by increasing their membership, but also creating a strong opposition movement which will rally to them a whole army of sympathisers.

It is only through factory nucleus and trade union fraction work that we will be able to set in motion and to lead large sections of workers. In this sense the trade unions are the rallying ground and preparatory school for the Communist Movement.

Discussion on the Report on Communist Fractions.

Speakers: Comrades Schumann, Liess, Dorsey, Piatnitzki, Sturm, Walcher, Bamatter, Algo.

Comrade Schumann (Germany):

On the whole, I agree with Comrade Ulbricht's proposals, but I think that emphasis must be laid on the principle that the work of the Communists in the Trade Unions must adapt itself to the organisation of the Trade Unions. The various reformist trade unions in Germany for instance, vary very much in their construction, some of them are to a certain extent successful in the factories, and others are not. Some Trade Unions attach particular importance to district work, for instance, the metal workers' union which very frequently holds district conferences which exercise a certain amount of influence, especially with respect to economic questions. The Conferences are composed of delegates from the various local organisations, and if our fractions worked successfully we could also delegate Communists to these conferences.

Interjection by Piatnitzki: What is the procedure at these elections?

It varies, sometimes at members' meetings of the local organisations, sometimes also at delegate meetings and general meetings. Sometimes delegates are elected through the officials' session and sometimes they are appointed by the local executive. It has also happened — when our comrades did not keep on the watch — that officials of the local administration were sent to the Conference as delegates.

Thus the methods vary, and I attach particular importance to this work of our comrades. More important still are conferences which in my opinion Comrade Ulbricht mentioned too cursorily — the district conferences of the Trade councils, that is to say district organisations of the A. D. G. B. Just where provincial governments are in the hands of the Soc. Dem., as in Magdeburg where Hörsing is President, Communists should be present at every session to which the local Trade councils send delegates. I agree that we should not have special fractions in the factories and I also agree with the slogan proposed by Comrade Ulbricht that wherever several trade unions are represented in the factory there should be one comrade for each union to do the work. Special meetings of Communists belonging

to the respective trade union must be organised, and over and above this, the candidates for the Conference should be also nominated at joint factory meetings of the trade union in question with Communists and sympathisers. I think there is a consensus of opinion that these meetings are necessary, especially when the factory is of particular importance. Thus the slogan is: get hold of as many members of this trade union as possible in order to create thereby through the factory nucleus a strong reserve together with the circle of sympathisers in the factory; for our work which will have to be done at the general members' meeting of the local organisation.

I cannot quite agree with the formula concerning the establishment of the local fraction executive. If in a locality where the metal industry is very strong there is at the head of the local metal workers' fraction a comrade not fit to be drawn into the local trade union executive, the local executive of the Party must be in a position to recall this comrade, of course with the help of the members. If he is not capable to be of any use as the local trade union executive, he is also not capable to lead the metal workers' fraction. I cannot imagine how in a local group, where one half of the population is metal workers, trade union work can be done unless the same comrade who is at the head of the fraction of the metal workers be also a member of the local trade union executive. It is another matter with the district fractions.

It is the duty of the district Executive to draw the most capable comrades from the trade unions for carrying out district fraction work, their activity being two-fold: firstly, to keep the district executive informed about the activity of the Communists in the Union, and secondly, to receive all the instructions of the Party district Executive. The trades in which the majority of the population is engaged, the localities where the most important factories are situated must be supplied with trade union workers, as our Party can only make headway in economic struggles with workers' representatives experienced in trade union work and in contact with the masses.

As to the national fraction executive, I am of the opinion that it should exist from trade union congress to trade union

Congress and that at the conclusion of every trade union congress the result of the work accomplished must be examined. These comrades must also express their opinion on the work of the national fraction executive in the past period and must, with the help of the trade union department of the Central Committee, to be represented by one Comrade who has a watching brief at the Trade Union Congress, select the forces in a manner to enable the formation of a capable national fraction executive.

Comrade Liess:

If we consider the various points of the report especially those concerning fractions, we cannot help asking ourselves: why are our comrades loth to go into the trade unions, and build up trade union fractions?

We must admit that even today there is in some of the Parties — if not to the same extent as before — a certain amount of anti-Trade Union feeling. Perhaps the policy of the Party is good, that it is in line with the Communist International, but one must admit that in practice a certain anti-trade union feeling still exists. On the other hand we must also admit that **whilst the political influence of the C. P. in some countries is very great our organisational influence in the trade unions is weak.** Let us take for instance the Minority Movement in Great Britain. The political influence of the Party is considerable. Let us take the Municipal Elections of the Party in Germany. Here too the influence is great. But if we examine the organisational power of the Parties within the trade unions, we must admit that there is a discrepancy between political influence and organisational power in the trade unions. What is the explanation for this?

It seems to me that this comes from the fact that many Communists have not asked themselves the question: what difference is there between our work in the reformist trade unions and the work of the reformists themselves? The question of the tasks before the Communists within the reformist trade unions, which unfortunately is still not very clear to many comrades, is in my opinion one of the most important questions. If there is still to be confusion of ideas concerning our comrades' policy of works and tasks in the trade unions, the discrepancy between the political influence and the organisational strength will continue to exist. We must admit that as far as some Parties including the biggest of them are concerned, no definitely Communist work has been done in the trade unions. In one of my articles I gave Germany as an example. You know that in Germany the trade union programme of action of the Communists is untenable, for it was based on the following: when reformist trade unions demanded a wage rise of ten or twenty per cent, we demanded a rise of 30% or 40%. This was not a programme, but khvostist (tail) tactics. It is an interesting fact that in Germany everyone recognises now that this is not the right way to deal with this question. But what does the "Rote Fahne" or other organs propose? That the work of the trade unions be revolutionised, that a number of political demands be brought forward. In an article of the "Rote Fahne" political questions are raised, as for instance imperialism, etc. which are really questions for the Party as a whole. The comrades are fairly well-informed about political questions but as yet they have no real programme for work within the trade unions. They admit this in a recent letter in which they say that their work in the trade unions was only carried on from time to time. I think that one of the main reasons of our failure within the trade unions, of our inability to draw the latter into our work and of our comrades' inability to do any work within them, is that we have not in our Parties a clear trade union programme of action. The things that matter are not demands which cannot be carried out but demands which can be carried out, which represent an economic aim within the given situation!

Another question is that of the attitude of the Party and of the fractions to the Minority Movement. In some countries there have been cases when opposition and fraction were mixed up with one another, with the result that no work was done either in the opposition or in the fraction. It must be made quite clear that fraction work is only part of this opposition work, so to speak, the Communist part of it. The first and foremost task of the fractions in the trade unions is the creation or development of the opposition movement. In many countries fractions are still mixed up with the opposition. The best example of this is America as we know from the articles of comrade Foster. There was a time when the League (T. U. E. L.) was mixed up with the fraction. I think that this confusion about opposition

and fraction has done a great deal of harm to our further development in the trade unions and that clarity must be brought into this question. But this can only happen when the concrete tasks are dealt with at the same time.

Comrade Dorsey. (America).

(Condensed from German Transcript).

In the U. S. A. the question of fraction work is so to speak making its first steps. In some industrial groups certain progress may be recorded. This applies particularly to the **garment making industry.** In this industry we have developed a whole network of fractions. In this trade union movement there is a palpable veering to the left. Progress has also been achieved in the steel and building industries. There are many fractions in these industries though not everywhere! already one organisation is even in our hands. Fractions are being formed also in other industrial groups. But the fact remains that we are only making the first steps in that direction.

A whole series of problems like those which were dealt with here, confront us also in America. Comrade Ulbricht was quite right when he pointed out that only 32% of our comrades are organised in trade unions. It is even partly true that a certain amount of hostility towards trade union organisations is noticeable. This is not to be wondered at considering the attitude of the reactionary trade unions in America. Our comrades think that the trade unions offer no opportunity for revolutionary activity.

Comrade Lies has already said that the League (T. U. E. L.) namely, the left organisation, is frequently mixed up with fraction work. It is a fact that we frequently meet with very little or no understanding at all on the part of our comrades, and that we must create it. It has frequently happened that elements not belonging to the Party were driven out of the League. A contributive factor to this was the fact that the League must work illegally. As soon as it is ascertained that a person belongs to the League he or she is immediately expelled from the trade union. We are endeavouring to put an end to this illegality and to work legally. Experience has shown that one must pay attention to appropriate slogans, but that one must do actual work. We have elaborated a programme and participate actively in trade union work. We have seen in New York that this kind of work meets with success.

With respect to the question of the **relation of the League to the Party**, it must be stated that the construction of the League is different from that of the Party, which makes the problem of the relations between the two still more complicated. In America we have also the very important question of **company trade unions.** With us the various capitalist organisations have established organisations in which the rank and file workers of the various industries are organised, through which the capitalists exercise their influence over the workers taking thereby the place of trade unions. These organisations of separate industrial groups are fairly numerous in America. In some parts of the country they are even bigger than the American Federation of Labour.

The Party has paid special attention to this fact and has finally come to the conclusion that one must penetrate into these organisations. It has issued the slogan: permeate these **company trade unions** in order to convert them into real workers trade union organisations. This slogan was published in the **September number of the Party monthly organ** and it is significant that the American trade unionist, Green, Gompers's successor, has taken up this slogan and has also issued it. I would like to say in conclusion that I hope to be able to present next time a more satisfactory report on the results of our trade union work.

Comrade Piatnitsky:

There are still many comrades who do not understand how to capture **Trade unions.** How is this to be done? Not by demanding a rise of 80 pfennig per hour as soon as reformists demand a rise of 60 pfennig. That is not work. Every worker with any Trade Union experience can see that this is certainly a "radical" but not a feasible demand. Workers are not going to fight for things which are unobtainable. It is only by persistent everyday work that we can capture the Trade Unions. If our comrades will do this work and can show that they are doing it well they will win the confidence of their fellow-workers. But if workers know a Social Democrat, who although he betrays them

in political questions, helps them in economic questions, and if they see at the same time a Communist who does nothing but criticise, then the workers will elect the Social Democrat for his petty daily work and not the Communist who does nothing but criticise.

There is also another task. We have in Germany in our hands a number of local trade union administrations and councils. These must serve us as a basis for the work of Communist fractions, not only in one locality but in the whole region. They must bring forward demands and criticise in a way to show up shortcomings of the trade unions in everyday life, and they must use methods and bring forward demands which the other Communists in this Union can make use of for our agitation. This is a task which we must take upon ourselves.

Comrade Lies said something which is very much to the point: Our ideological influence is greater than we can cope with organisationally. This is certainly a pitiful state of affairs within the Party. If in 1918 and 1919 when we attracted the entire working class we had had good organisations, the Social Democrats, the Amsterdam International would not perhaps be so strong numerically at present. But the Parties were too young and too weak organisationally hence the inadequacy of the auxiliary organisations of the Party — the fractions. What is the use of forming fractions if the Party does not consolidate and lead them, if it does not give them directions for their activity. We have had in fact a loose Social Democratic Party organisation. But how is it that the Social Democrats can manage with organisations which are there only for the elections? Because they have in addition the Trade Unions which with their cadre of officials have permeated the factories and have firmly established themselves there. Our Party had the same organisation as the Social Democrats but no firm hold in the factories — no Trade Unions. This is what made it weak and unable to utilise every possibility. Reorganisation has been taken up in our sections, and not on a fraction but on a nucleus basis. I will say quite openly that nuclei were set as the foremost task and Trade Union fractions came next. Fractions cannot be formed without a foundation for them in the factories. The foundation is the nucleus. It is there that the initial work of the Trade Unions lies. It is there and there only that workers can be got hold of and educated. We must create this foundation. And wherever this exists already to a certain extent we can concentrate more extensively on fraction work.

The French comrades have said that fractions are only necessary in the elected organs of the trade unions. This is only partly true. The fractions consist naturally of all the Communists in the organisations and organs of the Trade Unions including the Communists who are elected to the Trade Union Congress etc. But who is the fraction executive for the respective union in the interval between the Congress? Well, naturally the Communists who were elected to the managing committee of the Union. Why? Because in their capacity of committee members they receive all the material, because they are informed about the entire activity of the managing committee, because all the time they must concern themselves with Union questions and because they have an insight into the entire work of the Union. Our French comrades have very much simplified this matter for themselves. They want to recognise as fraction only the amalgamation of comrades in the leading bodies of the Unions. Can this be done? This would perhaps make things very easy and comfortable for the Party, as in times of campaigns, of trade union elections, etc., it would be of course such an easy matter to set tasks for the comrades in the leading bodies of the unions. But how is it really possible to carry on campaigns in the Trade Unions without bringing into this work in an organised manner all the Party comrades belonging to the respective Trade Union? No results whatever can be achieved without trade union work by the fractions in the lowest trade union units and in the factory nuclei. Therefore the French comrades make a very great mistake by limiting the term "fraction" to the Communists in the leading trade unions bodies.

Comrade Lies said that there are still Parties which are against Trade Union work, and that this is an obstacle. I admit that this is so. It is said for instance: how can it be tolerated that our comrades should pay contributions to the reformist trade unions, they use them for Social Democracy etc. Well, in one respect this is really so. We help the Amsterdamers: but by supporting these organisations we are bound to extend our influence provided we work hard. Such an ideology is quite explicable if one takes into consideration how our Communist Parties

were formed. To a certain extent they are workers who have left the Social-Democratic Parties, because they saw that the latter were betraying the working class. There was a time when these comrades who formed the Communist Party did not want to help the Social Democrats with their Trade Union contributions. I do not mean to say that this was correct, but psychologically it is comprehensible especially if one takes into consideration the split and expulsion activity of the reformists. In Czechoslovakia, for instance, we have different organisations, the Red and the Amsterdam Trade Unions and others. We have the same in France. The reformists split the C. G. T. and the C. G. T. U. was formed. To-day one still hears the cry that all the comrades should leave the C. G. T. and join C. G. T. U. At the time when the split was conjured up by the reformists this may have been correct, but it would be very bad for our further struggles. Our comrades must remain in the reformist trade unions.

Another example. One must say to the workers who see every day the Catholic Trade Unions in common cause with the bourgeoisie and betraying the working class at every opportunity that, they must get out of the Catholic Unions. But a Party comrade must not only remain there but should even endeavour to get into such a union. This is not an easy matter. In the factory as everywhere else he is against religion and the bourgeoisie, and then he is to join of his own accord a religious bourgeois trade union. This is easier said than done. In this connection considerable work will have to be done if Communist activity in the Christian National-Socialist Amsterdam and other organisations is to be carried on systematically. This requires ideological preparation. By whom can this be done? By a good Party organisation. If we have only a loose Party organisation unable to get hold of the members of the Party, a Party in which only 30% of the members participate in Party work, how can we with such an organisation carry on Communist work in the Christian National-Socialist and Amsterdam Trade Unions when there is a Red Trade Union organisation just round the corner. But if one does not work in these trade unions the workers suffer. As for example, there is at present a struggle in the Czechoslovakian textile industry, which has already lasted many weeks. What results do we see? The Amsterdamers and the Christian and Amsterdam workers go back to work? What can our Red Trade Unions do? They will have to go back to work on the same conditions, otherwise they will be dismissed from the factories. One could give more examples of this kind. Communist Parties must overcome the objections of the comrades who do not want to work in the Christian and Amsterdam Trade Unions. This must be done everywhere by means of an ideological and organisational struggle on a large scale, under the slogan of Trade Union Unity.

Now I want to deal with what interests us most: the organisation of fractions. Their organisation is very complicated because the organisation of Trade Unions is very complicated. In connection with this there is a tendency among some comrades to make the Trade Union Department of the Party responsible for trade union work. The Trade Union Department in the French Party is only a sub-department of the Org. Department and there are also trade union commissions. The latter practically do the work which the fractions should do, and this is bad for the work of the fractions. What should the trade union departments of the Parties do? Party organisations must first of all issue directions for work and the tactics in the trade unions. Secondly they must select capable comrades well able to carry out the work. Thirdly the Party must control whether the existing fractions or the comrades serving on the elected bodies really carry out the work. This means that the Party Executive must hold consultations with these comrades giving them all sort of support, but must on no account do the fraction work itself.

The next question is: The question of connection between the Party Executive and the trade union fraction. How is this to be done? Through the trade union departments of the Party Executives. The fraction is not an independent organisation. It must carry out the directions of the Party. The Party lays down the general lines, but must not interfere with the daily work of the fractions. At any moment different tactics will perhaps have to be adopted. Different methods will have to be used at different meetings and conferences. Party organisations and even the trade union departments themselves cannot lay down fixed rules how the directions of the Party are to be carried out in all concrete cases. But the directions themselves must naturally be

issued. This is the work of the trade union department. You know that we have no trade union department here in Russia. Why? Because the fractions in the trade unions are very strong. The comrades working there are well informed, they are fully aware of the will of the Party, all they need are directions which they carry out. But there is control and consultations take place. It is rather unfortunate that abroad we have no Communists on all the elected bodies. The question arises are we to replace the fraction by trade union departments of the Party in those elected bodies which do not include Communists? Certainly not. Let us take for instance the A. D. G. B. where there are no Communists. What is to be done in such a case? Comrades to be found in the elected bodies of various central unions should be amalgamated by the trade union department of the Central Committee into a provisional A. D. G. B. fraction. If there are no Communists in the Central Committees in the various unions, the trade union department of the central organ should get together the most capable Communists in this union and must form them into a provisional executive for all trade union committees with a presidium or bureau. The trade union department should give instructions to these provisional fractions and control their work, but it must on no account itself do the work which the fractions should do, for it does not know the conditions as well as the trade union members themselves. The trade union department may know the situation in general, the relations between the various groups of manufacturers and the various tariffs, but it cannot know the ordinary everyday work.

Comrade Sturm:

I am of the opinion that it is our foremost task to pay special attention to the work done by Communists in the most important unions. In Czechoslovakia it has come to light that in connection with the unity question we failed to understand how to cope successfully with the intentions of the reformist leaders of the transport and metal workers unions. This is partly due to the fact that the Party there has no fractions and partly that not all comrades in Czechoslovakia have a correct notion of the practical application of united front tactics. Therefore it would be of the utmost importance to emphasise that the beginning with fraction work must be in the most important industrial groups and unions, in order to avoid going the wrong way — showing good examples in small unions and failing in the most important unions.

Another no less important question is: when we consider the question of the development of trade union fractions, this must be done in conjunction with the Factory committees which are important pillars of the trade unions. What is after all the main basis of our trade union task? The factory! We are right in saying that the initial trade union tasks are to be carried out in the factory through the nuclei and as we succeed there we should proceed to do justice to our tasks in the trade unions with the help of fractions. To do this we must draw Factory committees into the construction and work of the fractions because we have to coordinate our fraction work in the Factory committees with the functions in the trade unions. This should be adhered to if the work is to be carried out on a united and satisfactory basis.

It is also necessary to point out an erroneous idea which exists in Great Britain, — that only Communists elected in the trade unions are to be considered Communist trade union fractions, whilst the remaining Communist trade unionists are not to form fractions but nuclei. By his arguments Comrade Ulbricht has already cleared up the question that not individual but all the members together are to form a fraction. But there is yet another misconception which must be cleared up. From past experiences we have learned the lesson that the actions of Communist officials in a union must be placed under the control of the fraction of the respective locality, district or country, namely that the Trade Union fractions and the fraction executives elected by them in agreement with the respective Party authorities must decisively control the activity of comrades appointed as officials in the trade unions (paid or unpaid).

Further on in the rules it is necessary to emphasise the organisational relations of the Communist fractions to the trade unions, and also how the work of the fractions in the trade unions should be done. This means that the fractions must be told how to prepare their actions at meetings, congresses, sessions, etc. If this is done then such things cannot happen that Communists argue against Communists in the trade unions.

If we lay down directions on an international scale on the strength of which all are obliged to undertake united action, then all mutual struggle will be made difficult or even impossible. Comrade Schumann was quite right in drawing attention to the activity of Communists within the trade councils. Therefore, Comrade Ulbricht's argument must be supplemented in the sense — under what control the Communist trade council fractions are active and how their collaboration with the trade union fractions is effected. Namely, if Communists in the trade councils are in direct connection and under the control of the local Executive, or if Communist trade council fractions work under the guidance and control of the local fraction executive and are through the latter kept in contact with the local Party Executive. What then decides the action of the Communist Fraction in the trade council? Here too it must be said that the Communist trade council fractions work in close contact with and under the control of the local or district fraction executive. In view of the limited time for speeches it is now impossible to deal with other questions.

Comrade Walcher:

What Comrade Ulbricht said about the relation of the fractions to the Party is quite right. But it is necessary to say here something about the relation of the fractions to the Trade Unions. The trade union bureaucrats have in their agitation a strong argument against us when they assert that Communists want to deprive trade union members of their right to self-determination, that they want to convert trade unions into inane appendices of the Communist Parties. We must set against this: that Communist members of reformist trade unions recognise all decisions and Statutes and take also into account the instructions of all competent organs, that Communists will do their utmost to win over non-Party members to their views, but within the framework of the statutes. We need not conceal that Communists are subject to strictest Party discipline. On the contrary we can boast of the fact that workers of their own free will appoint Communists to responsible posts just because they know from experience that they belong to a Party and an international which do not tolerate treachery and ruthlessly expel from their ranks anyone who works against the interests of the workers.

With respect to the question if we stand in need of fractions in the factories, I think that in spite of the nuclei we will in many cases not be able to do without trade union fractions. This will be the case wherever several unions are represented in one factory, where special functions for the various unions take place. In a word in factories where unions lead a separate life of their own, we must have fractions. As in every union we amalgamate all the fractions of the same local it goes without saying that the local fraction is not only to be active in the functions organised by the local trade-union administration but also in the factories. In my opinion this is inevitable. But in order not to complicate still more these already complicated questions I think that the formulation proposed by Comrade Ulbricht should be accepted. (Comrade Piatnitsky: One must not use the term fractions, one must find another term, otherwise there will be confusion.)

I should like to lay emphasis on what Comrade Ulbricht has said about the relation between the Communist Executive of a trade union local organisation and the communist fraction in the same union and locality. It should be the rule that the same persons should not serve on these two bodies, at least not always. In this respect we have had already a lesson. To manage a Communist local administrative body in such a way that it be on the one hand satisfactory from the Communist viewpoint, and that on the other hand the reformist managing committee should not be given an opportunity to take action against such a local administration, is an extremely difficult task. Many comrades, if left to their own devices, are not up to this task. They will only be able to assert themselves with the help of the Communist fractions. This involves that the Executive of the fraction is not identical with the Executive of the local administrative body. Wherever a personal union exists between the two executives we must expect that attempts will be made to use the authority of the Communist fraction to cover up all kinds of opportunist malpractices of the Communist local trade union administration. Moreover, the trade union department of the Party hardly ever possesses the necessary knowledge of local conditions to prevent the local Communist trade union Administrative body straying away from Communist principles, and if this has already happened, to remedy the evil in order

that Communist influence in the respective union be not impaired. That is why the necessary control must be exercised through the Communist fractions. The Party has also at its disposal comrades well up in trade union questions, who are members of trade unions but whose main work is Party work. Such comrades would make very good fraction leaders. (Piatnitsky: Do such comrades follow the directions of the Party? Do they come specially from the trade union department of the Party and do they exercise control over the work of the local administration?)

Such comrades are as a rule elected to the fraction executive by the Communist fraction. What really matters is — that the Communist trade union executive be not at the same time the Executive of the Communist fraction.

We shall have some bad experiences. On the strength of such experiences I should like to avoid leadership of Communist fractions being placed in the hands of Communist local trade union administrative bodies. We must of course not fall into the other mistake and saddle a capable comrade managing a local trade union administrative body with a fraction executive which has no technical or practical knowledge, and demands impossible things from the comrade in the local trade-union administration. There are of course cases when the Communist leader of the local administrative body has the necessary capacity also to lead the Communist fraction without any detrimental side effects. But this of course will always be the exception and not the rule.

Comrade Ulbricht apprehends from a direct connection between the national fraction executives with the local fractions a harmful super-centralism. I do not share this apprehension. The national central organisations must send regularly circular letters, newspapers and other material to the local fractions. If this material is sent through the district executive there is always the risk that it will either get no further, or that it will be forwarded too late to be of any use. Such procedure implies, of course, not only loss of time, but is also unsafe and extremely costly. If district executives are to forward all the material destined for all the local fractions of all the unions, they will require a much bigger apparatus than the present. But even apart from that, direct connection between the national executive and the local fractions is frequently absolutely necessary and quite safe. After all, the most important point is that district executives be kept informed about everything which goes on between the central organisation and local executives.

Comrade Bamatter:

You all know that the recent Trade Union Congress in Great Britain has been a great success for our Party and that the C.P.G.B. had a successful campaign in favour of a railwaymen's, transport workers, metal workers and miners' alliance. This result could not have been achieved without the everyday work of our British Comrades. With respect to fractions, as far as information goes, one may say that there are but few organised fractions with fraction executives and fraction-sessions in Great Britain. But individual comrades receive instructions and directions from the respective Party committees and work in accordance therewith. Thus our comrades succeeded in getting various resolutions adopted in the trade unions, including resolutions for the formation of committees for the I.R.A., Committees of Action, etc. Good work has also been done by the nuclei which carried out an energetic campaign for entry into trade unions. But there were also a number of shortcomings which Comrade Ulbricht has already pointed out.

Therefore I must urge that clarity be brought into the question of fractions and nuclei, as our British comrades are not at all clear on this point; secondly that it should be definitely stated that fractions must be formed in all non-Party organisations and their organs, including the Minority Movement. Up till now there is a tendency not to form fractions in the latter "as there are already Communists in the Executive". Experience has shown that in various questions which cropped up in the Minority Movement there was no concerted attitude on the part of the Communists there, because the questions had not been previously dealt with in the fractions. We saw, for instance, that in two questions of particular importance to Great Britain: that of the school-age limit and of vocational training and that of the workers' sport movement there was no consensus of Communist opinion. For instance while Comrade Purcell was an energetic advocate of the establishment of a workers' sport movement, the Communists in the Minority Mo-

vement rejected the proposals of the Y.C.L. relating to this question. This is a significant fact which cannot be left out of account, as the sport movement plays a particularly important role in Great Britain.

Comrade Algo:

I will deal with fraction work in the cooperatives. Here the situation is even more difficult, first of all because we ourselves in the Comintern, especially in the Women's Secretariat and the Org Department, whose particular task this is, have not as yet a correct appreciation of this work. For instance, we notice that the E.C.C.I.'s long letter to Germany does not mention work on the cooperatives although here we can find a good method to approach the masses.

What do consumers' cooperatives mean to us? They offer us an avenue to sections of the working class which we cannot reach directly either through political work or through trade unions. In the cooperatives we will find middle class circles and housewives with whom we do not come into touch simply because we do not work there. We do not make enough use of the cooperatives for our agitational and educational work, and also as an organisational basis. Moreover, such work is also important as a component part of the Minority Movement. This we can see in Great Britain.

Just a few words about the basis of cooperative work. According to estimates on an international scale there are fifty million members of cooperatives in 100,000 organisations throughout the world. This means that several hundred thousand meetings take place every year most of which we ignore.

I will deal concretely with four main shortcomings in our cooperative work.

1. **The Cooperative organisation of Communists.** The C.I. decided long ago that every Communist must be a member of a cooperative. This is far from being carried out.

2. **Fraction work.** In the model statute of the E.C.C.I. it is definitely stated that wherever at least 3 comrades are organised, they must form a fraction. This is not adhered to, and in Czecho-Slovakia we heard already the slogan "leave reformist organisations".

3. **No department for Cooperative Work.** The third shortcoming is — that cooperative work is looked upon as work for experts, not connected with Party work as a whole.

4. **The political basis is lacking for our Cooperative Work.** Wherever administration is in our hands purely economic work is the rule, Party policy being left out of account. Where fractions are at work, no efforts are made to go into the economic questions and to make use of the everyday slogans for the development of the political programme. (Here follow concrete statements concerning various national sections.)

In conclusion a few more words on cooperative work on an international scale. Comrades are of course aware that there is a United International with its seat in London in which the Russian cooperatives are represented even on the Executive. Last year the Soviet delegation made itself heard at the Congress in Geneva. In October, as a result of two years' steady work, the International Cooperative Alliance decided to establish a connection with the two Trade Union Internationals (with Amsterdam and Moscow), with a view to establishing collaboration in central questions between the cooperatives and trade unions. In contradistinction to the energetic action of comrades from the U.S.S.R. cooperatives, no other fractions, even where we have a majority have done anything to support on an international scale these successes of the Russian cooperatives to help the latter, or to make capital out of these successes. In connection with this, one must take into consideration that the Executives' decision in Paris with respect to joint action against taxation and war peril must be carried out now organisationally everywhere.

To sum up, more attention will have to be paid henceforth to the cooperative movement which must be used as an avenue to the masses and as a platform for successful work on a large scale, in order to extend the radius and influence of the Communist Parties. If the Parties of the C.I. intend to become mass organisations, they must endeavour to include also cooperatives in the sphere of their activity.

The Org. Department in particular can help Cooperative work by systematic observation, making it possible for us to achieve in the near future better results on this field than in the past.

Status of Fraction Work in the Trade Unions.

By Reinhardt.

Very little material is at our disposal with regard to the composition or activity of Communist fractions in the trade unions. The chief reason for the lack of such material is that the various Communist Parties have not yet fully grasped the significance of Communist work in the trade unions, and much less systematised this work, hence they are unable to give us statistics which would give a general prospective of fraction work in the trade unions of the respective countries.

For this reason our statements cannot be wholly systematised because we must confine ourselves to an attempt to sum up the materials at our disposal. The Parties can undoubtedly supplement our material and we will then be able to get a more complete picture of the Communist fraction activity in the unions.

Most difficult of all is the determination of the numerical strength of the Communist Trade Union Fraction. Of course, such statistical statements cannot constitute anything final or stable. With the growth of the Party and with the extension of our influence the numerical strength of every organisation changes. For this very reason it is of greatest importance for every Communist Party to follow up the dynamic and the curve of its numerical composition. This is essential in order to undertake the correction of activity where, for some reason or other, the fraction or our influence has generally deteriorated.

At the present time there is no possibility of determining numerically the dynamic of our strength and our influence in the various unions. The figures at our disposal are in some cases based upon the general situation in the respective country, in other cases upon individual unions or districts. Therefore we will present these statements according to countries.

Germany.

With regard to Germany it is at present impossible to determine either the total number of existing fractions or their numerical strength. Nevertheless the strength and influence in the German unions may be judged by other signs or symptoms, e. g. the elections to the union congresses.

A characteristic example of the catastrophic decline of Communist influence in the German Trade Unions is given by the latest A. D. G. B. Congress. Despite allowance for all difficulties and chicaneries on the part of the union bureaucracy (of 40 A. D. G. B. only 11 conducted local elections), the C. P. G. Central Committee itself comes to the following conclusions:

"The poor result of the elections of delegates to the Trade Union Congress has its cause first of all in the weak status of our trade union work itself, in the almost total lack of functioning fractions in all unions."

At the 11th Congress of the A. D. G. B. there were altogether 692 delegates represented; of whom 463 belong to the S. P. D., 138 to the U. S. P. D. and only 90 to the C. P. G. This was the strength ratio of 1922. At this year's Trade Union Congress we had out of a total 350 delegates only 2.

Of course, these figures are not to be regarded as absolute, since the influence of the Communists is, as a rule, greater than the number of their delegates at Trade Union Congress elections which depend partly upon the inner mechanism of the election machine; e. g. when proportional representation may exist. Nevertheless the figures given above is a characterisation of the decline of Communist influence in the unions.

A further characteristic of our influence in the Reformist Union is given by the Metal Workers' Union election returns to the A. D. G. B. Congress.

In Saxony we received 6120 votes of a total 21,600 or 28%; altogether in the German Workers' Union we received 38,000 votes out of a total of 146,000 cast, or 26%.

Although the Communists had more than a third of the mandates (138) at the Cassel Metal Workers' Congress in February 1924 (the election took place in the summer of 1923); and no less than 500,000 (more than 40%) of the total union membership (1,200,000) were under the influence of the Communists, our influence in the Metal Workers' Union has shrunk by half.

From these figures it appears that the retrogression of our influence is in direct proportion to the decline and neglect of our trade union fraction work.

These disturbing data and the status of fraction work emphasise the instructions of the Comintern (recent letter to the C. P. G.) to the effect that the Party must transfer 70% of its work into the unions.

Czechoslovakia.

During the past year the Central Committee of the C. P. Cz. undertook a Party censorship which determined the affiliation of the Party membership in the trade union and which included 87,734 out of 138,896 Party members. Upon the basis of this census it was constituted that 39,391 Party members (or 45%) are in the Red Trade Union, 14,796 (or 16,9%) in the Amsterdam Union, while 33,474 (or 33,8%) of the Party members are unorganised.

The occupational statistic presents the following picture: 78,83% of the Party members are industrial and agricultural workers, 14,74% women and housewives, 0,46% intellectuals, 2,31% independent workers, 2,66% small farmers, and 0,47% Party and trade union workers.

Hence of 80% of the Party membership which unquestionably could have been organised industrially 40% were not so organised.

According to the report of the Czechoslovakian Statistical Bureau, at the end of 1923 there were 492 Czechoslovakian unions containing 1,532,000 organised members. Of these about 400,000 were in the Employees Organisation and about 1,100,000 in the Trade Union Federations of which there were eleven. The 1924 reports are not yet prepared but from the reports of the various unions and of the Trade Union Federations it is evident that during this year the decline in membership was either at an utter standstill or that it did not exceed 2 bis 3%.

Comrade Kohn at the last Congress of the C. P. Cz. in characterising the situation in the Reformist unions points out that even in those Czech Social Democratic unions that had been split by the Reformists our fraction work was not consolidated to the necessary extent. "In this connection," he said, "I need only indicate the Metal Workers Union which must be considered an extremely solid union and which is utterly under the social-traitorous ideological influence of the Chairman Hampl, who at the same time is chairman of the Social Democratic Party. And in the German reformist unions our fraction work has not yet emerged from the stage of beginnings. Thus, for instance, the German Miners' Union, in which tens of thousands are organised, is completely under the influence of the Reformist Pohl. This can be said with even greater justification of the Czech Socialist Unions among which are included the 'Jednota' (Corporation) of the Czech railwaymen which united the entire traction service personnel with the organisation of the P. T. T. employees. The members of these organisations are extremely dissatisfied, but since we have no fraction we have not yet been able to direct this dissatisfaction into channels beneficial to ourselves."

According to our reports one-fifth of all members of the I. A. V. (red trade unions) are Communists. Comrade Kohn said in the same speech at the Communist Party Congress, that one-fourth of the I. A. V. membership was Communist. With 25% Communists in the Red Trade Unions, one might expect that our fraction work is at a corresponding height. But this not so. Comrade Kohn declared, in this regard during the same speech, "if all these Communists, one-fourth of our revolutionary unions, had been organised in solid fractions we would have required decidedly fewer Communists in order to exercise our influence upon this entire membership mass."

The weakness of the work of the fractions is revealed in a speech by Comrade Hais at the same Congress:

Comrade Hais stated that the Party was already in its third year of work in forming fractions. "We are already waiting for the third year for some sort of activity from the Trade Union Fractions, yet for two years nothing was done and this work will show no results whatever."

There, where we should expect the most effective support, utterly overwhelming pessimism has not yet been overcome.

Austria.

The number of members of the Communist Fractions (according to the latest report, August 12, 1925) is 798; the number of members of the Opposition Blocs (Non Partisans, Social Democrats and Communists included) is 1257. In relation to the total membership of the C. P. A., reported as 5000, this means that only 15% of the Communists belong to the Fractions. In relation to the total membership of the Austrian unions (828,088 on December 31, 1924) this means that not even 0,08% of the trade union membership belong to the fractions, and hardly, 0,14% thereof to the Opposition Bloc.

Even if a total of 70% of the Austrian Communist Party members participated actively in the trade unions there would still be only $\frac{1}{10}$ % (more exactly 0,4%) active Communists in the entire Austrian Trade Union movement. Under these circumstances it is inconceivable and unpermissible that 85% of the Party membership do no active trade union work whatever.

Among the **Metal Workers** there is a bloc of 400 members of which 360 belong to the Communist fraction. In ratio to the total number of industrially organised this means that in this decisive branch of industry, in this numerically strongest of Austrian unions, not more than 0,3% of the workers belong to the bloc, or the Communist Fraction.

We learn further that during the first three months of 1925 altogether only two fraction meetings took place which does not imply a very intense fraction activity.

Among the **Miners**, where the grounds is quite favourable for a revolutionary agitation the bloc movement is said to have been strengthened recently. In Grünbach, where Communist influence is strongest, 72 out of a total of 350 organised miners are said to belong to the revolutionary bloc.

In the **Railway Workers Union**, with its 91,456 members the second strongest Austrian union, there is a bloc of 18, a fraction of 15 members. The influence of the Party is practically nil.

Among the **Tramcar Men**, at present organised partly in the trade and Transport Workers Union and partly in the Oppositional Street Car Men's Union (5000 members reported) there are blocs in both unions (40 bloc and 20 fractions members).

Among the **Building Tradesmen** (67,896) there are 275 affiliated with the bloc. In this union the Communists exercise a considerable influence upon the organised workers. Two Vienna locals are in the hands of the Opposition; numerous Factory Councillors are Communists. At the last Vienna Factory Council meeting we succeeded in passing a resolution for the admission of the Russian union into the Building Trades International.

Of the **Food Workers** (36,342 organised) 30 belong to the bloc and of them 24 to the fraction.

The **Leather Workers** are organised in two unions: in the Reformist Leather Workers' Union (2859) and in the Free Shoemakers' Union (1400). The bloc comprises 21 members; it is not clear whether a fraction exists.

Of the **2366 Wood Workers** 27 belong to the bloc and 21 to the fraction.

Among the **Tobacco Workers** there appear to be no fractions.

The same applies to the **Chemical and Graphic workers**.

Among the **Textile Workers** there is no bloc; in Vienna recently a fraction of young textile workers was founded.

Among the **Clothing Workers** there is a bloc of 45, a fraction of 25 members.

Among the **Bank-Employees** the influence of the Communists in the enterprises is nil.

The bloc and the fraction of the **Industrial Office Workers** are 100 or 85 members strong.

Among the **Agricultural Workers** of which according to the 1920 census there are about 100,000, there is up to now neither bloc nor fraction.

This is the situation in Austria, in that country where every fourth worker is industrially organised and every sixth is a member of the Social Democratic Party; where the ratio of Social Democrats to the total number of the industrially organised amounts to 55%.

France.

We learn from a letter we recently received from the French Party that with respect of Trade Union fraction work "our Party has made very little progress".

"There are but very few fractions, and even when they are organised they have no clear understanding of their tasks. The

reason for this is that our nuclei and district organisations have not yet reached the stage of political ripeness to recognise fully the necessity of trade union work. Their activity is still much too weak to achieve any appreciable success".

We also read in another letter of the Latin Bureau that "The weakest point in Communist work in France is in adequate fraction work.

To bear out the correctness of this the theses of the Party on work in the Trade Unions were published in the "Cahier du Bolchévisme" (1. 10. 25).

This is what is stated in the theses: "The almost complete absence of Communist Fractions in trade union organisations, and where fractions exist they do not function well".

At the last Party Conference (October 1925) the reporter on the work of Communists in the trade unions said that "the Communist fractions in the C. G. T. U. and also in the C. G. T. had not been active enough" ("Pravda" 20. 10. 25).

The Communist Party of France has 70,000 members. In proportion with the total number of organised workers (700,000) this is a very high percentage (10%). But most of the Communists organised in trade unions are to be found in the C. G. T. U. It is just in the reformist Confederation that the work of Communist fractions has been far from adequate. This inadequacy of the work of the Communist fractions finds also its reflex in the number of organised workers. Of the nine million workers in France only about 8% are organised in trade unions.

Great Britain.

Not much can be said about real fraction work in Great Britain. If there are such fractions they are mostly to be found in the Executives of trade union cartels or local unions and at National Trades Union Congresses and Conferences.

The Party press gives a few fragmentary data on the work of fractions.

A perusal of the Central Organ of the C. P. of Great Britain "Workers Weekly" shows that there are after all trade union fractions in some localities. For instance the "Workers Weekly" of August 7, 1925, gives an extract from two district reports from **South Wales** and **Manchester**. We can gather from this that we have 27 trade union fractions (trade union nuclei) in the South Wales district with a total membership of 127, and that 315 Party members are active in the trade unions in that district (there are altogether 450 members in the district). In this report the "inadequate organisation of Party fractions in the trade Unions" is also criticised.

The report of the **Manchester District** shows that the Party has there 8 trade union fractions and 3 group (industrial) fractions. There are altogether 335 members in this district, 80% of whom are organised in the trade unions. Here too, the "inadequate utilisation of the opportunity for the establishment of trade union fractions" is criticised as a weak point of the Party.

We also find in the "Workers Weekly" of 7. 8. 25 a short notice on the fraction conference in the textile industry which took place on July 12 in Burnley. Fourteen Party members from five local groups attended this Conference.

It is impossible to ascertain how much work has been done in this direction in other industrial centres, as full reports are not to hand. Evidently not much has been done, for the Party itself complains about the members' lack of activity in fraction work.

In the theses on the formation of a mass Party, which was adopted at the VII. Party Congress of the C. P. G. B. it is acknowledged that fraction work in the various proletarian organisations (trade union etc.), was carried on very inadequately lately.

At the VII. Congress of the Communist Party of Great Britain (June 1925) the reporter on the organisational question, Comrade **MacManus** stated that there are approximately 100 nuclei in Great Britain embracing ten per cent of the total members of the Party. Everyone knows that Party work depends very much on the work of the factory nuclei. If the latter embrace only 10% of the total Party membership, one will not be far wrong in assuming that it is precisely this percentage of the total membership which takes an active part in the work of the Communist fractions. In proportion to the total number of organised workers this amounts only to 0,1%. Under such circumstances it is essential to increase the activity of Party members working in the Communist fractions, all the more so as according to the statement of British comrades at least 80% of Party members belong to trade unions.

U. S. A.

Generally speaking, Communist fractions were formed in the American Trade Unions already in 1920 when two Communist Parties existed there. To do justice to the Central Committees of the two Parties one must say that in spite of their mutual fraction struggle, they instructed their Communist fractions to collaborate in the left wing of the Trade Union Movement. At that time Communist fractions in the U. S. A., were only organised in the **Garment Workers' and Machinists' Unions**. Numerically they were insignificant, but their influence was so great that the bureaucrats found it necessary to neutralise it.

In October 1921 on the eve of the Miners' Union Congress an opposition group was formed consisting of 75 people. At the same time a Communist fraction was organised consisting of 15% of this group.

Henceforth, Communist influence went on increasing in the **Miners' Union**. Our influence in that union must be comparatively very great to judge by the number of votes which the Communist Voisey polled at the last Managing Committee elections in 1925. Comrade Voisey who was the candidate for the chairmanship of the Union polled 66,000 votes, namely one third of the total vote.

In 1921 the **Trade Union Educational League** was organised. Communist fractions were also organised in this League which according to official reports included only one per cent. of the total membership of the League.

During the railwaymen's strike in 1922, our Party organised Communist fractions in the **railwaymen's unions**. Such fractions were mostly to be found in the Western States. It is impossible to ascertain the numerical strength of these fractions.

Generally speaking, we can say that there are Communist fractions mainly in the following trade unions: **Ladies' and Men's Garment Workers (Tailors), Machinists and Metal Workers, Miners and Carpenters**.

There are also Communist fractions in some of the municipal trade union councils as for instance in Seattle, Detroit, Chicago and Buffalo.

For a time the Communist fraction headed by Comrade Foster exercised considerable influence in the Chicago Trade Council. But in connection with the organisation of conferences for the discussion of the progressive political activity and the Federative Workers' and Farmers' Party, considerable differences arose between our Communist fraction and the left at the head of which were Fitzpatrick and Nichols, who finally isolated our Communist fractions from the opposition elements. At present the influence of our Communist fraction in Chicago is practically nil and Fitzpatrick and Nichols have joined Green, the Chairman of the American Federation of Labour. Our Communist fraction's loss of influence in the Chicago Trade Union Council found also its reflex in the Trade Union Educational League, for this Council was the main support of the American Minority Movement.

There is also the I. W. W. where we have not had any fractions as yet. There are still about 20,000 workers in the

I. W. W. and some of its sections, as for instance the Seamen's section (6,000 members) are far from being insignificant. A report of July 1925 shows that although there are about 100 Communists in the I. W. W. organisations, no fraction work has as yet been done and no fractions have been formed. Moreover, there are many Communists in the industries where the I. W. W. is active. Here too, members of the Workers Party should be drawn into work within the I. W. W.

The American Party has 17,000 members. The weakness of the Party's trade union work is due to the fact that only 32% of the Party membership are organised in trade unions. One can hardly assume that the entire 32% take an active part in fraction work within the Unions. In the U. S. A., there are altogether 3,780,000 organised workers (according to the figures for 1923, Monthly Labour Review, March 1925), of whom 2,865,979 are in the American Federation of Labour (according to the figures for 1924, Bulletin of the R.I.L.U. Nr. 12). If one takes into consideration that there are 32 million workers in America of whom 9.5 million are factory workers (Labour Year Book 1924), one must come to the conclusion that to have only 30% Party members organised in trade unions does not speak well for the Party's participation in the trade union movement.

The importance of fraction work in such unions as the Machinists' Carpenters' and Garment Workers Union is shown in a very drastic manner by the recent trade union Congress elections in these organisations. We have there a strong left wing which can only be strengthened and developed by good fraction work. In the Machinist Union for instance the opposition was victorious in almost all the industrial centres at the time of the last election. In New York the opposition polled 2,200 votes against 74; in Chicago 2,700 against 800; in Canada the opposition had a majority of 1,200 votes.

In the Ladies' Garment Workers (Tailors) Union we control three of the largest local groups of New York with a total membership of 30,000.

In the Carpenters' Union too the opposition is growing under our guidance, — hence the necessity of well organised fractions.

What do the above-mentioned figures and facts prove? Firstly, that there are still among a number of comrades anti-trade union tendencies which must be overcome as rapidly as possible both organisationally and ideologically. Secondly, that even where Party members are organised in trade unions they do not take an active part in trade union work. Here too a radical change must take place. Thirdly, Communist trade union and fraction work must be systematised in order that every Party at any time might have a full and clear survey of all our forces in the trade unions. Unfortunately, this is not yet the case anywhere. Fourthly, fraction work must be popularised so that every Party member be made to understand that without active and systematic fraction work it will be impossible to win over to our side the masses who are still under the influence of the reformists.

Only when this becomes general in all Parties will we be able to make headway with the capture of the masses.

Tasks and Activity of Trade Union Fractions.

By George Schumann.

The maxim that three-fourths of all Party work of Communists is trade union work, does not mean that a member of the Communist Party divides his time three-fourths to the trade union and one-fourth to the Party, nor that only three-fourths of all Communist Party members are active in the unions and the other fourth not. As little as the workers are today trade unionists, tomorrow Party members, and the day after tomorrow even private individuals, so little also can the activities of Communists be distributed according to scheme. The working class as a whole is that factor that alone can throw off the capitalist yoke and win its own emancipation. Therefore there develops for Communists the task of making their influence felt in all branches of the labour movement and of directing every step of the workers along the only possible road to victory, the road of Communist politics. In the trade unions are found that portion of the workers who are at least ready to fight for better living conditions, and who have collected certain experiences in economic struggles and on the organisation field. To permeate with our ideas this group already in a certain battle array against capitalism, and to educate it to Communist strategy is the main task of the Communist Party.

The recognition of this main task means **simultaneously** the realisation that all Communists must exert their full strength in the trade unions, and that a tight net of Communist fractions must be created in every union and every national trade union federation.

How, now, should these fractions work to fulfil their purpose? It is quite clear that these fractions must adapt themselves to the structure of the present unions, i. e., that for every unit of the union a Communist fraction must be formed.

But it follows likewise that every fraction and every individual Communist is subject to the Party directives which control the work and issue instructions.

The effect of a Communist's activity in his union depends not alone on his good speech or the clarity of his comprehension, but also upon the conduct of the other Communists in the same union, and above all upon his own activity and attitude as regards the workers in the shop. In the shop must be built the first basis for an effectively working fraction in the respective union — that is a trained, disciplined Party nucleus in the shop.

The shop nucleus is the basic unit of the Party; it must handle all political and organisational questions. It must, however, also regulate all shop and trade union matters. Yes, it is precisely the essential purpose of the shop nucleus to tie up all daily happenings in the shop, all economic and wage questions, with current political events and to point out to all in the shop the only possible, the Communist tactic in the class struggle. In order to secure results for the Party, no Communist may leave the ranks, then the nucleus must thoroughly consider, and every member has the duty to work tirelessly among his fellows according to the decisions made.

Likewise the **Factory Nucleus** must deal with **trade union work**. A special fraction for each union in the factory must only be a hindrance to Party work. All general trade union questions, wage questions (even when only one branch is involved) must be discussed in the nucleus meeting. In many shops only one union comes into consideration. In large scale industries the various occupations are separated into definite sections. Here the section nucleus, as a rule, will consist of workers who are members of one union. It is nevertheless not excluded that special meetings of all Communists of a certain union, in a shop, might be held if special circumstances so demand it. Yes, it is often necessary to arrange meetings of Communists and sympathetic members of one union in the factory, (prior to local management, Cartel delegate and Congress elections) in order to strengthen the presence of our fraction in the union. But a **factory fraction is not thereby necessary**, because these are all the duties of the nucleus. Of course, a comrade for the trade union work must have a place in the Nucleus Executive together with the heads of the various departments. If separate unions in the shop come into question then one member for each must be entrusted with the problems of his organisation.

This union leader in the nucleus executive has the duty to keep track of all trade union questions in the factory conscientiously and to present them for consideration to the nucleus. He has, however, also to establish the connection with the local trade union fraction. If he functions in a large factory he must, at the same time, belong to the Nucleus Executive and the local Fraction Executive of his union. He must endeavour to bring all union members in his nucleus to take part in the fraction caucus and union meetings, to see to it that all members of his nucleus are industrially organised, that in the union they do detail work and agitate among the indifferent elements in the shop for their entrance into the union. Among the union's delegates in the shop a Communist fraction must be formed, which shall be under the direction of the industrial organiser of the nucleus. This industrial organiser must also establish connections with the workers in the religious (catholic) and other unions in the shop and there create fractions for trade union unity.

These **local trade union fractions** must include all Communists of the respective unions. Its executives must consist of comrades from the most important factories. They must maintain the closest connection with the Party nuclei in the factory in which their union is represented. In these factories in which no nucleus as yet exists they must appoint a representative. They must promptly carry all happenings in the union into the shops and there discuss them in the nucleus and in the meetings with sympathisers. Before every union meeting there must be an enlarged fraction meeting in which all Communists in the local participate and in which the activity of the Communists is predetermined (motions, speakers, etc.). At important consultations of the union fraction, representatives of the local Party Executive or the District Party Executive must take part since, of course, the Fraction Executive must work in close co-operation with the Party leadership. The order of business of the fraction meeting must be discussed with the Party Executive. The fractions are not legislative bodies of the Party, they can only carry out the decisions of the Party organ, — of course, after thorough joint discussion, precisely like parliamentary fractions, rent-payer's societies, sport organisations, etc. When Communists hold office in the City Executive of the unions it is advisable to elect them also into the Fraction Executives. The chairman of the Communist fraction, whenever possible, should not be a trade union official so that the will of the Party may be executed without opposition.

To the local Party Executive must be connected a trade union department in which the most important fractions should

be represented. It watches over the trade union life of the city and advises the Party Executive. In the unions which as yet have no Communist fractions it must establish connections and eventually entrust a member of another union with the creation of a fraction therein. This can be done successfully only through the nucleus in a shop in which this union functions.

A particularly important task of the local Trade Union Department is the creation and direction of a Communist fraction in the Trade Councils. These trade councils (City Committees of the Unions) have a great significance in the economic struggles and in political actions (May celebrations, revolutionary anniversaries, and vital occasions). The selection of council delegates in the local unions and the candidates for the executives can only be determined by the Party City Executive. When necessary the Party executives must call together all Communist trade union functionaries, (Fraction Executives, Council Delegations, executive members of the unions and their Central Bodies) to discuss general, important questions. In some localities a desire prevails that trade union fractions affiliate with the Communist council fractions, i. e., that trade union fractions shall deal with council fractions and these only with the Party Executive. We fear that this would lead to complications and misunderstandings; besides, too much time is lost. According to our opinion the individual trade union fraction must stand in direct connection with the Party Executive in order to create a sound relationship. The leader of the cartel fraction must, of course, be represented in the Trade Union Department of the Party Executive. According to the structure of the union and union federations the **Communist Fractions** must be organised by territorial divisions. Periodically district conventions of single unions or of union federations take place. The fractions must take a stand and formulate proposals for them. Before the conference there must again be a caucus of the Communist delegates in which the procedure is determined and speakers selected. At a district fraction conference a District Fraction Executive must be elected, the chairman of which belongs to the Trade Union Department of the Party District Executive. This District Fraction Executive has, above all, to follow the work of the district executive of the respective union and to keep the city fractions and the district executives of the Party well informed. It should be set up at the seat of the union district executive and include the Communists on this district executive. Naturally it can likewise only work according to the direction of the Party District Executive and has in no way autonomous functions. By agreement with the Party District Executive it may deal directly with the local Trade Union Fraction Executives in the district. It must give regular reports to the Central Committee of the Party (Trade Union department). For the Communist fraction of the Trade Councils, the trade union department of the Party district executive assumes the tasks of a district fraction executive at the seat of which the District Secretariat of the trade union Federation functions.

The Trade union department of the Central Committees of the Communist Parties has the task of leading the whole work of the Communists in the trade unions according to the instructions of the Central Committee. A member of the Trade union department must be responsible for the unions of each industrial group. The Central fraction executives of the trade unions work in close harmony with these industrial group leaders. The Central fraction Executives must follow exactly the activity of their executive committee, collect material and prepare for fraction caucuses prior to national trade union conference and congresses. Through the leaders of the industrial groups it must keep the Party Executive informed. In this Central fraction Executive must be represented the Communists in the leading committees of the respective trade unions. The Trade Union department of the Central Committee can, as a rule, only deal with the district fractions through the district committees of the Party. It must, however, have the possibility to maintain direct contact with the most important district fraction executives in the country, a copy of such communications should be sent simultaneously to the respective district Executive.

If the Communist Parties permeate their entire activity with work in the trade unions, if every individual comrade earnestly fulfills his trade union duties, then we will achieve extensive influence in the trade unions and will be able to lead the entire working class into victorious struggles.

The Work of the Communist Trade Union Fractions in Italy.

By Sigi.

The work of the Italian Communists in the Trade Union field deserves special mention because of the unprecedented difficulties under which it was carried on. Fascist reaction proceeded with fire and sword not only against the political movement, but also against the trade unions so that the Italian working class was completely robbed of its traditional organisation. Of the entire big trade union movement of 1919-20-21 only the Labour Chambers of Milan and Rome were spared by the Fascist Terror. But these were also restricted in their freedom of action and there was no end of police and Fascist threats and persecutions, hence their activity also was very limited.

The Socialist-Unitarian and Maximalist unions did not venture to approach the masses. On the contrary, they went over to the bourgeois "opposition", opened up an offensive against the Communists and thus prevented any possible mass intervention for the solution of the crisis.

In view of this situation our Party set to work and proceeded to make advances in the various trade union federations. In these union meetings concrete proposals were made for carrying through campaigns on behalf of definite political and economic demands. These were, however, flatly rejected by the Unitarians and Maximalists, which led to ever-increasing expulsion of our comrades from the unions, who alone conducted militant activity.

The fractions carried on the struggle on the following basis:

- 1: Maintenance of effectiveness of the trade union organisations at any price;
- 2: Intensification and extension of the trade union organisation on a national scale;
 - a) Conquest of all proletarian liberties: freedom of assemblage and of speech, freedom of the press, right to organise and strike.
 - b) Right to elect factory committees and possibility of their exercising their functions.
 - c) Revision of wages and stipends.
 - d) Struggle against the high cost of living and speculation, housing shortage, etc.
- 3: Convention of a Congress for the purpose of taking immediate measures for the struggle for these demands. Election of a National Agitation Committee consisting of representatives of the Federations and Labour Chambers, with due consideration for the Minority.

With regard to the Press Law the Trade Union section of the Party introduced at the Congress of Polygraphic Workers a proposal containing concrete agitational measures in case of seizure of the proletarian press. Only the Communist delegates supported this proposal.

In all trade union meetings, in the nuclei, in the press, at Congresses, by means of leaflets, these slogans were popularised and united front proposals were made; in the press our comrades polemised with the Maximalists in order to impel them to win the majority in the trade union federation for affiliation to the British-Russian Committee. They would not alter their position, however, despite the fact, that our proposals were met with sympathy both by the non-party workers and large sections of the Reformist and Maximalist labour elements.

The struggle waged by the Party for Trade Union Unity is severely hampered by the many expulsions of active comrades. The entire work of the Party for trade union unity at the Union Congresses, local meetings in the press etc., was branded by the Reformists en bloc as "Moscow manoeuvres". In all parts of the country the most active comrades were expelled. At the national congress of the trade unions, for instance, several comrades were expelled for proposing an amended agenda. In Turin all Communists on the lists for factory committees were expelled.

Therefore the Party issued the slogan "For every expelled comrade one hundred new members".

In the Turin Fiat works (30,000 workers) where our most active comrades were expelled from the F. I. O. M. solely because they ran as candidates for the factory committee, the activity in this gigantic factory was allowed to slumber because the union undertook nothing to initiate any campaigns, e. g. against the high cost of living. Our comrades repeatedly made

proposals in this respect. At a meeting in which Communists and sympathisers participated it was decided to present definite demands to the union leadership, which, however, found it unnecessary to reply.

The F. I. O. M. is not recognised by the Fiat management, but through united action it would surely be possible to compel the bosses to do this.

At the same time the Fascist Union approached, on politico-speculative grounds, the Fiat management with wage demands.

After the experiences in Brescia, Milan and other places, (where the Fascists applied similar tactics) and in view of the Fascist speculation and the fact that the Reformists left us in the lurch (viz. were prepared to make no sort of wage demands) our members considered it necessary to enter into negotiation with the Fiat management in order at least to save the dignity of the workers. The factory committee was in complete agreement with this view and concluded an agreement with the management for the period August 18th to November 30th which provided for indemnification for increased costs of living on the basis of an old agreement.

This resulted in a vilification campaign on the part of the Reformist-Maximalists and a vigorous attack by the Fascists on our comrades on the factory committee. The working masses did not allow themselves to be misled by the Reformists' agitation that the Communists had compromised with the management, but instead clearly recognised that the Reformists only raised such cries against the "compromising" Communists because of their own utter inactivity, not in any sense because they (the Reformists) are in principle opposed to compromises, but instead because through fear that the masses once in motion might go too far, they refuse to take any kind of action against reaction and bad living conditions.

In centres, in which our national trade union commissions of the various trades have their headquarters, general trade union conferences of the various trades were called. The most important were the three sub-district conferences of the Metal Workers of Upper, Central and Lower Italy, a conference of textile workers- one of building workers and one of food workers. Eleven further district conferences are in preparation, with the following agenda:

1. Suppression of the Unions;
2. General Situation of the Working Class;
3. National and International Trade Union Unity;
4. Down with the Reformist-Maximalist splitting;
5. Down with Reaction (Right to organise) etc.;
6. Factory Committees, agitation committees, factory conferences;
7. Press.

A conference of Transport Workers (railway workers, tram men, seamen, harbour workers, etc.) is also in course of preparation. The significance of this category of labour is tremendous. Only recently the government demanded that all railwaymen must take an oath that they are affiliated with no class union.

Our slogan is: **Maintenance of the union under all conditions.** The work among the seamen is even more difficult and of still greater importance.

In many places the formation of new trade union organisations was prevented by the Reformists. They preferred rather no unions at all than unions organised and led by the Communists.

On the other hand the Reformist leaders, on most petty pretexts, refuse to recognise local trade unions directly under the leadership of the Communists.

In other places, as for instance Verona and Livorno an agreement was reached with the Maximalists, (who were acting contrary to the Central Headquarters of their Party). The compromise was arrived at upon the basis of the struggle for the maintenance of the Labour Chambers, against the union secretariats, combat against the splitting on a national scale, for mass action and for affiliation with the British-Russian Committee for International Trade Union Unity. But the Trade Union Federation brought pressure to bear upon the Secretariats and hence even those centres, in which Communist influence is strong, e. g. Turin, Bologna, etc. are under Reformist control.

Due to fraction work Communist influence rises steadily. In Turin, for instance, the Communist ticket in the elections for the Committee for Mutual Aid in the Fiat works received 7636 votes against 7638 obtained by the Maximalist-Unitarian coalition. In the factory committees elections the number of votes was even higher.

Recently a 24 hour a strike of the metal workers took place in Milan where the F.I.O.M. section is under Maximalist leadership, which to a certain extent had the purpose of a delimitation of the Maximalists from the Aventino bloc. The strike slogan was well received although the preparations were insufficient. Thanks to the intense activity of the Communist fractions the strike resulted in a powerful protest against the Fascists and their actions against the Factory Committee.

The strike of the metal workers in Lombardy which was started by the Fascists resulted in masses of metal workers organised in the F.I.O.M. (Metal Workers Union) joining in the strike. As soon as the leaders of the F.I.O.M. perceived the trend of the strike under the leadership of the Communists who were conducting an active agitation among the masses, and the militancy of the masses became clearly apparent, they did everything possible to stifle the strike. Not only the authorities and the Fascists but also the Reformist leaders of the F.I.O.M. fought with all means against extending the strike movement.

The comrades in the Central Fraction Executive submitted the following proposals to the Trade Union Federation:

- a) The Federation shall take over the direction of the agitation among the metal workers and other movements now in progress.
- b) Unification of agitation, adoption of measures for the entire movement.
- c) Formation of a Central Agitation Committee composed of representatives of all trade union tendencies (of course exclusive of the Fascists).

The Fractions were pledged to see to it that all Party members promptly fulfilled their duty in a disciplined way in the respective trade union organs.

Despite the rejection of this, like all other proposals, our members continue their activity within the organisations. They do everything possible to prevent the unitarian Socialists and Maximalists from having any pretext for continuing their methods of expulsion.

Such progress of fraction work could only be achieved, because, first, the fractions functioned well (nearly all members of the Party, in so far as a trade union section exists in their locality, are organised industrially; where no such section exists, they are pledged to take the initiative in organising them) and second, because the factory nuclei have developed an adequate activity. Everywhere that the nuclei are active the influence of the C.P.I. is stronger than in all other fractions.

The shop nuclei have proved worthy in the difficult situation in which the C.P.I. finds itself to-day and have brilliantly proved

their efficiency particularly in illegal circumstances. In a report it is said:

"In every agitation, lock-out or strike, etc., our factory nucleus has proved worthy. It is the real leading kernel of every movement in any trade or factory. The working masses feel the existence of this organ in the factory and thus the nucleus more and more becomes the instrument which directs the masses, and which will lead the political struggle."

The position of the Communists in the various Unions shows marked improvement. Thus, for instance, at the last Congress of the Textile Workers (March 1925) the votes of the three trade union tendencies were divided as follows: Reformists 45.8%, Maximalists 23.2%, Communists 31%. Six months previously the ratio of voting was as follows: Reformists 70%, Maximalists 19% and Communists 11%.

At the last National Congress of the Building Trades our fractions numbered 27% of the votes.

At the Organisation Congress of the Food Workers Union, still in process of development, the Reformists and Maximalists jointly received 2376, the Communist 1512 votes. In connection with the report on International Relations our comrades proposed affiliations to the British-Russian Committee. In Milan, the centre of the Reformist-Maximalists, we hold a majority in practically all meetings of the metal workers because our comrades are really the most active. The tactics of the Maximalists and Reformists are always condemned at the meetings. At these meetings the report of the leading committee was rejected and the Communists were entrusted with the formulation of a list for the new Committee. The FIOM, therefore utilised the referendum knowing full well that they could count on those elements which were not actively working in the organisation and which do not attend the Meetings.

The results of the referendum were:

Reformists	36%
Maximalists	37%
Communists	30%

In the new elections for the Executive of the Milan Section the results were:

Communist	39%	of the vote	and	6	mandates
Maximalists	36%	"	"	5	"
Reformists	25%	"	"	5	"

After these results our elected Comrades proposed to the Maximalists to form a bloc upon the basis of our proposed programme of work and activity but they declined and coalised with the Reformists.

From the above figures it is clear that by means of the activity of the Communist Fractions, despite all the difficulties put in our way by the Reformists and Maximalists, a tremendous clarification process is in progress among the masses, and that ever wider strata of the political and trade union movement orientates itself towards the Communist Party.

Company Unionism in the United States.

By Wm. Z. Foster.

The chief characteristic of the new orientation in the American labour movement is a strong intensification of the trend towards a mutually agreed upon and regulated peace between capital and labour. It is a movement which is gaining more impetus daily, whose main objective it is to "stabilise" the relations between capital and labour, to eliminate strikes by substituting for them various schemes of conciliation and arbitration, and to heighten the efficiency and productivity of labour. The slogan of large sections of capitalists and trade union bureaucrats is: Co-operation between the employers and the workers for the benefit of both. The purpose of this article is to trace the origin and significance of company unionism and to point out its relationship to the class collaboration movement in general, and the B. & O. (Baltimore and Ohio) plan in particular.

Until some dozen years ago the accepted policy of American employers was to crush all semblance of labour organisation in their industries, and to give their workers absolutely no control, or even semblance of control, over their working conditions. This was the "open shop" movement in its most primitive forms. But about 1913, under the lead of the Rockefeller interests, the employers began to change this policy and to in-

troduce so-called company unions in their plants. Since then the movement has grown rapidly. Now a survey shows 814 of such company unions in existence. They encompass between two and three million workers. They are located in all the important industries, including steel, coal, oil, packing, printing, textile, railroad, electrical etc. Company unions are maintained by such great combinations as the Bethlehem Steel Company, Standard Oil Co., Armour Co., American Lithograph Co., Pacific (Textile) Mills, Pennsylvania Railroad, Westinghouse Electric Company, Davis Coal and Coke Co., Eastman Kodak Company, Elgin Watch Co., International Harvester Co., New York Shipbuilding Co., Pullman Co., United States Rubber Co., and the Western Union Telegraph Co. The policy of forming such unions is definitely established.

The general aims of company unionism are: 1. to prevent the growth of trade unions; 2. to check growth of class consciousness among the workers; 3. to raise the level of efficiency among the workers.

The company unions are of many types. But they fall within a few general classifications. Some are simple committees elected by the workers in the various departments of a given industry or plant, these committees joining with other committees of

equal size representing the employers. Others are based on the so-called industrial democracy plan, one form of which is patterned roughly after the American Government, there being a lower "House" made up of workers representatives and a Senate composed of employers representatives. Still others are simple dues-paying associations of workers, with only loose connections with the company at the top. In all cases the employers seek to control the company unions by a variety of means, including the election of bosses and "reliable" workers to the committees, the retention of the veto power over all the acts of the company unions, etc.

The functions of the company unions are even more various than their forms, ranging from the simple to the complex. The relations between the Rockefeller union and the company, for example, are a parody on trade unionism, a sort of contract between the two being drawn up to cover wages, hours, working conditions, and the usual subjects of trade union agreement. In the Dutchess Bleachery and other more developed company unions, on the other hand, the activities cover a wide range, such as wages, hours, working conditions, industrial efficiency, personal safety, selling of company stock to the workers, profit-sharing, old age and sickness insurance, education, money saving, housing, and a hundred and one schemes of social "welfare" and recreation. All the great American industries, especially those having company unions, issue their own weekly and monthly newspapers which pour a flood of class collaboration poison into the minds of the workers. Company unions should not be confounded with trade unions or genuine workers' shop committees. They hold no meetings outside of the company property, they have no funds of their own, they have no free press or skilled representatives whom they control and pay, they are not in connection with workers' organisations in other industries and cities, they are the instruments of the employers organised against the workers.

In practice the company unions undoubtedly still the discontent of many of the workers by eliminating some of their petty grievances. They at least, while in uncontested control of the capitalists, serve as a means to facilitate the enforcement of wage reductions (under the pretence that the company union committee, by its investigations, has found the wage cut justified), the introduction of all kinds of speeding up systems, and for the defeat of trade union sentiment among the workers. The rapidity with which such organisations are being established in the plants of the most ruthless as well as progressive capitalists in America, is sufficient evidence of their value to the employers. The workers, especially the unskilled workers, look askance at the company unions in most cases. But large masses, deceived by the many activities of these unions along the lines indicated, look upon them as offering some protection. Especially is this the case among the American Workers. The capitalistic efficiency experts and the capitalists generally are ardent defenders of the company union movement.

The company unions represent the organisations of the employers for class collaboration. The efforts of the trade union bureaucracy for intensified class collaboration are manifesting themselves through the B. & O. Plan. The leaders of the American trade unions have long been loyal servitors of the capitalist class. But after the loss of the great railroad strike in 1923, which badly shattered the unions, the trade union bureaucrats, refusing to adopt the militant policy of struggle proposed by the left wing in the Trade Union Educational League, turned more intensively than ever towards class collaboration with the employers. They developed the so-called Baltimore and Ohio Plan (B. and O. Plan). This is an arrangement by which the Union leaders agreed to raise the efficiency of the workers in return for the privilege of these leaders maintaining some semblance of organisation of the railroads, which will permit them to raise the funds necessary to pay their fat salaries and to finance their many schemes of trade union capitalism, such as labour banking, workers insurance and so on.

The B. & O. Plan of unionism has a disastrous effect on the unions. It robs them of their fighting spirit, and turns them from their natural role of combatting the employers into organisations to co-operate with the employers. The employers, on the other hand, derive the greatest advantages. The Baltimore Ohio railroads where the plan originated, saved \$ 2,000,000 last year through the increased efficiency of its workers through the operation of the B. & O. plan.

The B. & O. plan of unionism is now spreading through the whole trade union movement. At the El Paso 1924 convention of

the A. F. of L. the B. & Co. plan was specially endorsed. At its convention this year the A. F. of L. went much farther by the adoption of a new wage policy, which constituted an endorsement of the B. & O. plan in principle as the policy of the whole trade union movement. It pledges the trade unions, in return for recognition, and higher wages, to co-operate with the employers to raise the degree of efficiency among the workers.

Highly significant to the American labour movement is the fact that the company unionism organised by the employers and the B. & O. unionism supported by the trade union bureaucrats tend to converge and to result in agreement between the employers and bureaucrats on a form of unionism acceptable to both and which will be a compromise between company unionism and present-day trade unionism. Already distinct advances have been made between the open shop employers and the trade union bureaucrats for the amalgamation of the company union and B. & O. union movements. The A. F. of L. in its resolution on the new wage policy adopted the foundation principle of company unionism (which is to raise the industrial efficiency of the workers) and at the same time made a general offer to the employers to unite with them on this basis. This proposition was well received in the capitalist press, and in the near future efforts at agreement will be made between the "open shop" employers and the trade union leaders. All that the leaders will insist upon will be a form of unionism that gives them the right to collect dues. In return for this they will give up all defence of the workers' interests, and will act as the fascist agents of the employers. Against the menace of company unionism and B. & O. unionism, the Left Wing must fight militantly. We must carry on a ceaseless propaganda against the B. & O. plan, seeking to organise the masses to reject it. We must seek the re-invigoration of the many millions of unorganised, unskilled workers. All propaganda for abandoning the trade unions must be relentlessly combatted. The B. & O. plan tendencies have not made it impossible for us to work effectively in the unions, nor can they do so. Our slogan must be "Every Communist a Labour Unionist." The fight against B. & O. unionism is the fight to revolutionise the trade unions generally.

We must work out an effective programme to fight company unionism as such. The left wing in America has been very negligent about company unionism. It failed to develop a policy with regard to them. Only in the past few months through a series of articles in the *Workers Monthly* have we succeeded in attracting attention to this great menace.

Our aim must be to destroy the company unions and to replace them by trade unions and genuine shop committees. In order to do this, it is not sufficient merely to criticise the company unions. In many cases it will be necessary and feasible to penetrate the company unions and destroy them from within. Where these organisations have mass participation, either through their quasi-democratic character or because of unrest among the workers, which expresses itself through these channels, the workers display strong tendencies to endeavour to transform the company unions into trade unions, especially where there is a tradition of trade unionism in the industries. A recent survey by the National Industrial Conference Board of the causes of the failure of 15 company unions which died, showed that 5 of them failed because of friction between the employers and the workers, that is, the workers tried to use the company unions to further their own interests and thus destroyed them. This tendency exists to a greater or lesser extent in all company unions with a mass basis.

But our policy must not provide for a general participation in the company unions. That would be almost as bad a mistake as to refuse participation in them altogether. We must consider each case separately. Towards those company unions that are mere employers committees or which lack real contact with the masses in the shops, our policy shall be one of direct attack, ideologically and organisationally from the outside, with the slogan of "destroy the company union and build a trade union". But towards those that are based on mass elections in the shops and through which the workers can secure some expression, our policy must be to work inside with the slogan of "transform the company unions into a trade union". In all cases we must raise the slogan of genuine workers shop committees, against the company unions. The Trade Union Educational League must energetically lead the struggle against company unionism.

Experience with company unions demonstrates that the workers not only tend to turn them into trade unions, but that these organisations offer many opportunities to organise the opposition of the workers against the employers. In the company union

elections, lists of candidates may be placed, committed to the formation of a trade union or the demand for a wage increase. The question of wage increases or opposition to wage cuts may be raised in the company union committees. The active opposition of the employers to these moves will at once serve to disillusion the masses as to the real nature of the company unions and to set on foot movements of discontent that can easily be turned into strikes and utilised to form trade unions.

Only recently the trade unions are awakening to the menace and possibilities of company unionism. In the September 1925 number of the Workers Monthly the present writer raised the slogan of "Capture the company unions". In the next number of the American Federationist, October 1925, Wm. Green, President of the AF. of L. advocated the capture of the company unions as follows:

Wage earners will do themselves and industries a great service when they capture company unions and convert them into real trade unions. The machinery of the company unions offers a strategic advantage for such tactics. Use that machinery as a basis of a real organisation.

Many cases are on record where the workers either succeeded in capturing the company unions and turning them into trade

unions, or in using them as points of departure for the formation of real unions. Particularly was this true during the big campaign to organise the steel workers in 1918-19. The company unions in the great plants of the Bethlehem Steel Company, Youngstown Sheet and Tube Company, Cambria Street Company, and the Colorado Fuel and Iron Company being either temporarily destroyed or turned into trade unions. Just recently, at a convention of the company unions on the great Rock Island Railroad, a motion to turn the company union into a trade union was lost by just a few votes.

After the great steel strike in 1919, when it was demonstrated that the company unions cannot prevent mass movements of the workers in the industries, Gary of the United States Steel Corporation, issued a statement in which he doubted very much that company unionism is an effective bar to the spread of trade unionism. Now, that the left wing, followed so immediately afterwards by the trade union movement, is turning its attention to capturing and destroying the company unions, the employers will in all probability strive to protect these organisations by limiting their democratic features. But despite this, the company unions can and will be used to big advantage in the great struggle to organise the million of unorganised workers and to revolutionise the labour movement.

The International Trade Union Week of the Y. C. I.

By R. Chitarov.

Between December 14 and 20 the Y. C. I. will hold an International Trade Union week in all countries. The aim of this week is to give an impetus to our economic-trade-union work, to popularise the economic demands of the youth among the masses, to bring young workers into the trade unions and into the struggle for their demands and to organise them also for the struggle for trade union unity. Why is such a week of particular importance at the present juncture?

A Few Facts on the Position of the Working-Class Youth.

Generally speaking it is little known what an important factor the working class youth is within the capitalist process of production. We will just give a few figures concerning young workers employed in production:

In Germany there are 3,800,000 workers under 18, in Great Britain 2,500,000, in the U. S. A. 5,000,000 under 19, in Italy 1,400,000, in France 800,000 under 19, in Czechoslovakia 650,000 under 21, in China 500,000 including children, altogether in these seven countries approximately 15 million young wage earners!

This is a huge army of labour, one of the most important factors in capitalist industry. And yet this young army of labour is not even recognised as such in the capitalist world. It has not even the minimum rights accorded to the adult workers. They have not the right to vote at Factory Council elections, where such institutions exist, or at parliamentary elections; and frequently they are prevented from belonging to the organisations of the working class. They have no voting rights in the trade unions and frequently are not allowed to join them.

With respect to wages the working class youth is the most exploited section of the working class. Just a few examples in this respect:

In Germany apprentices earn 1 to 5 marks a week, young workers 7 to 12 marks; in France 30 to 60 francs a week, in Great Britain 12 to 15/-; in Czechoslovakia 80 to 100 kronen; in Norway 55 to 125 öere per hour. If one compares these wages with those of adults one will see that in all countries without exception the wage of young workers is on an average three to four times smaller than the wage of adult workers. For obvious reasons this "principle" is strictly adhered to everywhere by the capitalists, with the result that employers systematically replace all adult workers by young workers insofar as this is possible. This state of affairs prevailed during the past few years in a number of countries. This of course constitutes a terrible danger for the working class as a whole: capitalists take advantage of the helpless position of the youth and their miserable wages to use them against the other workers either as strike breakers or to cut the wages of the adults. Unfortunately, this fact finds still very little recognition among adult workers, very few of them realise that this struggle for the improvement of the economic position of the youth is in the interests of the entire working class and forms a very impor-

tant part of the entire struggle of the latter. To make all workers realise this, is one of the main tasks of our International Week.

The Youth Must be Organised for the Struggle!

The trade union organisation of young workers shows better than anything else that they are the weakest section of the working class, as far as their power of resistance to the employers is concerned. Here are a few figures: In Germany only 235,000 young workers are organised in trade unions; in Great Britain 280,000 (in Great Britain a young worker under 16 cannot join trade unions, although in the mining industry alone 50,000 young workers under 16 are employed), in France 40,000, in the U.S. A. hardly any (entrance fees are too high, in some cases they amount to hundreds of dollars). These figures show that of the many millions of young workers only a small number is organised in trade unions. Under such circumstances it behoves us, in addition to the propagation of the economic demands of the youth, to do our utmost to organise young workers in the trade unions and to make the latter exert themselves also for the interests of the working class youth. This can only be done if all the obstacles are removed which make entry of young workers into trade unions very difficult or even impossible. Another essential matter is that there should be equality of rights for young workers in the trade unions, and that the latter should support the interests of the young workers whenever tariff decisions, wage movements etc., take place.

But this is only possible if the ideology prevailing in most trade union organisations be abolished, an ideology which assumes that youth questions are "unimportant", that they are in fact a side issue. What is the origin of this ideology: it is the outcome of Reformism, of the Reformist bourgeois policy in the Labour Movement. Therefore the struggle for the economic demands of the youth, for the united front between young and adult workers in the trade unions is above all also a struggle for the unification of the trade unions on the basis of the class struggle and for Trade Union Unity.

Our Trade Union Week.

The Young Communist Leagues consider it their duty to lead the young workers also in all economic questions. The present situation and all the above-mentioned facts show distinctly that economic-trade union work will be in the foreground of our activity in the near future. We have already achieved considerable success in this field in a number of countries. In this respect our French League takes first place. It has carried out a number of industrial campaigns, it has organised a considerable number of young workers' congresses, and can boast of getting its programme of youth demands recognised by the trade unions, which made this programme part of their programme of action. In Great Britain too we can

boast of similar success, only that in that country, it is not a question of all the trade unions but rather of their left wing. (Minority Movement.) In Italy our brave comrades have organised and carried out a considerable number of successful economic young workers' campaigns, in spite of cruel persecution.

Notwithstanding these successes we must admit that we are only beginning to develop our economic trade union work. An enormous field of activity lies before us and very little has as yet been done. The International Trade Union Week which will be held between December 14 and 20 is intended to give an impetus to this work, to inspire all our comrades with the full recognition of our tasks on the field of the economic

struggle and to carry on the latter with the utmost energy in all countries. The slogans of our trade union week are:

For International and National Trade Union Unity!

For the improvement of the position of the Working Class Youth!

For the most energetic support to the Anglo-Russian Unity Committee!

For the trade union organisation of all young workers!

All comrades and all Sections of the Y.C.I. must take energetically in hand the preparations for the International Trade Union Week.

Communist Fractions in Consumers' Co-operatives.

By W. Bar.

If contact with the masses is to be established the formation of Communist fractions and systematic work in the Consumers' Co-operatives must be taken in hand. It is an indisputable fact that hundreds of thousands of politically indifferent members, especially proletarian housewives, various middle class circles and proletarian elements not organised in trade unions can be drawn through the Consumers' Co-operatives, into the revolutionary class struggle on the basis of struggle for their interests as consumers. If this is to be done all Communists without exception must be members of Consumers' Co-operatives, and there must also be a well-organised network of Communist fractions. The activity of Communist fractions must be such that the rank and file members of Consumers' Co-operatives regard Communist co-operators as the true representatives of their interests and as champions in the struggle for better conditions for the working class. Starting with the direct interests of the rank and file members and bearing these interests always in mind, Communist co-operative activity must concentrate on drawing the members of consumers co-operatives into the general revolutionary class struggle of the proletariat. I will give a few instances from Communist fraction work in the Co-operatives.

As a mass party the C.P. of Czechoslovakia had already since the first years of its existence a considerable number of members in the Consumers' Co-operatives in the industrial districts. But the organisation of Party influence in the co-operatives through the systematic formation of a network of Communist fractions has only just begun. Although Communists are already in a majority in the Consumers' Co-operatives of the Czech Co-operative Society, and although they also control some of the consumers' co-operatives of the German Co-operative Society, comparatively few co-operatives have as yet properly functioning Communist fractions. Good results were achieved recently through the convention of district conferences of Communist Co-operative fractions.

But the economic activity of the fractions needs a more effective political background. In connection with economic questions efforts must be made to show to the workers how the capitalist system as a whole prevents consumers' co-operatives doing justice to their tasks, so that co-operative organisations must for the sake of their own aims be drawn into the general mass struggle against high prices, indirect taxes, and protective tariffs in the interests of industrial and agrarian capital, and for the overthrow of capitalism.

In France Communist fraction work in the Co-operatives is only in its initial stages. Whilst there are co-operative commissions in a few of the provincial organs of the Party, Communist fractions are as yet only to be found in the co-operatives in the Paris district. In view of the custom prevailing in the French Co-operative Movement to amalgamate the most active members of the co-operatives in so-called co-operative circles, Communists fractions should also be formed in these circles. But owing to the dictatorial statutes of these circles which do not allow minority representatives to express in the general meetings of the consumers' co-operatives opinions differing from those decided upon by a majority decision of the circle, our comrades were compelled to found their own revolutionary circles. The latter are very active especially in the Paris district. They need developing. In order to carry on an energetic struggle against the bureaucrats in the co-operatives, they must be converted into mass organisations, whose business it is to rally all opposition elements for the struggle for everyday demands, and to participate actively in the proletarian struggle. Side by side with them Communist fractions should be systematically or-

ganised. The circles are the connecting link between rank and file co-operators and our fractions. The revolutionary circles are amalgamated into a national federation. The latter is represented on the Committee of Action against the Morocco War and the Caillaux taxation policy. It has invited the Central Organ of the Consumers' Co-operatives and both trade union federations to establish a united front in the struggle against these taxes.

In Germany the organisational development of Communist fraction work in the co-operatives has made better progress than in other countries. Because of the general attitude of the Party and particularly because of the expulsion campaign of the co-operative authorities against Communists, several positions in the co-operatives were lost in the course of the last 12 months. There is a Communist majority in about 30 Consumers Co-operative which have a total membership of 100,000. The fractions take up a definite attitude to all co-operative questions. They participate in general meetings and co-operative congresses in an organised manner, they criticise reformist management and bring forward concrete proposals in the spirit of the proletarian fighting demands. But the C. P. G. as a whole and the fractions have not done enough for the mobilisation of rank and file co-operators for the struggle against the protective tariff policy of the government of agrarians and big industrialists, and against high prices.

In Great Britain Communist co-operative work was only initiated after the III. World Congress of the Comintern. The first organisational steps in that direction met with success. There are fractions in the co-operatives in a number of important industrial centres (London, Glasgow, Sheffield, Manchester, usw.) Attempts are made to represent the revolutionary viewpoint at the various co-operative sessions. Very useful is the close collaboration with the trade union Minority Movement. As a result of the activity of the local Communist fractions in the co-operatives, 32 consumers' co-operatives and Women's Guild delegates attended the last congress of the Minority Movement. Much still remains to be done in Great Britain in order to gain influence among the 4½ million workers organised in the co-operatives, and to convert them into active champions of the workers' cause. To achieve this the work of developing Communist co-operative fractions must be energetically pursued. Our fractions must take the initiative in the matter of the convention of members' meetings, and the organisation of mass demonstrations in order to compel leaders under the pressure of the masses to put the economic power of the British co-operative movement at the service of the British proletariat in its hard struggle against the employers, especially during the impending strikes.

In other countries too there are isolated examples of effective Party work in the co-operatives (Switzerland, Poland, Italy, etc.) but on the whole the co-operative movement is still virgin soil as far as the Communist Parties are concerned. There are splendid opportunities to win new reserve forces among this army of co-operators for the revolutionary struggle of the proletariat, provide Communist co-operators do the right thing in standing up for the interests of the millions organised in the co-operatives, and provided they work systematically, organisationally and agitationaly.

Therefore: not a single Communist outside the Co-operative Movement! Not a single Consumers' Co-operative without a Communist fraction.

No Fraction without close connection with rank and file members, without active defence of the economic and political interests of these members!