

# **EUROPEAN STUDIES**

## **Trade Union Series**

**The trade union movement  
in the European Community**

***European Communities***

---

***Press and Information - 1972***



## The trade union movement in the European Community

*Peace and economic and social development through European unification—these are the major objectives of the Community. This Community unites democratic countries, which share the characteristic of having powerful trade union movements whose entire independence is recognised by their governments and who are accustomed to consult them when matters of interest to labour are involved.*

*Progress in the construction of Europe has not failed to exert its influence on the evolution of the trade union movement.*

*In most cases, the organisations representing the workers have actively supported the long march towards the union of the peoples of Europe. In all cases, they have reached a point where they had to take the fact of the Community into consideration and to shape themselves accordingly in their programmes, claims or criticisms as well as in their structures.*

*Since the Community's origins, the trade union movement participates in the activities of the Consultative Committee of the ECSC and of the Economic and Social Committee which plays the same role for the Economic Community (Common Market) and the Euratom. It has also been led to create its own forms of autonomous organisations at the European level: ECFTU (European Confederation of Free Trade Unions), EO-WCL (European Organisation of the World Confederation of Labour), and the Standing Committee of the CGT-CGIL. The future will no doubt cause the movement to multiply its efforts for common action, extended either to the whole Community in general or to industrial sectors or to firms implanted in various member states.*

*The construction of Europe would indeed deviate from its characteristic democratic course if the forms of organisation and of concertation which exist in each of the countries which make up Europe were to be ignored at the Community level. There too, the trade union movement has its own responsibilities which it will shoulder in full autonomy in face of the growing number of international firms and in face of the European authorities which are concerned with the importance of a healthy concertation.*

*Indeed, every day the European Communities have to take decisions directly concerning the workers in economic matters, as from the point of view of harmonisation and the promotion of social conditions in the member countries.*

*The texts which follow were issued in the period from 1968 to 1971, in the trade union and workers' series of the "European Documentation", published in French, German, Italian and Dutch by the Commission of the European Communities, that is by the Trade Union Information Division of the Press and Information Department. Where possible, the information has been updated.*

*These texts, which are meant to be merely descriptive, bear witness to the twofold process of europeanisation of the national trade union organisations and the building of European structures of the world labour organisations.*

*The trade union officials of the various organisations will also find in these texts useful information on the structures, the development and the problems of the workers' movements of the other member countries. They may thus further better mutual understanding and the development of feelings and links of solidarity, without which the idea of community would remain an empty word.*

# The European Confederation of Free Trade Unions in the Community

## From the Ruhr Trade Union Committee to the ECFTU

*The policy of European integration was launched by the idea of replacing the methods of international cooperation, which had been in use till then and which seemed obsolete, by the union of peoples and States. The European trade union movement immediately recognised the significance of these objectives; it centred its action on the determination to participate from the start in the construction of Europe and to play a role in accordance with its importance.*

The period of confusion which followed immediately in the wake of the second world war witnessed the emergence of the first, rather tentative, outlines of what was later to become a European trade union consciousness. The situation created by the introduction of an International Ruhr Authority led the representatives of the metalworkers and mineworkers of the United States, Great Britain, France, Belgium and Luxemburg to examine, together with their German colleagues, the new order instituted by the victorious countries. In their view, a project with such vast implications should not be realised without the participation of the workers' movement. These considerations made them call a Ruhr Trade Union Conference in March 1949 in Luxemburg at which the representatives of Germany, Belgium, France, the Netherlands and Luxemburg decided to set up a permanent inter-trade union committee with the task of making the workers' point of view prevail in all economic and social questions raised by the rational organisation of the Ruhr region.

In the meantime, the International Confederation of Free Trade Unions, deeply concerned for a democratic solution to the Ruhr problem, had also considered it necessary to intervene in the developments. There were all the more reasons to do so when it appeared that Robert Schuman was preparing a plan which was to lead to the first European Community, that of Coal and Steel. In the course of subsequent deliberations, particularly at the International Trade Union Conference of Düsseldorf in 1950, the ICFTU gave its support to the settlement of the Ruhr problem within the framework of a policy that would give a new structure to Western Europe's heavy industry. It demanded for this authority a fully recognised Trade Union Consultative Committee that would have the right to participate in its work.

When the treaty creating the European Coal and Steel Community was signed in 1951, the trade unions set up a coordinating body, the Committee of 21, which was to become the ICFTU Inter-Trade Union Committee for the ECSC in 1958. This Committee of 21 grouped the representatives of the seven metalworkers federations, of the seven mineworkers federations and of the seven national trade union federations from the six countries of the Community<sup>1</sup>. The presence of the national confederations ensur-

ed that, in addition to the problems of coal and steel, the more general problems of economic and social integration would also figure on the agenda.

Cooperation between the trade unions and the High Authority of the Coal and Steel Community, particularly in the Consultative Committee, in its subcommittees and technical committees, steadily provided valuable elements for developing a practice of collective participation in decisions. One should mention here in particular the numerous investigations and studies which were stimulated by the trade union organisations of the member countries, and the initiatives which were taken on the basis of these studies in fields as varied as social policy, harmonisation of working conditions, social repercussions of certain technical developments, remuneration, employment, vocational training, safety and health at work in the widest sense, fluctuations of the labour force, cost of wages, labour statistics, etc. From this period dates the introduction of a measure that was a complete novelty at the time: readaptation aid which to a large extent contributed towards freeing the worker from the fear of losing his employment as the result of technical innovations and rationalisation measures. The influence wielded in the High Authority by an eminent trade unionist, Paul Finet, greatly contributed towards facilitating these achievements.

The free trade unions could not rest contented with a partial integration. The beginnings of the Common Market were to be for them the signal of a new action to claim their right of participating in the new institutions. Apart from the economic and social emancipation of the workers which is their fundamental aim, they considered this participation as a unique chance to transfer the democratic interplay of forces from the national to the European level and to strive for the improvement of the Rome Treaties, which were incomplete from the start. Dynamic trade union initiatives were planned to develop the principle of supranationality, on which the Paris Treaty was founded and which removed certain competences from the different governments in order to attribute them to the Community institutions.

To give this project an institutional basis, seven trade union confederations of the six member countries of the EEC met in January 1958 in Düsseldorf for the constituent assembly of the European Trade Union Secretariat which

<sup>1</sup> Two for Italy in each case (CISL and UIL).

was later to become the European Confederation of Free Trade Unions. The seven confederations were the following:

- Deutscher Gewerkschaftsbund (DGB), Germany;
- Fédération générale du Travail de Belgique (FGTB), Belgium;
- Nederlands Verbond van Vakverenigingen (NVV), the Netherlands;
- Confederazione Italiana Sindacati Lavoratori (CISL), Italy;
- Unione Italiana del Lavoro (UIL), Italy;
- Confédération générale du Travail (CGT), Luxembourg;
- Confédération générale du Travail-Force Ouvrière (FO), France.

The participants did not merely confirm their identity of views in respect of the European Treaties and their implementation, but they also put forward a number of fundamental demands. These included a seat for a trade unionist on the EEC Commission (in a manner similar to the procedure adopted for the High Authority of the European Coal and Steel Community), trade union participation in the management of the European Social Fund, and the possibility for qualified candidates from the trade union movement to be given key posts in the EEC services. Finally, the confederations urged the Commissions of the EEC and of the Euratom to let trade union representatives take part in the deliberation bearing on the setting up of an Economic and Social Committee on parity basis. They also stressed the need for uniting the three Communities in one city to avoid dispersal of trade union representation.

## Organisational structure

### 1. Congress (formerly General Assembly)

The extremely flexible structure which had been put into place by the constituent assembly in Düsseldorf was progressively adapted to changes in the situation until it found its definitive form at the first Congress, held in The Hague in April 1969. Thanks to these transformations, this body became even more democratic and representative than before.

The Congress consists of representatives of the confederations and of industrial trade union committees. The allocation of seats to the confederations is no longer done by country alone; the new system of voting also takes into account the respective strength of the different organisations and an appropriate number of seats is allotted for the industrial trade union committees. The Executive Committee may also invite to Congress representatives and observers from the International Confederation of Free Trade Unions and from ICFTU member organisations in other countries.

Congress, which meets at least every three years, reviews the Secretariat's report of activities and lays down the main lines of the future programme. On proposals made by the affiliated confederations, Congress elects the members of the Executive Committee and—on proposals from this Committee—its President and its General Secretary. This procedure strengthens the importance of these two posts internally and externally and places them on a genuine European level.

The adoption of the system of majority voting for Congress and Executive Committee decisions constitutes an important provision. In principle, of course, Congress will attempt to obtain the agreement of all participants; but if a vote cannot be avoided, decision is taken by a two-thirds majority of voting members present. Requests for amendments and proposals which fail to obtain two thirds of the votes but reach more than 50 per cent of valid votes are remitted to the Executive Committee for final decision.

### 2. The Executive Committee

European trade union cooperation in this central body which in the beginning met more sporadically than regularly has now grown to such an extent that, in addition to consultations on economic and social problems of European and general concern, in-depth discussion on trade union questions affecting particular countries now regularly take place. A balanced rhythm of six to seven meetings per year has thus been established.

In accordance with directives established by Congress, the Executive Committee analyses and examines the trade union activities undertaken on the European and national plane during the period between two sessions. In the last few years, the Committee has devoted a great deal of its time to establishing unified trade union conceptions on a number of clearly defined subjects.

Among them should be mentioned social policy (free movement of labour, social security of migrant workers, equal remuneration for men and women workers), economic planning (statement on the medium-term programme of economic policy proposed by the Commission), the action programme of the European trade unions, common agricultural policy and common policies for fuel and power and for transport, a common European wages policy, foreign relations of the Community (Israel, Spain, Greece), relations with developing countries and—last but not least—the crucial question of British entry in the Community.

The Executive Committee consists of the presidents or general secretaries of the different confederations on the basis of two representatives for Germany, France, and Italy and one representative each for Belgium, the Netherlands and Luxembourg.

To this number must be added two substitute members each for the DGB and FO and one each for the other confederations. Every industrial trade union committee may delegate one representative with a consultative status to the Committee sessions. The Executive Committee may add to the number of participants by inviting to its meetings representatives of the International Confederation of Free Trade Unions—and of its member organisations from other countries. Since the creation of the Trade Union Committee for the EFTA countries, which includes the British and the Scandinavian trade unions, observers from this body are also admitted to the sessions of the Executive Committee.

It elects two Vice-Presidents among its members and appoints the secretaries of the European Confederation of Free Trade Unions, the President of the Common Fund Management Committee and the two international auditors.

The Executive Committee, which represents the European Confederation of Free Trade Unions before the Community institutions and employers' organisations, may delegate its powers to one or several of its members or to the Secretariat. As can be seen from the introduction to its report on activities, the Committee takes the measures necessary for the implementation of Congress resolutions and action programmes. To prepare its work, it sets up commissions in which the industrial trade union committees take part, depending on the subject to be examined. Here, too, the introduction of the two thirds majority system has enabled the Committee to take more precise decisions than hitherto.

### 3. The Secretariat

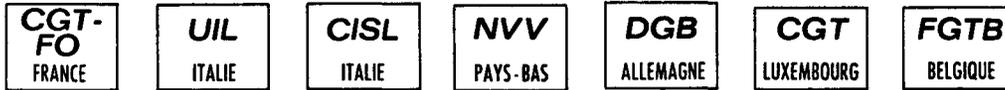
At the first General Assembly, it was decided to give the organisation a permanent Secretariat with the task of coordinating trade union activity at Community level, to ensure the day-by-day management of affairs and to represent the organised workers before the European institutions in Brussels.

Basing itself on the guide-lines worked out by the Executive Committee, the Secretariat seeks new possibilities

# EUROPEAN CONFEDERATION OF FREE TRADE UNIONS IN THE COMMUNITY

Head office: 1000 Brussels, rue Montagne aux Herbes Potagères 37 Tel. 17.91.41 - 17.91.42

## AFFILIATED TRADE UNION ORGANISATIONS



**CONGRESS**  
meets every three years

**INDUSTRIAL TRADE UNION COMMITTEES**

Trade Union Committee for Transport in the Community (ITF)  
Secretary **B. JONCKHEERE**

European Federation of Agricultural Workers (ECFTU) Unions in the Community (EFA)  
Secretary **A. LULLING**

EEC Coordination Committee of the International Federation of Chemical Workers and other industries  
Secretary **A. KLOSS**

Joint Committee of the Building and Woodworkers in the EEC  
Secretary **J. FERNANDEZ**

European Metalworkers Federation in the Community (FEM)  
Secretary **G. KÖPKE**

Trade Union Committee of Employees, Technicians and Supervisory Staffs (FIET)  
Secretary . . .

Trade Union Group of the Food, Tobacco and Hotel Industries in the EEC  
Secretary **B. JONCKHEERE**

European Trade Union Committee for the Textile and Garment Industry  
Secretary **S. BAECK**

Trade Union Committee for the EEC Countries of the Postal, Telegraph and Telephone International (PTTI)  
Secretary **J. M. AUBRY**

Metalworkers and miners inter-trade union Committee (ICFTU - ECSC)  
Secretary **E. WEIS**

**EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE**

Decides the measures for the implementation of resolutions and action programmes voted by Congress

**MEMBERS**

**H. O. VETTER**  
President (DGB - Germany)

**B. STORTI**  
Vice-President (CISL - Italy)

**G. DEBUNNE**  
Vice-President (FGTB - Belgium)

**O. BRENNER**  
(DGB - Germany)

**H. TER HEIDE**  
(NVV - Netherlands)

**A. BERGERON**  
(FO - France)

**C. MOURGUES**  
(FO - France)

**E. DALLA CHIESA**  
(UIL - Italy)

**M. HINTERSCHIED**  
(CGT - Luxemburg)

**W. MICHELS**  
(Inter-Trade Union Committee for the ECSC)

**MEMBERS WITH CONSULTATIVE STATUS**  
one representative per industrial trade union committee

**PERMANENT SECRETARIAT**

coordination,  
day by day management,  
representation

General Secretary:  
**TH. RASSCHAERT**

Secretaries: **W. BRAUN,**  
**A. MISSLIN, C. SAVOINI**



for ensuring trade union participation in Community decisions; it attempts to define the trade union standpoint on the manifold problems posed by European integration. In addition, it acts as secretariat of the Workers' Group in the Economic and Social Committee of the Community. As such, it has the task of organising this Group's preparatory consultations, to collect and transmit the information and to prepare the working documents. The Secretariat also provides the liaison between the Executive Committee and the industrial trade union committees by organising regularly meetings between the secretaries of the European Confederation of Free Trade Unions and the industrial trade union committees.

In order to prepare the viewpoints and discussions of the Executive Committee, working groups including representatives of the various confederations have been set up within the Secretariat. These commissions, originally planned to have a more general scope (economic commission, social commission), have steadily changed into bodies charged with the study of specific problems (wage questions, democratisation of the economy, tax legislation, security of employment, energy, merger of the European executive bodies, etc.) Some of their work is obtaining broad dissemination by the regular convening of conferences on the subject at which a great number of representatives from the national confederations and from the industrial trade union committees take part. Two of these conferences have already taken place. The first, organised in Luxemburg in June 1967 dealt with relations between European organisations of employers and of workers and it was agreed to organise contacts between the two sides of industry within the Community's framework. The second, held in the beginning of 1968 in Milan, studied the experiences made in the matter of economic planning. It has helped to define more clearly the instruments necessary for achieving judicious economic planning.

## Programme of action

During the whole period which followed the constituent Assembly and which included the second General Assembly in Luxemburg (November 1959), the third in Brussels (January 1962), the fourth in Paris (March 1964), the fifth in Rome (9, 10 and 11 November 1966) and the sixth in The Hague (23, 24 and 25 April 1969), the European trade unions became steadily more convinced that their influence depended in the first instance on a growth of their movement's strength. Evidently, it took a certain amount of time to reach an adequate degree of unity in their European work. When they had reached this stage, they realised more and more that the struggle for a progressive Europe would be long and hard, given the preponderance of conservative forces in the Europe of the Six and given the weakening pluralism in the trade union camp, and they decided to plan their actions accordingly.

In view of these considerations and these experiences, the trade union movement decided at its fourth General Assembly in Paris that the time had come to condense its proper tasks in a united Europe in a single programme. This was how the action programme of the European Confederation was born. Otto Brenner, First President of the German metalworkers trade union IG-Metall and member of the European Trade Union Executive Committee, presented it in outline in a policy speech held at the culminating point of the Paris General Assembly when he underlined the major importance of this approach, intended to arouse public interest and provoke solutions to neglected aspects of integration, such as wages and social harmonisation. These proposals were only possible because the Secretariat of the European organisations had reached a stage at which it was able to crystallise all common efforts in the

Community's sphere of action and because it had succeeded in raising its status beyond that of being merely the worker's ambassador.

The action programme, which the member organisations of the European Confederation made the platform of European trade union action, was adopted and made public on 1 May 1965. It was not merely a list of demands. Conscious of promoting the fundamental interests of the workers in the six countries, the affiliated organisations limited themselves to highlighting a few key problems:

1. *Reduction of the working week* to a maximum of 40 hours spread over five days without loss of earnings;

2. *Extension of holidays* to four weeks per year;

3. *Rise in holiday pay*, e.g. apart from normal wages during the holiday period, an equivalent amount in addition as holiday pay;

4. *Security of income* in case of incapacity for work: that is, the worker's living standard is to be maintained even for long periods of incapacity by ensuring that he continues to receive his salary or wages or is awarded a pension.

If judgement is passed on what has been achieved on the impulse of this action programme in the period which ended with the General Assembly at The Hague, it must be agreed that the calculations have proved correct. It is too early to make an evaluation of all that has been done to date; but even so it is already possible to gather certain indications on the direction future actions will take. Progress achieved in the field of working hours and of holidays, (length and holiday pay) is especially noteworthy.

## European wages policy

This is certainly a distant and ambitious objective; it was nevertheless set up by the trade unions at their Paris meeting when they categorically refused to abandon Europe to unilateral interests. The results achieved by the action programme so far show that there are valid foundations for putting such a policy into effect. "We are not prepared to lose on the European level what we have achieved on the national level," the trade unions stress. They want to recall thereby that power for political decision is not only in the hands of governments and parliaments; apart from these, a wide margin of decisions concerning living and working conditions is left to negotiations between workers and employers.

To conquer this margin inch by inch at the Community level is the task of the Standing Commission of Information on Wages Policy, created by the organisation as a result of the Paris General Assembly. This Commission publishes quarterly reports, as well as an annual overall report on the state of wages policy in the different countries. These reports are extremely important on their own; they have added weight as nothing comparable had ever been attempted on the European level. In addition, this trade union Commission improves reciprocal information on demands which the different trade union organisations plan to put forward so as to enable them to line up their programmes on a certain number of common points. Work in this respect was facilitated after the Congress in The Hague had adopted common trade union principles in the field of salaries and wages.

## Common Fund

Another idea raised in Otto Brenner's speech before the fourth General Assembly concerned the setting up of a Common Fund for the European trade union movement. This Fund should provide the means for stimulating in a lasting manner trade union action in the framework of the Six through a strengthening of the different confederations. This initiative was inspired by the determination to extend

to the movement's roots the extremely fruitful cooperation which were already extant at the top level and to allow it to penetrate the entire trade union life of the member countries. The Fund started working in 1965; it helped to reorganise the trade union press of the French confederation Force Ouvrière and to strengthen its structure. Special assistance was granted by the Fund during the strikes in France (events of May-June 1968) and the recent social troubles in Italy.

### **New Constitution**

Already before the Rome General Assembly, the Netherlands Confederation of Trade Unions NVV had submitted proposals aiming at strengthening constitutionally the links among the trade unions affiliated to the International Confederation of Free Trade Unions. The General Assembly approved these proposals and placed the first stone in deciding to set up a committee for the systematic reinforcement of trade union cooperation. It is on the basis of the preparatory work of this committee that the Congress adopted the new Constitution already described earlier. This lays down in detail the means of cooperation between the confederations and the industrial trade union committees and thus improves coordination in the overall field of trade union activities.

The General Assembly which on this occasion transformed itself into a Congress, completed its action by a significant gesture: the "European Trade Union Secretariat" became the "European Confederation of Free Trade Unions in the Community". It is an eloquent gesture because beyond the strengthening of the movement's internal structure, given substance by the new Constitution, it was intended to show clearly that the time had come to lay the foundations for the future at a time when the European fabric was threatened by collapse through attempts at undermining its political structure.

### **Relations with the industrial trade union committees**

Next to the confederations, the industrial trade unions have also become more and more aware of the consequences which European integration must bring with it for the different industrial sectors. They realised that the responsibilities which are properly their own in so far as their respective industry is concerned should not lead to a compartmentalisation that would prevent them from taking their share in responsibilities affecting the social and economic development of the whole trade union movement. This is why, at a conference of their committees which met in October 1963, they jointly decided that a representation of these committees on a European trade union executive committee was a necessity.

This representation—having passed the intermediate stage of an enlarged executive committee—has found its most adequate expression so far in the new constitution. In order to improve communications, the secretaries of the European Confederation of Free Trade Unions and those of the industrial trade union committees hold regular meet-

ings to exchange information on the work in hand. A few of these industrial trade union committees have their offices at the ECFTU Secretariat. Some have already succeeded in establishing a close cooperation which enables them to be better informed about the situation in the different countries, and, based on this information, to formulate precise demands.

## **Revival of European policy**

The slogan "Europe for Europe" is obsolete. In view of the radical changes taking place in the economic and social field, the free trade unions know very well that the Community cannot ignore the challenge posed by the rest of the world. This view they have made manifestly clear in the statement which they published jointly with the European Organisation of the World Confederation of Labour on the occasion of the 10th anniversary of the signing of the Rome Treaty. This statement underlined as foremost trade union concerns the enlargement of the Europe of the Six and the democratic strengthening of the European institutions. Events which have taken place since have confirmed their conviction that the European idea must be given new life. One of their most spectacular actions undertaken to provoke this reawakening and to open European perspectives to the masses was a great manifestation organised by the German DGB at Dortmund in July 1963.

During the period which followed this demonstration, the workers' organisations continued their struggle in different forms but always with the same orientation. The Conference of Heads of State and of Government which was recently held in The Hague has, in the trade union view, given a new impulse that should be able to remove step by step the obstacles which hinder the realisation of essential trade union demands for Europe: economic and monetary union, a definite settlement for the financing of agricultural policy, industrial research and development, reform of the European Social Fund, proper resources for the Community and stepping up the rapprochement between the Six and the countries wishing to join the Community. At its meeting of December 1969, the Executive Committee unanimously declared that it considered the Summit Conference as the beginning of a process which should ultimately transform the customs union into an economic union.

At the same time, it underlined the heavy responsibility of the Commission which has the duty of making full use of its right of initiative. Also in this respect, the Executive Committee placed the emphasis on a democratic strengthening of the Communities and on its determination to contribute towards it, both on the national and on the international level. This reinforcement, however, is not the only objective of the struggle of the European trade unions. In this confrontation between the trade unions and Europe, they are also determined to claim at Community level the rights which they have conquered in the different member countries. Only then will the workers be able to say that they hold all the aces for constructing a socially-minded Europe.

# The European Organisation of the WCL

*The origins of the European Organisation of the International Federation of Christian Trade Unions—CISC (which in October 1968 became the World Confederation of Labour) go back to 1958. It is generally agreed to date them from 27 May 1958, when the Provisional Council met for the first time.*

*The creation of the European Organisation of the CISC was decided to meet the needs of the trade union movement of our continent. But it also met the efforts at regionalisation of the CISC, engaged in a vast, world-wide action since 1952. So it was not by chance that the European Organisation was born almost at the same time as the Panafrican Union of Believing Workers (UPTC) in Africa and the Latin-American Centre of Christian Trade Unionists (CLASC) in Latin America. The Brotherhood of Asian Trade Unionists (BATU) was founded several years later as a result of the extension of CISC activities in Asia.*

## I. Origins, development and aims

When it was founded, the European Organisation consisted solely of national trade union confederations. The international professional federations demanded the right to take part, a right which they obtained in January 1962. On the internal level—research and decisions—this more balanced structure has given good results. On the external level, it has improved representativity and brought the international professional federations into contact with the European institutions.

Since its inception, the Regional Organisation of the CISC in Europe differed from those for Africa and Latin America by the fact that its preoccupations were limited to and centred on European integration. This state of affairs developed later, but at the beginning the European Organisation had only one aim: to give a trade union answer to the economic and social challenge of European integration.

This limited its actions to a precisely defined institutional frame, with all its implications. It was the adaptation of European trade union structures to European governmental structures.

The European trade union movement as such, with all its problems, aims and requirements stayed in the background during this first phase of the European Organisation.

At its first three conferences—in Bonn, Rome and Strasbourg—the European Organisation attempted to define its line in relation to the social, economic and even political realities of Europe. By placing on the agenda of its 4th Conference at Amsterdam in 1966 the orientation at the European level of both trade union structures and trade union action, the Committee wanted the Organisation to define its own responsibilities. The fact that the drawing up of this report was entrusted to August Cool, President of the Organisation, was clear indication of the importance with which it was viewed. One of its main purposes was to give a constructive reply to the criticism addressed to the trade union movement for reproaching to the European integration the same weaknesses which could be found in its own ranks.

The Cool report marked not only the Amsterdam Conference but also the two succeeding years. Its guiding lines are summarised below:

— Given the realities of the situation, it is in the worker's interest to organise themselves in relation to a reasonable aim, that of European unification.

— This new dimension has not modified the objectives of trade union action but must modify its methods and structures.

— European trade union action strengthens the need for unity of action among organisations of different tendencies while maintaining trade union pluralism, not as a necessity but as a possibility.

Having thus defined its choices and its objectives, the

European Organisation attempted to realise them in the course of 1967 and 1968.

At the same time, it took part in the studies and discussions, which on the world level caused the International Federation of Christian Trade Unions to transform itself into the World Confederation of Labour at the World Congress held in Luxemburg in October 1968.

The implementation of the decisions taken by the CISC at this Congress was the main internal preoccupation of the European Organisation during the first quarter of 1969.

On 16 April 1969, the European Organisation of the CISC became the "European Organisation of the WCL", with a sub-title stressing the plurality of its sources of inspiration. It is formulated as follows: "grouping trade union organisations based on Christianity and other democratic organisations". This new designation was adopted by a very large majority.

This definition of principles was expressed by a decision of the Committee in a new article, replacing article 3 of the constitution and formulated in the following manner: "The Organisation consists on the one hand of national confederations specifically based on Christian social principles and, on the other hand, on organisations based on other principles, all of which accept the WCL declaration of principles. These confederations must have their seat in Europe and be members of the WCL."

A similar text concerning the international professional federations will be formulated as soon as the question of their structures will have been settled in the WCL.

## II. The European Organisation of the WCL and the Communities

Since 1958—the year when the European Organisation was founded—the European Community has been subject to major developments and changes which acted as a backdrop to the four conferences of the European Organisation: that of 1960 in Bonn, of 1962 in Rome, of 1964 in Strasbourg and of 1966 in Amsterdam.

On several occasions, the European Organisation of the WCL has denounced the causes which it considered as the most determining factors in handicapping the Community's development:

- the normal tensions and contradictions of a Community in its starting phase;
- the attitude and the political action of one member State;
- the complicity, either through interest or through lack of determination, of the other five states, leading to a weakening of the Executive bodies to the advantage of the Councils of Ministers and, in the case of the EEC to that of the Committee of Permanent Governmental Representatives;
- the weaknesses or tactical errors of the Executive bodies of the Communities;
- the lack of a genuine pressure from public opinion and particularly the lack of coordination among the real political, economic and social forces;

— the lack of a new European ideal, adapted to the needs of the 1960's, a failure which forces the supporters of European unity to rely on the obsolete ideals and conceptions of the years 1945-1950.

At its Amsterdam Conference in 1966 and at its Brussels Congress in 1969, the European Organisation of the WCL continued to analyse the European situation from a trade union viewpoint and to seek appropriate solutions.

Let us take a brief look at how far the reality of European integration has met trade union expectations.

The customs union was accomplished on 1 July 1968. It was welcomed by the European Organisation of the WCL in a statement which, linking this Community event with events in France, appealed to solidarity among the six and stressed the imperative need to make progress on the road of integration. In considering the customs union as a stage on the road to economic union, the statement demanded that in its realisation the trade union movement should obtain the rights corresponding the duties it was ready to assume.

According to the leaders of the European Organisation, the common policies had made no progress except for the agricultural sector. Faced by divided governments, a more and more helpless Commission, and employers pursuing their own interests, the trade union organisations had been unable to mobilise the forces needed for the realisation of common policies, as the farmers had managed to do for agricultural policy.

This failure was judged to be particularly grave with respect to social policy. J. Alders, Vice-President of the European Organisation of the WCL, analysed this situation in the report he submitted to the Committee on 20 December 1968.

"It must be noted," he wrote, "that but few of the demands of the European Organisation's social programme of November 1965 have been achieved, that the Central Group of the two sides of industry and other meetings concerning social affairs, which have been convened by the EEC Commission, has practically led to no concrete result, that the joint meetings on parity basis with the UNICE (employers) have never gone beyond the stage of a confrontation of views. One can, of course, make reproaches to the governments, to the EEC Commission, to the employers. But the trade union movement has not, or has hardly, reacted in the way it generally does on the national level."

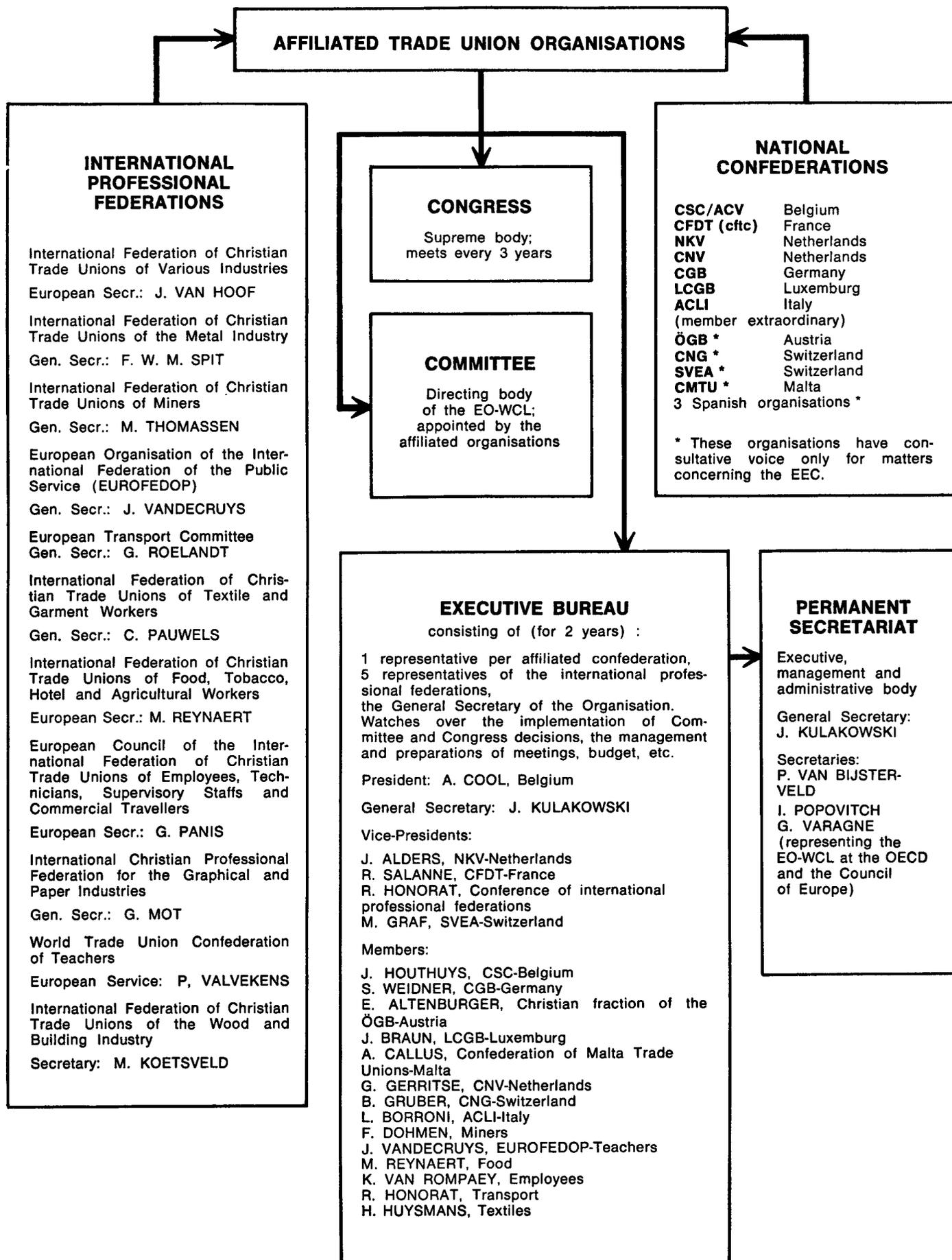
According to the EO-WCL, this is the key to the problem of trade union action within the Community. The trade union movement is adhering too closely to the Community's institutions. It is represented in the Commission's Economic and Social Committee and in many other committees.

In the meantime, the governments—or at least some of them, the EO-WCL stated, were slowing down the institutional development of Europe while the employers, by agreements, mergers and concentrations were continuing to build an economic Europe—their own.

"This is why the European Organisation of the WCL questions the premiss of this 'institutionalist' strategy. The question of working out a more realistic strategy has been raised. This brings with it a host of other questions: should inter-trade union action committees be set up at the industrial sector level and in the large companies of the Community? Should demands to governments and employers be drawn up in common

# European Organisation of the World Confederation of Labour (EO-WCL)

Headquarters: 1040 Brussels, avenue d'Auderghem, 26-32 Tel. 36 11 00





programmes with other trade union organisations at Community level? Should we consider trade union actions at Community level that would force our partners to negotiate with us instead of listening to us with half an ear while continuing to do what suits them best? To all these questions, the European trade union movement must urgently find a reply."

Having thus highlighted the problem which for the EU-WCL seems fundamental for trade union action within the Community, it may be useful to mention here several statements, initiatives and actions of the European Organisation of the WCL:

— on the subject of the merger of the Communities, it has jointly with the International Confederation of Free Trade Unions undertaken a research project which led to the adoption of a common Statement in March 1969;

— on several occasions it had reaffirmed its stand in favour of an enlargement of the Community by the admission of those democratic states which accept its rules;

— on the occasion of the 10th anniversary of the signing of the Treaty of Rome, it has jointly with the ICFTU addressed a memorandum to the governments on the problems of the geographic extension of the Community and the strengthening of its democratic structures;

— together with the UPTC, it has defined the trade union guide-lines for the renewal of the Convention of the Association between the Community and the African States and Madagascar;

— it has made a statement on the reform of the European Social Fund and demanded that a tripartite Community conference on employment be convened;

— it has further defined its point of view before and after the Conference of The Hague in December 1969, urging an internal revival, and the democratisation and the enlargement of the Community.

In carrying out the instructions given by its constitutional bodies, the European Organisation of the WCL had undertaken numerous activities day by day within the framework of the European Communities. Its main activities consisted in the following:

— representation within the Economic and Social Committee of the European Communities;

— participation in all consultations of the trade union movement organised by the different Community institutions;

— permanent contact with the departments and services of the Community;

— a beginning to discussions with the employers at European level.

All these activities evidently imply a considerable amount of preparatory work, of documentation and of research.

Nevertheless it is not easy to give an evaluation of the action at Community level of the European Organisation of the WCL.

In the first place, the EO-WCL has created a European framework for union action and ensured a trade union presence in the most important European institutions. This framework has enabled its leaders from different countries and from different industrial sectors to get to know each other and understand each other better. It has also given them the opportunity to study together certain questions which arose from the new

economic and social circumstances and thus to attempt the first outline of European trade union thinking.

The trade union presence in the European institutions has made it possible to raise questions and to understand better the problems caused by European integration. It has also brought about an effective collaboration with the European Confederation of Free Trade Unions in the Community (ECFTU), a result which can only be of advantage to the workers.

However, by creating a framework, it has not yet been possible to give it the means of completing it by effective trade union action at the European level. It is not merely a question of men or money. It is also a question of clinging to old structures and acquired positions. "To impose ourselves in unfavourable conditions," said Jean Kulakowski, General Secretary of the EO-WCL, "we needed an exceptional concentration of force and initiative. We have only succeeded in ensuring a presence and not in imposing our will. For this, we are not the only ones responsible, but the Congress of May 1969 was right to state in clear terms the problem of trade union responsibilities in face of European integration."

### III. New structures of the EO-WCL (Brussels, 1st Congress)

The Congress, held by the European Organisation of the WCL in Brussels in May 1969, marked at the same time both the 10th anniversary of the EO and an important stage in the WCL's European movement. Indeed, until then, the EO had never met in Congress but merely in biennial conferences which were consultative in character. The power of decision had been held in the hands of the Committee, manned by the national confederations and the international professional federations.

The transformation of this conference into a congress, with power of decision by majority vote and constituting the supreme authority for the Organisation, had been proposed at the Amsterdam Congress in 1966. The Committee then decided to convene the 1st Congress in May 1969 and proceeded to alter the Constitution accordingly.

The preparations for the Congress took place at a time of important internal debates which followed the transformation of the CISC into the WCL. But the convening of this congress was endowed with a particular importance because it affirmed the vitality of the European trade union movement at a time when the European Communities were in difficulties.

The Committee entrusted G. Gerritse of the CNV (Netherlands), assisted by a working group, the task of drawing up a report on "the workers' place in a changing Europe". The General Secretary was asked to make the first part of his report on activities an evaluation of ten years of activities (1958-1968) and a prospective examination of its orientation. He was also charged with the task of submitting to Congress on behalf of the Committee a brief report on the revision of the Constitution.

The first Congress, held from 7 to 9 May 1969 in

the presence of 140 delegates and of eminent European personalities, adopted a general resolution which:

— supported the strengthening of the EO with a view to the setting up of a genuine European Confederation;

— defined the world-wide responsibilities of the EO within the framework of the WCL;

— favoured united trade union action with the International Confederation of Free Trade Unions at the European level;

— made a series of proposals aiming at strengthening trade union action within the European Communities.

The Executive Bureau, which met in June 1969, decided to investigate immediately the implementation of the Congress resolution. To that end, it decided:

— to convene the Committee for 2 and 3 July 1969;

— to charge the General Secretary with the task of submitting to this meeting a full working document for the implementation of the Congress decisions.

This document takes up—point by point—the Congress resolution by commenting on it and by making concrete proposals as to its implementation.

It was carefully examined by the Committee at the meeting of 2 and 3 July 1969. It was decided that the problems which it raises would be studied by the national confederations and the international professional federations. A new concluding report by G. Gerritse of the CNV was examined by the Committee in December 1969 and January 1970 and some of its concrete proposals were applied in the course of 1970.

In particular, a far-reaching planning programme will be carried out. This is one of the main conclusions of the evaluation of the ten years of activities which the Congress attempted to draw up.

For more than ten years, the European Organisation of the WCL has defined its attitudes on a number of concrete subjects: economic and social planning, social policy, vocational training, democratisation of European institutions, enlargement of the Community, association with the African states. In addition, the Committee has defined guide-lines for short-term activities.

“Pragmatic action which, day by day, takes into account the realities of trade union needs and European needs must be continued,” the General Secretary of the EO-WCL declared. “If one wants to be concrete and effective, it must correspond to a necessity. But we must at all costs avoid the danger of wasting our strength, which would lead to a slackening of efforts and to stagnation.

“That is why these activities must be fitted into the framework of the medium-term programmes which will have as one of its main objectives the evaluation of different activities, to make a choice among them, to establish priorities, to give up certain activities, perhaps, for the sake of strengthening others.

“A medium-term programme will enable us to see more clearly where we want to go and what our priorities must be. We cannot go into such a programme at length; let us merely say in brief that it will contain two sections which we consider the most important:

— how do we see the internal and external development of the European Communities? Starting from the assumption of a single Community, one would have to define the perspectives of the political unification of Europe, with its economic, social and institutional content, and its place in the world;

— how do we see the role and the action of the trade unions in this framework? There is the whole problem of trade union power confronting economic, political and technocratic power on the one hand, and methods of trade union action in the European framework, which is at the same time a framework for economic life and one for institutional activities, on the other.

“In making a rapid evaluation of ten years of European trade union activities, we must think of the next ten years, for the past has no value except for the future. By making the point of what had been done since 1958, the Congress of 1969 had drawn up guide-lines that will enable the European Organisation of the WCL to prepare now by its daily actions the means to face its responsibilities in the 1980's.”

# The Standing Committee of the CGT-CGIL

*The setting up of a Standing Committee of the CGT-CGIL was decided by representatives of the two Confederations at a meeting held in Rome on 25 and 26 November 1965.*

*"The CGIL and the CGT", stated the communiqué published at the end of this meeting, "while reserving their freedom of opinion about everything concerning the Common Market, and, at the same time, respecting that of other trade union organisations, demand the right to be represented in the Community institutions so as to be able to act in the workers' interests within the competences granted to trade unions by the Treaty of Rome".*

*According to the Standing Committee of the CGT-CGIL, this recognition was not only a legitimate right but also corresponded to an adequate representativity of the trade union movement as a whole.*

On 9 March 1966 the General Secretaries of the *Confederazione Generale Italiana del Lavoro*—CGIL (Italian General Confederation of Labour) and the *Confédération Générale du Travail*—CGT (French General Confederation of Labour) sent a joint letter to the President of the Council of Ministers of the Community and to the President of the Commission of the EEC in which they informed them of the creation of the Committee and requested that the CGT and the CGIL be received by the EEC authorities.

After a press conference held in Brussels on 5 April 1966, a memorandum from both organisations explaining their attitude to the Common Market was given to the Community authorities. It emphasized in particular the economic and social situation

of the workers of France and Italy, as well as the contradictions between the objectives set out in the Treaty of Rome and existing realities in their respective countries.

"Conscious that problems of wages, working conditions, etc. must be solved within each country, the CGIL and the CGT are also convinced that a strengthening of unity of action at EEC level will help towards solving the workers' common problems and reinforce international solidarity," the memorandum stated.

The Standing Committee also decided to install a secretariat at Brussels, thus starting a new phase of its activity at Community level.

On 28 February 1969 the Standing Committee

was received by the President and Vice-President of the Commission of the European Communities, Mr. J. Rey and Mr. Levi-Sandri. This meeting represented an evolution towards normalising the situation by the recognition of the two most representative organisations of their respective countries.

On 17 April 1969 the European Commission published the following communiqué: "The Commission has received a delegation of the Standing Committee of the CGT-CGIL and has considered the request expressed by this Committee to establish working contacts similar to those which have been established since the beginning of European integration with the member organisations of the International Confederation of Free Trade Unions and the World Confederation of Labour. On this occasion the Commission reaffirms its willingness to establish contacts which may prove useful in furthering the social and economic progress of the Community with all trade union and professional organisations created at European level which attempt to develop relations with the Commission within the framework of the Treaties and which respect the Community laws and institutions. The Commission pointed out to the Standing Committee of the CGT-CGIL that, sub-

ject to this policy, it intends to develop such contacts with the Committee as would appear useful."

The secretariat of the Standing Committee met at Brussels on 18 April 1969 and defined the communiqué "as constituting the official recognition of its Committee by the EEC and, furthermore, a factor which should improve the rapprochement and contacts with the European secretariats of the ICFTU and the WCL and lead to a better defence of the workers' interests in the six countries".

From this day on, the Standing Committee has steadily been admitted to the different Community institutions while parallel meetings with representatives of various sectors of the Common Market took place.

Already on 27 June 1969, the CGT-CGIL Committee worked out a draft of trade union action and submitted it to the European organisations of the International Confederation of Free Trade Unions and of the World Confederation of Labour.

The Committee wants to act as a permanent body in the defence of the workers' interests. An instance of this was its memorandum of 10 July 1967 with respect to the free movement of labour. This stated,

## Standing Committee of the CGT-CGIL

Confédération Générale du Travail, France (CGT)  
213, rue Lafayette, Paris X<sup>e</sup>

André Berteloot, confederal secretary  
Oswald Calvetti, member of the Executive Committee

René Duhamel, confederal secretary

Henri Krasucki, confederal secretary

Livio Mascarello, confederal secretary

Confederazione Generale Italiana del Lavoro  
Italy (CGIL)

Corso d'Italia, 25, Rome

Mario Didò, confederal secretary

Gino Guerra, confederal secretary

Piero Boni, confederal secretary

Umberto Scalia, head of the international department

Rinaldo Scheda, confederal secretary

### Brussels Secretariat

21, rue de l'Industrie, 1040 Brussels (Tel. 11 63 05)

Livio Mascarello

Marius Apostolo

Mario Didò

Umberto Scalia

### Permanent Secretaries:

Pierre Calderara

Mario Lispi

inter alia, that "free movement should be freely determined by the workers; this principle should be based on the liquidation of all discrimination in wages, working conditions, qualifications, etc. Employers must not be allowed to take advantage of the free movement of labour to weaken the workers' movement by causing competition between immigrant and national workers". The Standing Committee pointed out on the same occasion that "the solution of unemployment is linked to the realisation of an economic policy able to overcome the imbalances among regions and industrial sectors and to create new employment in those areas where there is unemployment of where it is imminent".

On 10 December 1967, the Standing Committee submitted to the Community a memorandum on the European Social Fund. It recalled the notorious insufficiencies, the imperfections of its mechanism and of its means of intervention in realisation to genuine needs. It considered that the Fund, made more efficient and democratically managed, could become a valid intervention instrument for an active employment policy. It pointed to the necessary coordination with the European Investment Bank, the European Fund for the Orientation of and Guarantees for Agriculture and the European Coal and Steel Community.

The Standing Committee took an active part in the European Conference on Employment, held on 27 and 28 April 1970 in Luxemburg. Already at the preparatory stage it recalled among other things that:

1. The problem of employment can only be resolved in a framework of an economic policy which, by rejecting the decision-making power of the great financial and industrial fiefs, will develop the economy harmoniously in the six countries of the Community, remove regional disparities and ensure full employment for all workers.

2. All policies aiming at a reduction of consumption by limiting the growth of wages or at a reduction of social investments should be rejected and replaced by a genuine economic development policy which in the first place will guarantee both the growth of workers' purchasing power and security of employment.

3. The utilisation of all human, material and territorial resources demands a new direction of

investments, having as its foremost aim the development of backward regions which the mechanism of private development has fated to be purveyors of labour for the industrial regions. On the other hand, the function of enterprises with state participation could become a decisive element for spreading the industrial development process. With this in view, it is necessary to review also the role and the means of the European Investment Bank.

4. The objective of full employment within the framework of a balanced regional development policy should be complemented by an active manpower policy ensuring guaranteed and secure employment; the protection of workers in case of restructuring or the reorganisation of enterprises or of industrial sectors, particularly as the result of mergers or concentrations; guaranteed resources; re-instatement at an equal level; guaranteed housing for the worker and his family in case of relocation—these are the conditions which must be ensured by appropriate legislation at national level and by precise Community norms.

5. The employment and free movement of labour must be accompanied by measures which effectively guarantee equal rights not only for the workers from EEC countries but also from third countries and which ensure for them a genuine vocational training policy within the framework of a democratic reform of education.

6. Within the framework of the present reform of the European Social Fund, this body should be given the function and sufficient means to contribute effectively to an employment and manpower policy in liaison with the Consultative Committee for the Free Movement of Labour and with the Consultative Committee for Vocational Training.

7. The composition and the working of the Economic and Social Committee should be revised so as to give it genuine powers of initiative, and the right to be consulted not merely upon demand by the Commission but on all questions which it judges appropriate. The role of the ESC would be facilitated by the setting up at Community level of a consultative body on employment consisting of representatives of trade union organisations, employers' organisations, of the governments and of the Commission. Such a committee would give an impetus to the various Community institutions dealing with

manpower problems and provide guidance for the outlines of an employment policy at the level of the Community and that of its member countries.

8. Technological development, the sharpened process of work-reorganisation which it provokes, the pressure for higher productivity caused by the bitter competition among the large capitalist companies at international level—all these are factors which call for a reduction in working hours without loss of wages.”

On the bilateral plane, talks were held between representatives of the Community and the professional CGT and CGIL trade unions of the textile, food, agriculture, chemical, metal, power and trans-

port industries. Economic experts and bank workers have also exchanged their point of view.

In the opinion of the Standing Committee, the admission of the CGT and the CGIL to the Economic and Social Committee in 1970—by giving greater strength to the workers' representation at Community level—will allow a more effective defence of their interests.

To this end, the CGT and the CGIL in their joint communiqué of 10 September 1970 draw the attention to the urgency and the need of reinforcing trade union relations in Western Europe and to proceed to unitary confrontations among all sectors of the European trade union movement.

# The Organisations of Agricultural Workers

*The European Federation of Agricultural Workers' Unions (ECFTU) in the Community and the Working Group for Agriculture and Food of the European Organisation of the WCL represent the interests of the wage-earners in agriculture at the European level.*

## 1. The European Federation of Agricultural Workers' Unions (ECFTU) in the Community

### 1. History

The free trade unions of agricultural workers were among the first professional organisations to group themselves at the level of the Six in order to become a valid and effective partner for the Community institutions.

Their first meeting took place on 11 and 12 March 1958 in Luxemburg.

In a resolution adopted at that meeting, the free trade unions of agricultural workers decided to set up a Working Group of Agricultural Workers' Unions and a European Secretariat of Agricultural Workers in the framework of the European Trade Union Secretariat which, in turn, had been set up by a decision of the national confederations of the six countries taken at Düsseldorf on 16 January 1958.

In order to ensure their presence and their collaboration in all stages of the elaboration and the implementation of the common agricultural policy of the EEC, the free trade unions of agricultural workers, in their first resolution adopted on 11 and 12 March 1958 in Luxemburg, made the following demands:

a) they invited the national governments to grant an adequate representation to agricultural workers in the national delegations to the Conference on Agriculture, to be convened by the EEC Commission in accordance with Article 43 of the Treaty (this Conference took place from 3 to 11 July in Stresa, with an adequate representation of agricultural workers);

b) they requested the Commission of the EEC, the Council of Ministers, the European Parliament and the Economic and Social Committee to give special considera-

tion to the situation of agricultural workers in the elaboration of common social, economic and agricultural policies.

The Working Group, set up on 11 and 12 March 1958 in Luxemburg, held its first conference on 27 November 1958 in Luxemburg.

It was decided there to create a small Bureau, consisting of the President and two Vice-Presidents. This Bureau was given the task of maintaining relations with the Community institutions and the European Trade Union Secretariat. It was further decided to ensure the financial basis of the Working Group's Secretariat by annual dues from the six affiliated organisations. These were the following:

Gewerkschaft Gartenbau, Land- und Forstwirtschaft, Germany; Algemene Nederlandse Agrarische Bedrijfsbond, the Netherlands; Centrale générale, Belgium; Fédération nationale Force Ouvrière de l'Agriculture et Secteurs connexes, France; Confederazione Italiana Sindacati Lavoratori—"CISL-Terra", Italy; Unione Italiana Lavoratori della Terra—"UIL-Terra", Italy.

In the course of the years 1959, 1960 and 1961, the Working Group, its small Bureau, its enlarged Bureau, which consists of one delegate per affiliated organisation, and its Secretariat completed in particular the following tasks:

— they defined the fundamental viewpoint of agricultural workers' unions on the objectives of the common agricultural policy;

— they insisted on the convening of a consultative conference on parity basis on the social aspects of the common agricultural policy (which took place in Rome from 28 September to 4 October 1961);

— at this conference, they succeeded in getting accepted the principles and social aspects of the common agricultural policy of the EEC with respect to wage-earning agricultural workers;

— they laid claims to have the wage earners represented on an institutionalised basis in the following committees:

- the consultative committees for market products, created in 1962 (at present agricultural workers are represented on the committees for grain, rice, milk, beef, pork, eggs and poultry, wine, fats, sugar, fruits and vegetables, and flowers);
- the *joint* consultative committee for social questions of agricultural workers, set up in 1963;
- the consultative committee for social questions of agricultural producers, also set up in 1963;
- the consultative committee for questions of policy on agricultural structure, set up in 1964.

The Working Group and the Secretariat coordinated the work of the delegates of the agricultural workers' unions in all the consultative committees along the guiding lines laid down by the conferences which took place in Rome (May 1960), Bari (September 1965), Narbonne (May 1967) and Dortmund (September 1969).

At the Bari Conference in 1965, the question of a trade union integration that would go beyond the stage of a Working Group was discussed for the first time. Confirmed by the Narbonne Conference (1967), trade union integration, which raises questions such as the giving up of national trade union sovereignty for the sake of a European trade union policy, for instance in the field of regulating wages and working conditions, was the subject of internal meetings in 1967 and 1969. During this time, the Working Group's Bureau elaborated the draft of a constitution which was submitted to the Dortmund Conference in September 1969.

This conference, attended by delegations from eight trade union organisations of agricultural workers (wage-earners and share-croppers), decided to pass from the trade union coordination stage within a Working Group to the stage of trade union integration by setting up a "European Federation of Agricultural Workers' Unions (ECFTU) in the Community-EFA".

## 2. Present organisational structure

According to the Constitution's preamble, adopted at Dortmund on 23 September 1969, the under-mentioned trade union organisations, convinced of the need to ensure both a greater cohesion of agricultural workers' unions in the EEC and a strengthening of their political effectiveness by a common representation, constitute the European Federation of Agricultural Workers' Unions (ECFTU) in the Community-EFA:

- Algemene Nederlandse Agrarische Bedrijfsbond, "ANAB", Utrecht, the Netherlands;
- Centrale Générale, Brussels, Belgium;
- Federazione Italiana Coloni, Mezzadri e Coltivatori Diretti, FEDERCOLTIVATORI-CISL, Rome, Italy;
- Federazione Italiana Salariati Braccianti Agricoli e Maestranze Specializzate, FISBA, Rome, Italy;
- Fédération Nationale Force Ouvrière de l'Agriculture et Secteurs Connexes, Paris, France;
- Gewerkschaft Gartenbau, Land- und Forstwirtschaft, Kassel-Wilhelmshöhe, Germany;
- Unione Italiana Mezzadri e Coltivatori Diretti, UIMEC, Rome, Italy;
- Unione Italiana Salariati Braccianti Agricoli, UISBA, Rome, Italy.

The Federation acts within the framework of the decisions of principle of the European Confederation of Free Trade Unions in the Community—ECFTU.

The Bureau decides on the affiliation of new member unions to the Federation. Applications for affiliation will be considered only if they come from national unions which are members of the free international trade secretariat and of the International Confederation of Free Trade Unions.

The Federation's aims are:

a) to coordinate the activities of the member unions and to defend their common interests in the fields of economic and social policy, both before the bodies and institutions of the EEC and before other organisations and institutions at EEC level;

b) to intercede, within the limits of its possibilities, in favour of an enlargement of the Community by the admission of other democratic countries.

The financing of the common tasks is ensured by the affiliated organisations by annual dues.

The Federation's governing bodies are:

### a) The Conference

This is called at least once every three years. Affiliated organisations are represented by delegates whose number is laid down by the Presidium.

The tasks and competences of the Conference are:

1. to elect the President, two Vice-Presidents and the other members of the Presidium;
2. to review the report on activity and the financial report and to rule on their adoption;
3. to discuss and decide on future activities;
4. to discuss and decide on motions submitted; and
5. to change the constitution, when necessary.

### b) The Bureau

It consists of the Presidium and one delegate per affiliated organisation.

Its particular task is to discuss and decide matters of principle.

It is convened when the majority of its members request it or when the Presidium considers it necessary. It meets at least twice a year.

### c) The Presidium

It consists of:

— the President (at present Mr. Alois Pfeiffer, President of the Gewerkschaft Gartenbau, Land- und Forstwirtschaft, Germany);

— two Vice-Presidents (at present Mr. Raoul Dentu, FO, France, and Mr. Petrus Schippers, ANAB, the Netherlands);

— of one representative from each affiliated union as long as this representative is neither the President nor one of his substitutes (the following are members at present: Messrs. Livio Ligorì, UISBA, Italy; Gaetano Lugli, FEDERCOLTIVATORI-CISL, Italy; Ugo Luciani, UIMEC, Italy; Giovanni Simonte, FISBA, Italy; André Vanden Broucke, Centrale Générale, Belgium).

The Presidium's task is to represent the Federation in the European Community's field of activity. It is empowered in particular:

— to appoint the Federation's representatives in all the committees and institutions of the EEC;

— to set up special commissions in order to discuss and study specific problems;

— to create and maintain contacts with other organisations and institutions.

The procedure for taking decisions and for voting are governed by the following rules:

a) The Federation's governing bodies are competent to rule when more than half the members of each body are taking part in the vote and when every member organisation has been invited in good time by letter.

b) A majority of two thirds of effective members present is required for adopting a motion.

Those motions and proposals which fail to reach two thirds but which gain more than 50 per cent of the votes are remitted to the Presidium for study and will be submitted to the next Conference for decision.

c) Shall be elected the candidate who in secret ballot receives most of the votes and more than half of the number of registered votes.

d) *The Secretariat*

The Federation maintains a Secretariat in Brussels in the offices of the ECFTU, rue Montagne-aux-Herbes-Potagères, 37, 1000 Brussels, Telephone 17 91 41. The present Secretary of the Federation is Miss Astrid Lulling, Deputy in the Luxemburg Parliament and Member of the European Parliament. The Secretary deals with the daily affairs of the Federation in accordance with the presidium's guiding lines and in close contact with the President.

He ensures, in particular, that affiliated organisations are being kept informed of all problems concerning the common agricultural policy, prepares statements together with the governing bodies of the Federation and coordinates the activities of the agricultural workers' representatives in the different consultative committees. He is responsible for relations with the Economic and Social Committee of the EEC and with the European Parliament.

One of the main tasks of recent years was the preparation, the negotiation and the conclusion of an "agreement for the harmonisation of working hours for permanently employed wage-earners in crop farming", signed on 6 June 1968 in Brussels by the President of the European Agricultural Producers' Association COPA, the President of the European agricultural workers' free trade unions and the President of the European agricultural workers' christian trade unions. This agreement is the first concrete result of European negotiations between the two sides of industry. Although it has only the value of a recommendation, it may be qualified as the first outline of a European collective agreement. It was negotiated by an ad hoc commission consisting of representatives of employers and agricultural workers on a parity basis from the six countries of the Community. A similar ad hoc commission is now negotiating a second agreement on working hours in livestock farming.

Although the former Working Group of Agricultural Workers' Unions and the new "EFA Federation" have devoted their main activities to the social field, in particular to the consultative committee on parity basis and to the European negotiations between the two sides of industry, they have not neglected market policies nor structural policy on the subject of which they adopted many resolutions and statements. In respect to the "Mansholt Plan", in a joint statement with the Working Group for Agriculture and Food of the WCL, they recognised "that the aims of the European Commission's land reform plan contain human and social objectives which must be pursued on the basis

of free choice and in which a decisive importance must be attached to the cooperation between the producers, the workers and their professional organisations."

## **2. The Working Group for Agriculture and Food of the European Organisations of the WCL**

### *1. Its origins*

At the end of 1958, the unions of agricultural workers and of food workers, of tobacco workers and of the hotel industry who at the level of the six countries of the EEC were affiliated respectively to the International Federation of Christian Agricultural Workers' Unions (FISCOA) and the Christian International of Food Workers (ICA) met for the first time to examine the possibility of cooperating with a view to defending the interests of their members in the framework of European integration.

At a joint meeting held in Rotterdam on 12 February 1959, the representatives of these organisations decided to give this cooperation definite shape. They founded a contact organisation entitled Working Group for Agriculture and Food of the European Organisation of the WCL (formerly the International Federation of Christian Trade Unions).

In a resolution adopted unanimously, the representatives defined the Working Group's aims as follows:

"The defence of the moral, social and professional interests of the agricultural workers and of the workers of the food, tobacco and hotel industries in the six countries of the Community;

the representation of these workers before the organisations and institutions of the EEC;

the study of social, trade union, professional and economic problems related to the setting up of the Common Market and affecting these industries."

It must however be pointed out that the Working Group is to date a contact organisation for the trade unions affiliated to the two International professional organisations mentioned above.

This means, *inter alia*, that the Group has no proper financial means at its disposal and that its expenditure is borne by the two internationals, both as to representation costs as well as secretariat and working costs.

### *2. Structure and management*

As unions affiliated to the Christian International of Food Workers, as well as those affiliated to the FISCOA, form part of the Working Group, its activities are not limited to the purely agricultural field; they also deal with the problems of the food, tobacco and hotel industries—problems which in any case are closely related to measures taken in the provisions of the so-called "agricultural" section of the Treaty and therefore to the common agricultural policy.

The supreme body of the Working Group is the General Assembly which consists of the delegates representing all affiliated trade unions. It decides on the activities to be undertaken and on major standpoints. It meets generally once a year but in urgent matters, as was the case with the Mansholt Plan, the Assembly meets more frequently.

In the periods between assemblies, the Working Group's activities are directed by a Directing Committee, consisting of nine members elected by the General Assembly and including one President, one Vice-President and one Secretary. The Committee's task is to implement the resolu-

tions and statements adopted by the General Assembly and to represent the Group before the services and institutions of the EEC and the member states.

For the daily work of the secretariat, the Committee appoints among its members an Executive Bureau consisting of the President, the Vice-President, the Secretary and two Committee members.

The Directing Committee and the Executive Bureau meet as often as circumstances require it.

To study specific problems, the Directing Committee may, with the help of affiliated unions, set up ad hoc working groups to prepare the Committee's and the Assembly's work. Such was the case when preparations had to be made for the Conference on social problems in agriculture, held in Rome in September-October 1961, define a position on the Mansholt Plan (Agriculture 1980) or draw up the action programme on social policy in European agriculture, published in September 1968.

### 3. Member organisations

On the date when the Working Group was founded, the following unions became members:

— Centrale Chrétienne des Travailleurs de l'alimentation, de l'agriculture, du tabac et de l'hôtellerie, Brussels, Belgium.

— Nederlandse Christelijke Bond van werknemers in agrarische bedrijfstakken en tabakverwerkende industrieën (CBAT), Utrecht, the Netherlands.

— Katholieke Bond van Personeel in Agrarische, Voedings- en Genotmiddelenbedrijven (AVG), Harlem, the Netherlands.

— Nederlandse Centrale Bond van Christelijke Arbeiders in de Bedrijven van Voedings- en Genotmiddelen, Rotterdam, the Netherlands.

— Christelijke Bedrijfsgroepen Centrale, The Hague, the Netherlands.

— Nederlandse Katholieke Bond van Werknemers in Industriële Bedrijven, The Hague, the Netherlands.

— Fédération Générale de l'Agriculture, CFDT, Paris.

— Arbeitnehmerverband Landwirtschaft, Gartenbau und Forsten e.V. Berufsverband Landwirtschaft der CGD, Stade near Hamburg, Germany.

— Bund der Hotel-, Restaurant und Café-Angestellten e.V. "Union Ganymed", Cologne, Germany.

The following organisations were admitted as observers, without the right to representation in the Directing Committee:

— Österreichischer Gewerkschaftsbund—Christliche Fraktion der Landarbeiter, Vienna, Austria.

— Österreichischer Gewerkschaftsbund—Christliche Fraktion der Lebensmittel und Genussmittelarbeiter, Vienna, Austria.

— Österreichischer Gewerkschaftsbund—Christliche Fraktion der Arbeiter im Hotel-, Gast- und Schankgewerke, Vienna, Austria.

— ACLI, Settore Terra, Rome, Italy.

— Christlicher Transport-, Handels- und Lebensmittelarbeiterverband, Zurich, Switzerland.

Since September 1967, the following organisation has been admitted as effective member:

— Zentralverband Milchwirtschaftlicher Arbeitnehmerverbände, Oldenburg, Germany.

### 4. Activities

To make a complete list of the activities of the Working Group in the last eleven years is impossible and would be inadequate in any case; let it suffice to enumerate the main stages marked by fundamental policy statements.

It must be recalled that the Working Group first formulated its point of view when the first plan for the common agricultural policy was adopted in 1960.

It then took an active part in the drafting of the conclusions of the Consultative Conference on the social aspects of the common agricultural policy (Rome 1961) which are of fundamental importance for the guidance of social policy in European agriculture.

As a representative body on the Community level for the sectors of food and agriculture, the Group is active in the consultative committees of the general departments for social affairs and for agriculture of the European Commission.

As mentioned earlier, the Working Group launched an action programme on social policy in European agriculture in September 1968. Its main idea is that in the common agricultural policy, social measures should be recognized as being part of the whole, just as much as policies on prices, markets and structures.

In addition, the Group has on several occasions given its views on problems related to the common agricultural policy and its repercussions on the tobacco industry and on several sectors of the food industry.

In the year 1969, the Group has laid down its position on the Mansholt Plan on Agriculture for the 1980's.

It should be pointed out in conclusion that the Working Group, consisting of member unions of the European Organisation of the WCL, maintains close relations with it, all the more so since its Secretary, E. Machielsen, is simultaneously Vice-President of the EO-WCL.

Furthermore, regular contacts are maintained on the one hand with the European Federation of Agricultural Workers' Unions (ECFTU) in the Community and, on the other, with the Working Group of the Food, Tobacco and Hotel Industries, also affiliated to the ECFTU.

In a number of cases, the Working Group has taken up a common stand with these organisations.

# The Belgian trade union movement

*Almost all trade unions in Belgium are "associations de facto", that is to say associations without legal status. Although two laws are available to the unions to obtain legal status<sup>1</sup> they do not take advantage of them in order to avoid certain obligations which they consider might endanger their rights. Nonetheless, they are recognised by the Government which, particularly since the last war, has associated them with the management of numerous parastatal bodies as well as with the elaboration of parliamentary bills.*

## Permanent trade union pluralism

One of the foremost characteristics of Belgian trade unionism is its pluralistic structure, solidly rooted for three-quarters of a century. The trade unions which group the workers according to their industry (workers of the metal industry, for instance) or profession (salaried employees, supervisory staffs...) are grouped in national confederations of greatly different sizes.

The Confederation of Christian Trade Unions (CSC) of catholic tendency had 872,245 members in 1966. It is the outcome of the merger in 1912 of two confederations: the Federation of Christian Professional Unions of Belgium<sup>2</sup>, created on 17 December 1908 for the Flemish part of the country, and the Confederation of Christian and Free Trade unions of the Walloon Provinces which dates from 5 September 1909.

The Belgian General Federation of Labour (FGTB) of socialist ideology grouped 761,636 members in 1966. The FGTB is the successor organisation of the CGTB which in turn merged on 1 January 1938 from the Trade Union Committee created by the Belgian Workers' Party in 1898.

The General Centre of Liberal Trade Unions of Belgium (CGSLB) had 120,864 members in 1966. It was founded in 1930.

The grouping of the Independent Trade Unions in the Public Services (SISP) had a total of 72,000 members in 1966. It was set up for the public sector in 1926.

The Confederation of Unified Trade Unions of Belgium (CSUB) had 26,100 members in 1966 and was created in 1963.

The pluralistic structure is based on ideologies which are on occasions concretely expressed in "statements of principles". This is the case for the FGTB which at its founding congress in May 1945 adopted its "statement of principles" whose first nine points are quoted here:

1. The FGTB, which has emerged directly from the organised workers' movement, proclaims that the trade union ideal, aiming at a classless society and the dissolution of the wage earning class, will be accomplished by a total transformation of society.

2. The FGTB, born in the class struggle, emphasises that this struggle is developing to another, no less vigorous, of all producers against an oligarchy of banks and monopolies which have become the supreme rulers of the entire machinery of production.

3. In the spirit of absolute independence from political parties and in full respect of all political as well as philosophical opinions, the FGTB affirms its will to achieve its aims with its own means and by appealing to all wage and salary earners in particular and the entire population in general, as the spiritual as well as the material interests of the overwhelming majority are identical with those of the workers, the employees and the technicians.

4. The trade union movement will accept the support of one or several parties who will collaborate with its action for achieving its aims without feeling indebted to them and without allowing them to interfere in the conduct of trade union action.

5. The trade union movement aims at achieving a genuine rule of social justice that would give to everyone his place in society.

In order to ensure for everyone his share in accordance with his work and his needs, the FGTB declares that it is indispensable to complete political democracy by an economic and social democracy. To this end, it demands that labour, as creator of all value and the source of all goods, be finally considered as primary factor, the other factors being merely subordinated to it or parasites depending on it.

6. The movement's origin, its character and the permanence of its ideals show that it is designed to be the main driving force of this constructive revolution.

7. In a spirit of justice it formally repudiates the false values consecrated by the capitalist regime, such as those of birth and wealth. It wants to turn the exploited, now reduced to sell their labour, into free participants in the common task of production.

8. Faithful to its conceptions, it will work for the creation of organisations whose final aim must be to transfer to the forces of labour the management of a transformed economy for the benefit of the whole society.

9. The trade union movement has not the intention of supplanting the parties in their political action. It calls on the workers in their capacity as producers, for it is on their economic condition that their social, intellectual and cultural development prospects will depend."

The CSC, on the other hand, has not adopted a statement of this kind, but gives as its aim in its constitution "to concentrate to the maximum the Christian trade union forces so as to realise the organisation of professional and economic activity and a society based on Christian principles". By Christian principles one must understand the teaching of the Catholic Church; this was clarified in a significant report submitted to its 1951 Congress: *Christian trade unionism, its nature and its mission*: "By its mission, the Catholic Church has authority in all matters that may directly or indirectly concern the eternal destiny of man. The Christian trade unions recognise this authority."

Faith in this doctrine is expressed in a resolution adopted by the Congress as a result of this report: "The Congress...

<sup>1</sup> The law of 31 March 1898 on professional unions and the law of 27 June 1921 on non-profit making associations.

<sup>2</sup> Verbond der Christene beroepsverenigingen van België.

declares once again that Christian social doctrine constitutes the foundation of the social order and the application of its principles is the necessary condition to give to the worker, in full respect of his human personality, the possibility to reach through his professional life on the material and on the spiritual level the destiny which God accords to every man."

The confessional character of the CSC is thus established without equivocation. At its 11th Congress in 1934 its President Henri Pauwels stated that Christian trade unionism was "an active fighter for social peace and for the defence of catholicism among the workers". At the 1951 Congress the above mentioned report stated: "Trade union discipline is essential to maintain the Christian character of the trade union organisation. Generally, the persuasive influence of the leadership is sufficient to maintain discipline among its ranks but the danger of marxist infiltration is not an imaginary one; should the Christian trade union organisation become systematically undermined, the sanctions foreseen by the constitution should be vigorously applied to expel the opponent's agents."

The CGSLB is based on liberal doctrine. Its constitution foresees as task "to create understanding between the givers and takers of labour, based on mutual respect of reciprocal rights and duties in accordance with essential liberal principles of freedom, solidarity, progress, justice and social peace..."

## Strong trade union centralism

A second characteristic of the Belgian trade union movement is its centralisation. Contrary to certain types of trade union structure where many medium-sized unions are affiliated to a national body, the most representative trade union movements in Belgium have developed in such a way that they consist only of national unions federated in a national trade union organisation (CSC, FGTB...). Most of these national unions are founded on an industrial basis: they group the workers of the same industry or of several industries which are more or less connected. Others are constituted on a professional basis and group, for instance, commercial or clerical employees or public service workers.

Each of these national unions—generally called national centres (Centrales nationales)—have district branches in the regions (sections) which in turn have local sections in the factories or enterprises as well as on the local level. The national centre is the place where decisions are taken on trade union matters within its sphere.

The district branches of the national centres are regrouped horizontally on the regional level in regional sections on an inter-industrial and inter-professional basis. In the CSC, these regional sections are called "regional federations" (Fédérations régionales).

Finally, the local sections of the national centre are generally regrouped by district or locality in inter-industrial and inter-professional sections.

Several factors have helped to strengthen the authority of the two national trade union organisations CSC and FGTB. Among these can be quoted the problem of the generalised strike which goes beyond the competence of one national centre and the attempts to set up a single central strike fund; only the CSC has managed to do so. Another factor is the arbitration role which these organisations have played in questions of union demarcation (areas of competence of the national centres). Finally the setting up of strong regional sections has reinforced their authority on this level. Here also, it seems that the CSC has gone farthest.

Between the two world wars there have been attempts, both from the socialist as well the christian camp, to set up a single union that would replace the national centres and group all the workers in a single inter-industrial and

inter-professional organisation. However, these attempts did not succeed and around 1930 one can say that a balance was reached between the tendency for all-out centralisation and the wish for independence of the national centres.

The system of the single trade union was achieved in the CGSLB. This organisation has no national centres but merely sections in the different regions where it has members.

## Steady growth in numbers of organised workers

On the whole, the percentage of organised workers in Belgium is constantly increasing. By considering only membership of the CSC and the FGTB, the percentage of organised workers has evolved as follows:

1910: 6.88	1961: 55.80
1930: 35.05	1965: 55.39
1947: 40.89	1966: 59.64
	1967: 60.87

The first four figures are calculated on the basis of censuses, that of 1965 on the basis of social security statistics.

The growth in the percentage of trade union organisation was again confirmed in 1965 and 1966, for if all trade union organisations are taken into account, this percentage reached 67.60.

As to the relative importance of the two most representative organisations, the undermentioned table and diagram clearly show that after the 1914-1918 war the socialist trade union organisation reaches a very high level and progresses slowly from 500,000 to 700,000 members. For the period between the two wars it dominates the christian trade union organisation by its superior weight. The growth of the latter is much faster; starting from a lower level it has reached in the last few years a bigger membership than the former.

*Progress of trade union membership*

	FGTB <sup>a</sup>	CSC
1900	31,311	10,000 <sup>e</sup>
1905	34,184	14,000 <sup>e</sup>
1910	68,844	49,478
1914	129,177	123,000
1920	687,610	156,631
1925	525,039	133,156
1930	502,781	209,311
1935	545,119	297,296
1939	546,224	339,769
1947	567,071	437,183
1950	631,075	567,587
1955	674,721 <sup>b</sup>	653,636
1960	706,087 <sup>c</sup>	761,705
1965	734,805 <sup>d</sup>	812,257
1969	823,379	950,233

<sup>a</sup> The figures referring to the FGTB are taken from: BONDAS, "Un demi-siècle d'action syndicale, 1898-1948," for the figures from 1900 to 1939. Those from 1947 until 1965 are taken from Reports of activities of the FGTB.

<sup>b</sup> We have subtracted from the published figure 2,543 members of the FGTB-Congo and 4,002 members of the youth section to make it comparative with that of the CSC, which do not include these categories.

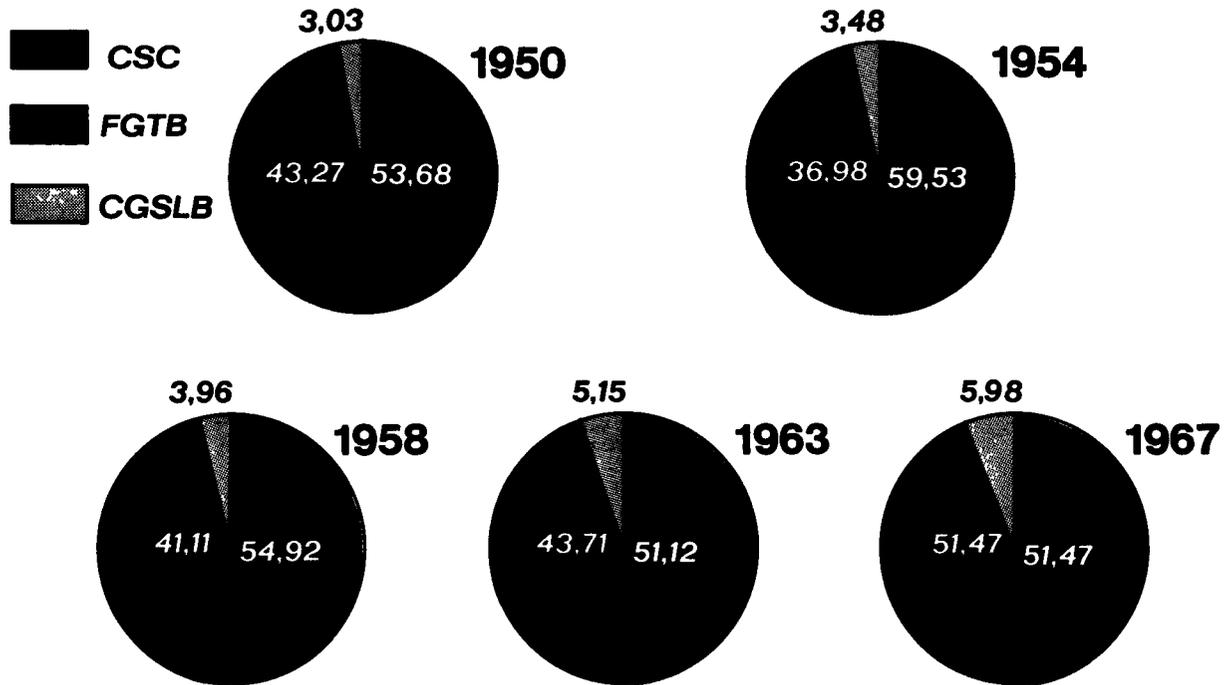
<sup>c</sup> We have subtracted 1,829 members of the FGTB-Congo and 9,541 members of the youth section for the same reason.

<sup>d</sup> We have subtracted 14,891 members of the youth section for the same reason.

<sup>e</sup> The two figures have been reduced by the number of non-trade union members.

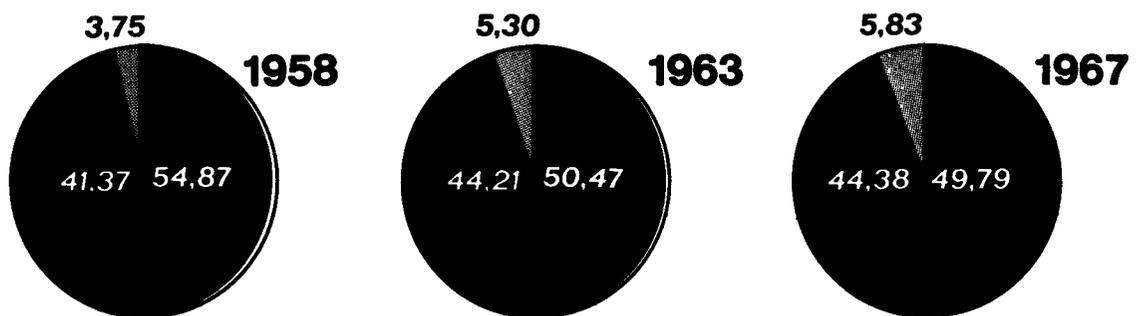
## TRADE UNION ELECTIONS

### Work councils : totals of votes (in %)

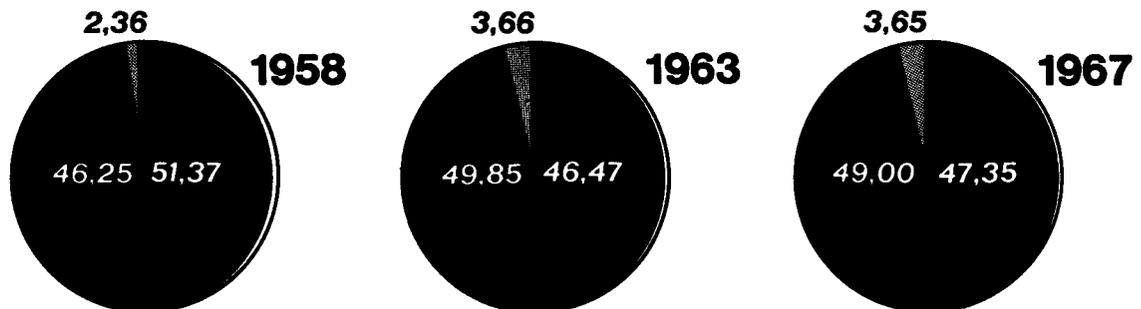


### Committees for Safety at Work

#### Totals of votes (in %)



#### Totals of seats



Note : The most complete results are those for the Safety Committees which are found in the greatest number of enterprises. On the other hand, comparison for a long period is possible only for the works councils. This is the reason for the two series of diagrams.



Considering the influence exerted by the trade union organisations on the workers, one can temper the appreciation reached on studying the membership figures by looking at the support each of them has obtained in the elections for the Safety at Work Committees and for the Works Councils where also non-trade unionists may vote. The enclosed diagrams show these results for the elections published so far.

It is somewhat difficult to establish the percentage of unionisation by industry; several national trade unions group members who in fact work in several industries. However, we have tried to establish these percentages for the workers in the metalworking, mining and textile industry; there, the union membership is fairly homogenous.

*Percentage of unionisation of manual workers*

	1910	1930	1947	1961
Metal-working industry	9.10	59.10	62.30	72.26
Mining	12.66	36	41.30	59.56
Textiles	7.74	60.30	66	85.41

Based on economic and social censuses. For 1961: statistics of the Social Security Service.

For the professional categories, calculations are easier. The percentages for the three categories: manual workers, salaried employees and public service workers, are given below for the post-war period:

*Percentage of unionisation by profession*

	Workers	Employees	Public Service
1947	50.21	23.59	46.67
1950	55.59	28.05	56.44
1955	61.89	27.11	57.15
1960	73.75	29.59	67.21
1965	74.45	33.70	78.91
1966	77.21	33.00	76.44
1967	77.43	31.39	75.70

The lowest percentage is thus found among the salaried employees. The highest, that in the public service, reaches this level in 1960 and 1965 thanks to the inclusion of the CSI and the CSU, both chiefly rooted in this sector. If one considers only the two most representative trade union organisations (CSC and FGTB), the percentages are as follows:

	1965	1967
Workers	68.06	70.93
Employees	30.64	28.82
Public Service	63.26	64.27

An approach by industrial sector is possible however, by referring to election results so as to discover which union organisation is most representative in each. But there another difficulty arises: it is the multiplicity of sectors and the need to regroup some of them.

This shows that the FGTB, in the 1963 elections, gained more than 55 per cent of the votes in such sectors as iron and steel, coke and allied industries, department stores, trams and buses... It also won more than 50 per cent in transport, gas and electricity, metal working, printing...

The CSC, however, did not reach 55 per cent in any sector. It gained more than 50 per cent in less concentrated

sectors with smaller enterprises (with the exception of chemicals and cement). These are food, wood working industry, textiles, chemicals, cement...

The FGTB thus seems better implanted than the CSC in the sectors where large companies dominate, the key sectors of trade union action. The CSC dominates especially there where the small enterprise is the general rule.

Geographically, trade union implantation does not seem to have been primarily a result of industrialisation. When the percentage of unionisation is calculated by provinces on the basis of the professional censuses of 1910, 1930, 1947 and 1961, we obtain the results shown in the following table:

*Percentage of unionisation by provinces*

	1910	1930	1947	1961
Antwerp	8.73	53.80	57.50	71.35
Brabant	4.58	17.42	19.58	28.64
West Flanders	7.28	52.18	61.90	82.92
East Flanders	10.48	48.12	58.15	75.73
Hainaut	7.28	28.05	35.99	55.06
Liège	5.93	38.24	38.45	51.08
Limburg	5.01	17.02	26.70	49.32
Luxemburg	2.15	7.34	23.73	36.98
Namur	1.08	13.85	26.37	35.15

This table, as well as the enclosed maps, show that trade unionism has always been developed more strongly in the less industrialised provinces bordering the sea than in the Walloon provinces of Hainaut and Liège. It is only in 1910 that the percentage of organised workers in Hainaut reaches the level of West Flanders but it is not certain whether the trade union membership for Hainaut has not been inflated.

The comparison cannot, however, provide a definite argument against the influence of industrialisation on these percentages. For it must be taken into account that membership of a trade union—especially in Flanders—always was registered in the worker's home district. Until a few years ago, however, many Flemish workers went to work in Hainaut Province. The same phenomenon may be true for Limburg and Liège provinces.

## Faith in the European ideal

Since the Schuman Plan was launched, numerous statements on the question of Europe have been issued by the trade union organisations, either by their congresses or their leaders.

Apart from a few shades of meaning, the points of view of the CSC and of the FGTB follow certain guiding lines, the main ones being listed below:

### 1. Agreement on the aims of the integration plan

Thus on 23 March 1954, when the Central Economic Council (*Conseil Central de l'Economie*) was examining an opinion paper, the Bureau of the CSC expressed its agreement with the aims and methods of the integration plan. The FGTB also gave its support to the principles of the Schuman Declaration, in particular in a memorandum of December 1950 and on its 1951 Congress.

This agreement has not lessened with the passage of time but on several occasions, the trade union organisations made it clear that they did not want merely any kind of Europe. "It is not our view," said the memorandum of the FGTB, "to agree to any form of organisation. An organisation is required that implies a kind of economic

planning that would be totally opposed to the political action practised hitherto by the employers' trusts..."

The President of the CSC declared at the 1962 Congress that "the Common Market must be more than a customs union and must become a genuine economic entity...", a point of view which was included in a resolution voted by Congress.

## 2. Insistence on social aims of integration process

The trade union organisations have frequently expressed their concern at the Treaties' weaknesses in formulating social aims. "We do not accept", the President of the CSC declared on 21 January 1958, "the thesis, which appears in the Treaties and which is defended by certain political representatives, that it would be enough for economic integration to be achieved for social integration to follow automatically." And the 1962 Congress of the CSC, "considering that economic activities must be subordinate to social aims", adopted a series of resolutions concerning social objectives of which only the following will be quoted for the moment: "demands that, in cooperation with the trade union organisations, an overall social policy at European level be systematically studied".

Already in 1950, the Bureau of the FGTB declared: "although the economic aspect is extremely important, it cannot be the only to be considered. Together with it, the social effects must be examined". At its 1965 Congress, the FGTB demanded "that the trade union organisations be regularly consulted in the preparation of social and economic policy. The present consultation of the Economic and Social Committee must be complemented by organising direct consultations at Community level on the elaboration of the fundamental lines of economic and social policy".

## 3. The trade unions want to be associated in the decision-making process

Already during the discussions about the Schuman-proposals, the FGTB declared that "the trade union organisations must be represented at all levels, first in the national delegations, then within the High Authority". The memorandum of 1950 underlines that "the trade unions must always be closely linked to all leading administrative bodies about to be created". The Congress of 1965 "notes that the trade union organisations are not represented in the unified executive body in conformity with what had been done when the High Authority of the ECSC had been set up" and a resolution was adopted insisting on regular and direct consultations of the trade union organisations. The CSC also declared from the start its will to be associated effectively by the presence of delegates at all levels, national and international, where the conditions to realise the plan were to be elaborated. At the end of 1957, the Bureau considered even that the new international bodies "will only fulfill their tasks properly if the workers are fully associated with them; this could only be achieved by having the various trade union tendencies represented both in the leading administrative bodies as well as in the consultative bodies".

## 4. Unions complain of less rights on Community level than on national level

The demand to be associated at the decision-making level not having been fully met, the trade unions have frequently expressed their regret that the prerogatives they enjoy on the national level have not been granted to them on the Community level. "No readiness has been shown",

the President of the CSC declared in the beginning of 1958, "to grant to the workers and to the trade unions on the European level the competence and the recognition they conquered long ago on the national level". Regretting at the 1964 Congress the absence of direct contacts between employers' and workers' organisations at the European level, the President stated: "We feel that the Council of Ministers does not wish these contacts and is excessively affected by the permanent delegations which exert a very great influence on Council decisions. It seems to me that the Europe of the Governments is gaining more and more weight in these circles. We are recognised on the national level and ignored on the European level..."

At its 1965 Congress, the FGTB noted in their adopted resolutions that "in the present process of European integration, the trade union organisations run the risk of losing the rights of consultation which they have acquired on the national level".

## 5. For a Community open to the democratic countries

The trade union organisations do not want a Community which is closed to the outside world. The 1965 Congress of the FGTB "underlines that the EEC must be open to all democratic countries of Europe who accept the principles and achievements of the EEC". Similarly, the President of the CSC declared on its 1962 Congress that the Common Market should stay wide open "on the one hand, to European countries which should have the possibility to join or to associate themselves with it. On the other hand, it should remain wide open to the non-European world and their problems." In a resolution, the Congress "emphasises that membership should be granted only to those countries which subscribe to the treaties and to the decisions already taken by the European Communities, countries which have a democratic structure and accept the principle of political integration"; the Congress "in the framework of these principles, hopes for the successful outcome of the negotiations between the European Communities and Great Britain".

## BRIEF BIBLIOGRAPHY

In addition to the reports of activity and various publications of the trade union organisations the following books can be consulted to obtain an insight:

- DELSINNE, *Le mouvement syndical en Belgique* (1936).  
ARENDE, *La nature, l'organisation et le programme des syndicats ouvriers chrétiens* (1926).  
BLANPAIN, *La liberté syndicale en Belgique* (1963).  
ID., *De syndicale vrijheid in België* (1963).  
BONDAS, *Un demi-siècle d'action syndicale, 1898-1948* (1948).  
ID., *Een halve eeuw syndicale aktie, 1898-1948* (1948).  
CREMER, *Le syndicalisme* (1958).  
EBERTZHEIM, *Les syndicats ouvriers en Belgique* (1959).  
NEUVILLE, *Une génération syndicale*.  
ID., *La représentativité des syndicats*.  
CRISP: issues of *Courrier hebdomadaire* dealing with percentages of unionisation;  
ID., issues of *Courrier hebdomadaire* dealing with the analysis of union elections.  
SCHOLL, *De historiografie der arbeidersbeweging in België*.  
SPITAEELS, *Le mouvement syndical en Belgique* (1967).  
GUBBELS, *Essai d'étude du comportement électoral des travailleurs lors des élections aux conseils d'entreprises de 1963* (1967).

# The Trade Unions in Germany

*The main stages of the German trade unions' development are the following:*

1863: Foundation in Leipzig of the "General Association of German Workers" (*Allgemeiner Deutscher Arbeiterverein*).

1864: Von Ketteler, Bishop of Mainz, publishes Workers' questions and Christianity. This text lays the first stone for the foundation of the Christian trade unions of the 1890's.

1868: Founding Congress of the "Federation of the Working Class" (*Arbeiterschäftsverband*) by the merger of the "General Association of German Workers" with the cigar workers' union.

1868: Foundation of the liberal professional associations *Hirsch-Duncker* (*Hirsch-Dunckerschen Gewerksvereine*) which lay particular weight on promoting understanding and co-operation with the employers.

At the end of 1868, three main trade union tendencies were on the scene: the workers' unions (Lassalle), the professional associations *Hirsch-Duncker* and craft unions.

1875: Merger of the two socialist parties in Gotha; this is followed by the merger of the "workers' unions" and the "craft unions."

1890: Abrogation of the law against the socialists. This allows the trade unions which were in close contact with the "Socialist Workers' Party of Germany" to operate openly.

1892: The Congress in Halberstadt confirms the General Trade Union Commission as permanent leading body of the trade unions. For 34 years, its President Carl Legien headed the free trade unions.

1894: Foundation of the first Christian miners' federation by August Brust.

1899: Founding Congress of the Christian trade unions in Mainz.

At the turn of the century, then, the three trade union tendencies, which were to last till after the first world war and into the Weimar period, were already in existence.

In 1933, the trade unions were banned by the national socialists. Their funds were confiscated and their members enrolled in the German Workers' Front (*Deutsche Arbeitsfront*) which was set up later, while many union presidents and responsible trade union officials were arrested by the new masters, tortured and sentenced to detention in prison or concentration camp.

After the second world war, the trade union officials who had survived the nazi terror immediately began to rebuild the trade unions. As a result of their experience, they opposed the former dispersion of forces, divided by different tendencies, and decided in favour of a unified movement where all the workers, irrespective of their religious or their political affiliation, would stand together in the struggle for a new social order.

Thus a unified trade union organisation, the German Trade Union Federation (*Deutsche Gewerkschaftsbund—DGB*), was founded in October 1949 in Munich. However, this unification was not a total one. Apart from the 16 industrial and other unions affiliated to the DGB (6,407,733 members at the end of 1967) should be listed the German Employees Union (*Deutsche Angestellten-gewerkschaft—DAG*, with 482,139 members), the Christian Trade Union Federation of Germany (*Christliche Gewerkschaftsbund Deutschland—CGD*, 187,369 members), the German Civil Servants' Federation (*Deutscher Beamtenbund—DBB*, 710,183 members), the Union of the Police (*Gewerkschaft der Polizei—GdP*, 108,330 members) and several smaller professional unions.

Like the DGB, these federations are, legally speaking, private associations in law (§ 21 of the Civil Code) as this

legal form gives them the greatest degree of independence and freedom.

## 1. The DGB

The Constitution defines the main tasks of the DGB: these consist not only in carrying out legal functions, such as providing legal advice and representation in matters concerning workers' rights under social, administrative and financial jurisdiction; they range from editing trade union publications to the building and the upkeep of holiday and rest homes for the workers; from leading and supporting industrial struggles to the furthering of consumer co-operatives; they pledge the DGB to fight against all anti-democratic influences on society, to promote understanding among nations and to use all its endeavours for the maintenance of peace and freedom.

The Constitution stipulates further the conditions for membership of the DGB, the financial contribution of the industrial unions and the other unions (12 per cent of the dues they collect), the working of the solidarity fund, the structure of the DGB (see enclosure) as well as the tasks and competence of the Federation's supreme political body, the Federal Congress.

### Political conceptions of the DGB

The DGB and its trade unions proclaim the inalienable right of man to freedom and self-determination. They aim for a social order that ensures respect for the dignity of man and demand the realisation of the Declaration of Human Rights of the United Nations in all parts of the world.

Since their foundation, it has been the aim of the trade unions to obtain respect for the dignity of working people and to protect them, to secure them socially and to fight for a society that will ensure the free development of the personality for everyone. The trade unions have a duty to participate in the development of a socially-minded state based on law and in the shaping of a democratic society.

Free and independent trade unions can only exist and operate in a democracy. By defending democracy, they defend the foundation of their proper existence. The DGB and its affiliated trade unions are therefore resolutely opposed to all totalitarian and reactionary trends and will fight all attempts to limit or abrogate the rights and freedoms enshrined in the Constitution of the German Federal Republic.

The DGB and its affiliated trade unions are and remain independent from governments, parties, churches and employers. They are determined to practise philosophical, religious and political tolerance.

### The DGB and workers' participation in industry

In the DGB's view, workers' co-determination at the work-place, in the factory, in the firm and in the economy as a whole should be a complement to political democracy. How workers' and trade union rights should be extended in factories and offices are shown in the following trade union statements and claims:

a) The first level on which co-determination is effective is that of the workshop, office or factory. It is mainly characterised by the rights and duties of the works council. According to the law of 1952 on the social organisation of enterprises (Betriebsverfassungsgesetz), these rights are subdivided among rights of workers to co-determination and participation in social matters, personnel questions and economic questions. At this level can also be reckoned the right to information of the economic committee as well as the institution of the general assembly of the staff.

b) The second level is that of the firm. It is effected by workers' participation in the company's most important institutions, that is in the supervisory board and, for the mining and steel industry, in the management board, where the workers are represented by a worker director.

c) The third level encompasses all that is generally defined as "co-determination beyond the company level." This includes all form of workers' participation in public or national decisions. This form of participation is but in its beginnings in Germany and results achieved on this level are very incomplete.

Present public debate on co-determination bears mainly on participation at the company level.

The workers' struggle for co-determination has brought about the promulgation of four laws in the 1950's:

a) The law of 1951—on workers' co-determination in the supervisory and management boards of companies in the mining and steel industry—gives the workers far-reaching participation in the decision-making process as a legal right.

In principle, the supervisory board is manned on a parity basis, i.e. it consists of an equal number of representatives of workers and of management. The management board includes a worker director who has the same rights as the other board members. This gives the workers the assurance that their interests will be considered when decisions are taken.

b) The law of 1952 on the social organisation of enterprises, which regulates co-determination in the remaining part of the economy, did not meet trade union hopes. It even meant a certain regress for the trade unions which in some states had obtained a higher degree of co-determination through local legislation, particularly for the works councils. This law regulates:

- the composition, the election and the tasks of the works council, its influence on staff problems and economic and social questions;
- the activity and rights of the economic committee which must be set up as soon as the firm employs more than 100 people permanently;
- the representation of the workers in the supervisory board and its election by the personnel. One third of this board consists of workers' representatives, of which at least two must be employed in the firm.
- the rights of the general assembly of the personnel.

Compared with the law on co-determination in the mining and steel industry, which provides for a worker director on the management board and a supervisory

board manned on parity basis, the law on the social organisation of enterprises marks a certain regress in workers' rights to co-determination in the sense that it does not provide for workers' representation on the management board and that on the supervisory board, the workers have only one third of the seats.

c) The law of 1955 on the representation of employees in public administrations and enterprises is even less satisfactory in the eyes of the trade unions.

It is valid for national administrations and public bodies of the Federal Republic. The law also applies to public corporations. When it came into force, it applied to some 800,000 civil servants and 1.2 million workers and employees in the public service. The right of trade unions and of public bodies as employers to conclude collective agreements was not affected by the law, nor was the right to strike.

Staff councils are elected in every administration and every public enterprise of more than five employees. Their task is to cooperate with the administration within the framework of existing laws and collective agreements. In a number of cases, they have a right to a consultative voice on social and staff questions.

By a majority decision of the staff council, representatives of the trade unions and of the public employer may take part in their meetings with consultative status. The staff council has no co-determination rights in economic matters.

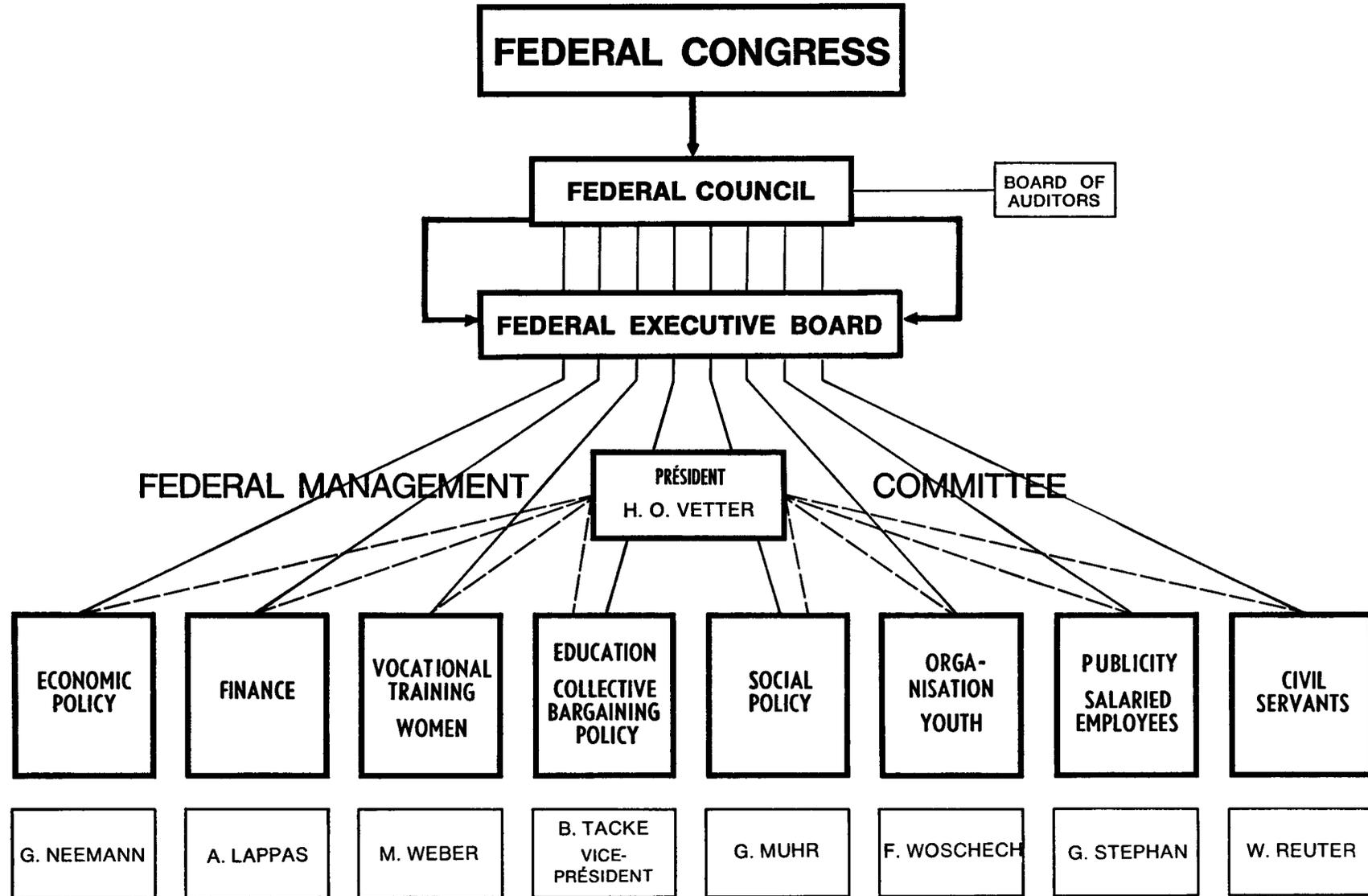
d) After three years of struggle, the supplementary law of 1956 on workers' co-determination in the mining and steel industries laid the legal foundation for co-determination in the trusts formed by the companies in these industries. In March 1967, the Federal Parliament (Bundestag) adopted an amendment to this supplementary law on co-determination to avoid it being emptied of substance.

The DGB considered the law on the social organisation of the enterprise as inadequate already in 1952, when it was adopted by the Bundestag despite trade union resistance. Practice since then has shown up its shortcomings. The law prevents the works council from participating in firm's most important decisions. One cannot even pretend to a right to workers' co-determination in personnel and economic questions. The DGB considers it absolutely essential to have the law on the social organisation of enterprises reviewed—co-determination should be extended in their view to economic development, to technical transformations and to new working methods.

In carrying out their tasks of defending the interests of the workers before the employer, the works councils depend on the support of the trade unions. Within the law's framework, however, the unions' rights are limited to a few specific cases. In general, the law is based on a separation between legal representation of the workers through the works council and the trade unions. Thus, works council members, for instance, do not have to be union members. Experience has shown that the separation between works council and trade union, foreseen by the law, has no basis in reality as more than 80 per cent of the works council members are trade unionists and consider themselves as their unions' representatives in the factory or office.

Studies have shown clearly that in fact the works councils only make use of their legal rights in those fields where they have right to co-determination which they can actually impose. The greater the limits placed on the works councils' rights, the less use is made of them. This phenomenon is the expression of a certain resignation because the works councils must recognize that in most cases, the employer is able to take decisions alone. Only a form of co-determination based on equal rights can guarantee an effective participation of the works council. This state of affairs applies only to social problems; it is completely lacking in personnel matters and economic questions.

# DGB STRUCTURE





The law on the social organisation of enterprises does not recognize the participation of the works council in decisions concerning reconversions made necessary by technical evolution, though these are of crucial importance to the workers affected. The exceedingly weak form of co-determination foreseen by the law in economic questions is excluded even when changes in the firm's objectives or the introduction of completely new work methods are caused by changes in the market situation or by technological progress.<sup>1</sup>

In addition, the trade unions are represented on various social bodies, recognized by law, which owe the unions their existence and administrative autonomy, such as health insurance associations (friendly societies ensuring free treatment for wage-earners and supplementary payments for salaried workers, and other social security bodies), pension insurance associations (insurance bodies for the workers at state level and at federal level for the salaried employees), and bodies for unemployment insurance (federal employment exchange office and of unemployment insurance).

### The DGB's views on Europe

Ludwig Rosenberg, former DGB President, has defined the attitude of the German trade unions to European integration as follows:

"Since the 1860's, the union of the peoples and nations in one great federation is one of the chief aims of the workers' movement.

"The workers' movements of all countries, since they came into being, have been international movements with international demands and objectives. The German trade unions have therefore declared themselves in favour of European political and economic integration from the start.

"Leading trade unionists are active in various organisations of the Community. It concerns, after all, an old, moral principle of the workers' movement, that of the solidarity of nations and of men, and its realisation in an important part of the world. The Community of the Six should make a start in this sense. It should prove by practical solutions, that it is possible to tackle the great tasks facing our epoch in freedom, peace and in defending the dignity of man."

The DGB approved the Treaty which created the European Coal and Steel Community in 1950 and declared itself in favour—though with certain reservations—of the Treaties which created the European Economic Community and the Euratom.

The seventh ordinary federal Congress of the DGB, held in Berlin from 9 to 14 May 1966, devoted far more interest to various aspects of European integration than all previous DGB congresses. This fact must be related to the great importance shown by the DGB in a dynamic development of the European institutions at the time when the Communities were emerging from a crisis caused by the rejection of the Commission's proposals for obtaining its own financial resources and for organising parliamentary control over them.

The most important demands and statements of this Congress are included in the motions given below:

"After a long and grave crisis, the three European Communities, the EEC, the ECSC and Euratom, have resumed normal activities at the beginning of 1966. The 7th DGB Federal Congress calls on those holding office in the member states of the Communities, for the sake of peace, economic development and social progress, not to

endanger once more the great task of unification through national isolationism or for the sake of short-term group interests.

"The Congress trusts that the governments of the member states will refrain from deducing that the Luxemburg agreement of 28 January 1966 gives them a right of veto in voting in the Council of Ministers of the European Communities.

"The DGB is ready to contribute, as hitherto, to the construction of a free, social and democratic Europe. Its objective is and remains the political and economic unification of Europe. The DGB knows that its aim is shared by the fraternal trade union organisations in the EEC which are united in the International Confederation of Free Trade Unions. "This contribution of the trade unions, however, can be effective only if the democratic and parliamentary forces and the trade unions are given an adequate role to play in the construction of a new Europe. This implies the following measures:

- strengthening the role of the European Parliament, particularly by putting into effect the election by universal direct suffrage of its members, as foreseen in the EEC-Treaty;
- widening of the Commission's competence;
- granting the Economic and Social Committee the right to initiate measures;
- developing direct cooperation between the Communities' institutions and the trade unions on the basis of the working methods successfully applied by the High Authority of the ECSC; and
- intensifying the activities of the European Communities in the field of information.

"The DGB appeals to the Government to support these demands in the Council of Ministers of the Six and to press for the representation of the free trade unions of the EEC member states in a joint Commission for all three Communities.

"The trade unions, which defend the principle of supranationality for economic and political integration, must therefore strengthen their own supranational cooperation so as to enable them to defend the interests of the workers they represent also on the international level.

"The 7th DGB Congress therefore expects all governing bodies of the free trade union organisations of the six member countries to work towards a greater cooperation among the trade union federations within the EEC.

"The merger of the executive bodies of the European Communities should provide the opportunity to check—in agreement with the international secretariats of the trade unions and of the professional associations—if trade union representation within the Community institutions is adequate. During the debate on a common stand within the Community, relations with trade union organisations of countries which are not yet EEC members should be strengthened.

"The 7th DGB Congress urges the Commission of the European Economic Community to continue the cooperation which it has maintained hitherto with the workers' representatives.

"The Congress rejects with amazement the French Government's opinion according to which all participation in European social measures, provided for under articles 117 and 118 of the Treaty, should be denied to the trade unions and to the employers.

"As to the harmonisation of social security, experience has shown that the mere coordination of the systems of social insurance in the six countries is no longer sufficient to prevent workers who have been employed in several member states from suffering certain social disadvantages. At the request of the trade unions, the Commission has taken this fact into consideration and invited the member states to harmonise and improve their national social legislations. The Congress welcomes these European initiatives and hopes that the member states will, by implementing these initiatives, contribute towards a social harmonisation based on progress."

<sup>1</sup> The Betriebsverfassungsgesetz was amended by the Bundestag and adopted in its new form in November 1971. The revised version contains a number of clauses—though not all—for which the trade unions had been pressing.

## 2. The DAG

Among the ranks of the salaried employees, the DAG is also a powerful trade union movement.

After 1945, the active members of the former employees' federations of all tendencies met in Hamburg and, in closest agreement with the reconstituted workers' trade union organisations, founded the German Employees' Trade Union (Deutsche Angestellten-Gewerkschaft—DAG). There, too, ideological splits were considered a thing of the past.

Until the 1948 Congress of the DGB in Recklinghausen, the DAG had a seat with voting rights in the DGB of the British Zone. However, when this Congress decided by majority vote that the principle of organisation by industrial sector also applied to salaried employees, the DAG found itself in practice excluded from the DGB.

In its present form, the DAG is the biggest trade union exclusively grouping salaried employees in the German Federal Republic since 13 April 1949, the date on which it merged with the employees' federations of Southern Germany. The number of members has continued to grow since then and reached 482,139 on 31 December 1967.

### Structure and Aims

The DAG is the unified trade union organisation of the employees. It extends over the whole territory of the German Federal Republic, including Berlin, and aims at the union of all employees on a democratic basis. It is independent from the state, employers, political parties, churches, and other institutions outside the DAG.

Membership is open to the apprentice as well as to the chief of service, or to civil servants. The DAG is a member organisation of the International Federation of Commercial, Clerical and Technical Employees (FIET), in Geneva, which is affiliated to the International Confederation of Free Trade Unions.

The DAG is structured according to categories and geographically in 11 state groupings and 725 local branches.

The DAG safeguards and furthers its members' economic, social, professional and cultural interests. These aims should be reached by the following:

- co-determination in the fixing of salaries and other working conditions, in particular by concluding collective agreements in applying all possible means available to the trade unions;
- influencing legislation and social and economic policy in general and cooperating in cultural policy;
- obtaining representation for the workers, with equal rights, on the existing economic policy bodies, as well as on those still to be created, to safeguard the right to co-determination in all economic and social fields;
- democratizing the economy and the administration, preventing, and struggling against, nationalist, militaristic and reactionary influences which might cause a danger to the State and the Constitution;
- giving assistance and legal protection in all matters concerning workers' rights, social rights and the rights of public workers;
- maintaining international relations.

### The DAG and Europe

Among a series of important resolutions on economic, wages and social policy adopted by the 9th Federal Congress of the DAG in Berlin in 1967, was the following

resolution concerning the European Economic Community:

"The DAG reiterates its support for the principle of the economic and political unification of Europe. It is a pre-condition for Europe having the ability to appear in the future as equal partner of the two world blocs. The task of overcoming the problems posed by technology, science and research goes beyond the capacities of individual states. On the other hand, the standard of living of the peoples of Europe depends in the last resort on the participation of Europe, on the formative and decision-making level, in this process of development.

"The unification of Europe must not be limited to the six countries of the European Economic Community. In line with the aim of the Rome Treaties, it should be extended to all European states that want to join it. The DAG demands that a first step be taken in this respect and that positive decisions be taken on the subject of the requests for membership of Great Britain, Denmark, Ireland and Norway."

## 3. The Christian trade unions and Europe

The Christian Trade Union Federation of Germany (Christliche Gewerkschaftsbund Deutschlands—CGB) and its affiliated unions of workers, employees and public service workers have also declared themselves in favour of a constructive European policy. The starting point for this attitude can be found in the guiding principles of the CGB:

"The unification in a European Economic Community, open to all free peoples of Europe on condition that they respect the rules and treaties adopted when the EEC was created, constitutes the most effective guarantee for a peaceful future for the nations of Europe; it is also an essential pre-condition for Europe's capability to fulfill its important tasks in the world, particularly in respect of the developing countries.

"The trade unions' right to participate in the construction of Europe is exerted by the CGB through its collaboration within the European Organisation of the Christian Trade Unions. In this respect, they believe that it is not a question of achieving a levelling but a harmonisation of the social and economic conditions now obtaining in the countries of the EEC. Faced with the material weight of quantity, they have to awaken the live feeling for a natural order of values in the interest of a European integration which has the support of the peoples of Europe."

These declarations cover the whole range of wishes and intentions of the CGB. On the practical level, this implies: the harmonisation of policies in various fields, the admission by the Community of those countries wanting to join and, ultimately, the political unity of Europe. A Community which remains limited to economic integration will not be able to fulfill its tasks in respect of the Third World nor maintain an independent place in face of the two world powers.

One of the main tasks of the trade union organisation is to defend these principles on the national plane in face of the political power. But a European activity cannot be limited to this aim; it is also essential to explain to large sections of the population the need for European integration. This is why in all educational activities of the Christian trade unions in Germany, the question of European unity is given prominence with the aim of constantly training new educators who will devote themselves to this task.

# The trade union movement in France

All trade unions in France are associations having legal status and all rights and obligations which derive from this status. Workers may associate freely since the law of 21st March 1884.

The French concept of trade union organisation is that of industrial unions (as distinct from craft unions) associating all workers on the local as well as on the national level according to their industry, irrespective of their particular craft (e.g. metal-working, building, mines, textiles, etc.).

The characteristics of the French trade union movement, in contrast to trade unionism elsewhere, are its divisions and its minority position. These basic facts do not, however, exclude a degree of effectiveness which becomes apparent when social conditions in France are compared to those in other countries.

## I. A divided trade union movement

The division of the French trade union movement is expressed by the existence of three types of organisation: national trade union confederations, professional associations and various independent and autonomous unions.

### a) The national trade union confederations

Known as workers' central organisations, they owe their title to their proletarian origins: historically they were almost exclusively organisations of industrial workers. Today, they are also open to employees, public service employees and employees of the nationalised industries, as well as to technical and supervisory staffs.

There are four national trade union confederations in France:

— *The General Confederation of Labour* (Confédération générale du Travail, CGT) is numerically the largest.

Communist militants were for a long time in a minority in the CGT. They withdrew from it for the first time in 1921 when they were outvoted after attempting to make it adhere to the communist-orientated trade union International. They were expelled from the CGT in 1939 after the German-Soviet Pact. When they obtained a majority after the second world war, they took it over in 1948 and caused the withdrawal of the non-communists. The latter reorganised themselves, creating the General Confederation of Labour-Workers' Force (Confédération générale du Travail-Force Ouvrière), better known under the title of "Force Ouvrière" (FO).

The CGT is affiliated to the World Federation of Trade Unions (WFTU).

— *The General Confederation of Labour-Workers'*

*Force* (Confédération générale du Travail-Force Ouvrière, CGT-FO), created by the split in 1948, considers itself the successor of the pre-1948 CGT. It claims to be its historical and doctrinal heir. It is therefore more particularly committed to the independence of the trade union movement from political parties. The preamble to its constitution states: "Force Ouvrière emphasises the absolute necessity for self-determination of the trade union movement . . . in accordance with the spirit of the Confederation's Congress of Amiens in 1906." This makes explicit reference to the basic text of trade unionism from before the first world war which defined the movement as independent and revolutionary.

The "Force Ouvrière" is affiliated to the International Confederation of Free Trade Unions (ICFTU).

— *The French Democratic Confederation of Labour* (Confédération démocratique du Travail, CFDT) is the successor of the French Confederation of Christian Workers (Confédération française des Travailleurs chrétiens, CFTC) founded in 1919. The CFTC became the CFDT in 1964 as the result of a slow transformation. The change meant abandoning the social doctrine of the Catholic Church and assuming a resolutely socialist direction for the Confederation's programme. This evolution of Christian trade unionism has to a certain extent found its international projection by the transformation of the international projection by the transformation of the International Confederation of Christian Trade Unions (CISC) into the World Confederation of Labour (WCL).

The CFDT is a member of the WCL (CISC).

— *The French Confederation of Christian Workers* (Confédération française des Travailleurs chrétiens, CFTC) is the organisation of the members who refused to accept the transformation of the CFTC into the CFDT at the 1964 Congress when it gave up the organisation's confessional link and who wanted to maintain the tradition of Christian trade unionism. The CFTC is based on the social doctrine of the Catholic Church.

### b) The professional associations

These are organisations grouping specific categories of salaried employees.

— *The Federation of National Education* (Fédération de l'Éducation nationale, FEN) is the organisation of the teaching staff in the national educational establishments.

Before the 1948 split the teachers were affiliated to the

CGT. When it occurred the FEN preferred to maintain its internal unity rather than to make a choice between the CGT and the FO. The Federation encompasses a number of tendencies: the so-called "autonomous" tendency is in the majority (65 per cent to 70 per cent) and approximates to the line of the FO. The "Unity and Action" tendency is second (22 per cent to 25 per cent) and is under the influence of the Communist Party. Finally, it contains an anarchist-sindicalist tendency (6 per cent to 8 per cent).

— *The General Confederation of Supervisory Staffs* (Confédération générale des Cadres, CGC) was the result of the amalgamation of the National Federation of Technical Staffs Unions (Fédération nationale des Syndicats d'Ingénieurs) with the General Confederation of Supervisory Staffs of the French national economy (*Confédération générale des Cadres de l'Economie française*). It tries to organise in trade unions all employees who have reached a certain level in the industrial hierarchy (technical and supervisory staff). This attempt is inspired by the "middle class" concept.

Technical and supervisory staffs unions also exist within the national confederations CFDT, CGT, FO and CFTC.

### c) The independent organisations

There is a certain number of so-called "independent" or "autonomous" trade union organisations. They are mostly linked with a single industry or even a single company. They are mainly found in the Paris area and in the national interprofessional sphere their influence is limited. It is difficult to estimate how representative they are.

Among several independent or autonomous trade unions there are: The General Confederation of Independent Unions (*Confédération générale des Syndicats indépendants*), the French Confederation of Labour (*Confédération française du Travail*), the Autonomous Confederation of Labour (*Confédération autonome du Travail*), etc.

*The National Confederation of Labour* (Confédération nationale du Travail, CNT) is a survival of the anarchist-sindicalist tradition which dominated the CGT up to the first world war. The CNT now mainly recruits amongst the Spanish political refugees.

## II. Historical development and the causes of the divisions in the trade union movement

The division of the trade union movement in France is explained by the tendency of the trade unions to link themselves right from the start to political options. This division, however, was not inherent in its vocation—the young trade union movement wanted to replace the generally hierarchically structured and divided world by an equalitarian and solidary society. But by not being based on a social doctrine proven in action, as had been the case for the German Social-Democratic Party or the British Labour Party, the French trade union movement had to create its own doctrine and to take its distances from the many and varied political attempts aiming at social renewal.

### a) Revolutionary trade unionism

First set up in clandestinity, the trade unions obtained the right to legal recognition in 1884. They formed a

national interprofessional trade union organisation by creating the CGT in 1895. Strongly influenced by anarchistic and Blanquist ideas, the leaders of the CGT elaborated a coherent doctrine, that of revolutionary trade unionism. It was to be the ruling doctrine of the CGT until 1914 and can be summarised as follows:

— "Social justice can result only from the expropriation of the capitalists and the setting up of an equalitarian society, in which production and distribution are organised by the trade unions."

— Only the working class, organised in trade unions, can achieve this transformation.

"The trade union movement appeals to the workers to take up the struggle against the might of the state, against the corruption of politics and calls them to action; it proves itself as a power capable of regenerating the world. Today, it is the greatest fighting weapon; tomorrow, it shall be the great renovator," wrote Griffuelhes, Secretary of the CGT.

— The other means, especially universal suffrage and the rule of parliament, are nothing but a deception in which the socialist deputies take part.

— The strength of the bourgeoisie resides only in the support of the state, that is the army, the police and the church.

— This oppressive organisation of society is presented to the people as if it were the necessary consequence of national solidarity, based on the artificial notion of the Fatherland.

"To the worker, the Fatherland is embodied by the boss, the foreman, the soldier, the judge and the gaoler," Griffuelhes emphasised. He wrote further: "The worker's Fatherland is his place of work."

That is why the CGT emphasises its internationalist outlook: "Geographic frontiers are changed according to the will of the property-owning classes. . . . The workers only recognise the economic frontiers dividing two hostile classes: the working class and the capitalist class."

— The struggle must therefore be fought between the social classes; the weapon for the class-struggle is the general strike.

Within the CGT, agreement on this conception of trade unionism was not unanimous. Two other trends were also in evidence. On the one hand, there were the marxists who, while in agreement with the revolutionary aims, did not believe that the trade unions would be able to achieve the revolution alone without a political direction, namely the party, consisting of the workers' élite; on the other, the reformists who wanted to limit trade union action to the economic and social level to arrive at progressive improvements of the workers' conditions.

These tendencies remained side by side in the CGT until the first world war, whose outbreak marks the end of revolutionary trade unionism and the collapse of the myth of internationalism. In the name of "sacred unity," the leaders of the CGT decided to give their support to the national cause. They justified this action by the astonishing about-turn in working-class opinion. "At that moment, the working-class would not have left it to the police to shoot us; they would have shot us themselves," said Merrheim, secretary of the Metalworkers Federation, subsequently.

At the end of the first world war, two tendencies stood face to face in the CGT: those who wanted to achieve reforms at the social level by taking advantage of the understanding reached with the Government during the war and those who wanted the revolution. To the latter, the Russian revolution of October 1917 was an example and an expression of hope. . . .

At the same time, another event occurred which caused little notice and which remained of marginal significance between the two wars: the birth of the French Confederation of Christian Workers (*Confédération française des Travailleurs chrétiens*, CFTC). Opposing the class-struggle of the CGT, the CFTC intended to promote

reforms by seeking its inspiration in the social doctrine of the Catholic Church, defined by the Encyclica *Rerum Novarum* (1891). The CFTC defined its objectives as follows: "The aim of our trade union action will be to realise the principle of peaceful collaboration between capital and labour in the enterprise and to divide profits equitably. . . ."

## b) Ideological handicap

The particularity of the French trade union movement consists in the fact that from this period onwards, it mirrors in its ranks all the crises which derive from the ideological conflict which splits the world since 1917. Periods of trade union division, just as periods of relative unity, are merely the consequences of various phases of this conflict:

— The foundation of the Communist International caused the first split within the CGT. The communists, having failed in their plan to get the CGT to affiliate to the new International, left the CGT and set up a dissident organisation: the "CGT Unitaire" (1921).

— The rise of the fascist danger in the whole of Europe led to a rapprochement of the dissident organisations: the communists once again rejoined the CGT in favour of the Popular Front (1936).

— The conclusion of the German-Soviet Pact led to the expulsion of the communists from the CGT (1939).

— Following the breaking of the Pact by Germany and the invasion of the USSR by German troops, the communists rejoined the CGT militant members engaged in the struggle against the German occupying forces. Together they laid the foundations for the rebuilding of the CGT which had been dissolved during the war.

— At the end of the war, the CGT is reconstituted.

— The start of the cold war provokes a new split and the creation of "Force Ouvrière."

## c) Parallel development

While this part of the French trade union movement was torn between two opposing tendencies—between trade unionism seen as "a transmission belt between the party and the masses" and a trade unionism determined to define independently its aims and the means to achieve them—another parallel development was to be noted: the slow growth and transformation of the christian trade union movement. This phenomenon can be illustrated by a few important mile-stones:

— Already at the time of its foundation in 1919, there were two schools of thought in the CFTC: those who wanted to maintain the organisation in the strict observance of catholic social doctrine and obedient to the hierarchy of the Church and those who demanded independence of judgement and initiative.

— The year 1936 is for the christian trade union movement the first genuine opportunity to take an active part in the social struggle.

— The contribution of the Christian Workers' Youth Movement (*Jeunesse ouvrière chrétienne*, JOC) brought a steadily growing radicalisation of the organisation. In addition, the setting up of the General Union of National Education (*Syndicat général de l'Education nationale*) within the CFTC gave it a progressive wing.

— A further occasion for the CFTC to take its distance from the Church came with the second world war, when it was disbanded by the Pétain Government together with the CGT. The participation of CFTC members in the resistance movement brought them together with other trade unionists and considerably increased their exposure to socialist ideas. Nevertheless, they refused to join the CGT, afraid of losing their specific christian character.

— The progress of the CFTC towards the shedding of

its confessional links with the Church gathered speed from 1946 onward, the date when the study groups "Reconstruction," influenced by JOC members, had the references to the Encyclica *Rerum Novarum* replaced in its Constitution by the simple mention of "christian social ethics." The CFTC also steadily loosened its ties with christian democracy (the MRP Party).

— This development leads in November 1964 to the creation of the CFDT and to abandoning all reference to "christian moral ethics."

To be able to estimate the importance of this transformation, one should place side by side the text mentioned earlier which defined the former CFTC as favouring collaboration between capital and labour and the following statement by Eugène Descamps, former General Secretary of the CFDT: "The trade union movement should not be the social assistance of capitalism." The present policy of the CFDT calls for the establishment of democratic socialism. It should be recalled that a part of its members has not accepted this development and has maintained in existence the CFTC, which is at present under the presidency of Jacques Tessier.

## III. A minority trade union movement

Certain people see in its division the reason for that other characteristic of the French trade union movement, namely its weakness in membership. It is impossible to be precise on this issue, because the estimates given—whether they come from the organisations themselves or whether they are given by outside sources—vary considerably. One may state, however, without meeting too much protest, that the percentage of trade union membership is around 20 to 22 per cent of the active wage-earning labour force.

This weak proportion has remained constant, apart from a few periods, such as 1920 when the CGT had some 2,400,000 members, 1936-1937 when it had 5,000,000 and the CFTC 250,000, and 1945-1947 when the two organisations grouped respectively 5,400,000 and 350,000 members.

It is only fair to acknowledge that in all Western countries (excepting the Scandinavian countries and Belgium), organized workers are in the minority. Thus the percentage of unionisation does not go beyond 40 per cent in Federal Germany and 25 per cent in the USA.

As to France, this situation must be clarified further: the degree of unionisation is very different according to industry or profession. It is very high among teachers (90 per cent), electrical power workers, gas industry workers, and in general among the whole of the public sector, though these very sectors are usually weakly organised in other countries. On the other hand, in the retail trade, building industry, textiles, etc., union penetration seems to meet difficulties. In the leading industries, such as electronics, oil, chemicals, the percentage of union membership is higher than in the traditional industries.

The causes for this relatively low degree of unionisation are difficult to discover:

— The division in the trade union movement is often given as explanation. However, even in periods of relative unity (e.g. 1945), trade union members represented only 40 per cent of the wage earners. Furthermore, in other countries where the trade union movement is as divided (e.g. the Netherlands), the percentage of union members is higher.

— Another cause could be the ideological impregnation of the French trade union movement. But why should this prove an obstacle to union organisation in France when this is not the case for the Scandinavian countries, Great Britain, etc.?

— Some observers put forward another reason: the relatively "centralist" structure of the organisations could be the cause for a "trade unionism from the top" and the passivity of the masses. Another factor which might explain the trade union situation in France is that the essential part of social progress which benefits the workers depends on legislation and not on collective agreements, as in other countries. Replies to these suppositions point out that the activities of the trade union organisations in France depend entirely on the voluntary participation of the workers and that the permanent trade union administration uses a far lighter hand than is the case in most other industrialised countries.

The historian Georges Lefranc defends the view that the situation which has just been described can be explained by the Frenchman's individualism. He adds that this individualism, which repudiates mass organisations and the discipline demanded by any structure, even a democratic one, does not exclude support for initiatives taken by the militant minority, nor spontaneous enthusiasm. It is important to underline in this respect that the French trade union movement is one of the few (excepting those of Italy and Belgium) carrying out national—interprofessional and interindustrial—strikes.

## IV. The French trade unions and Europe

From the beginning of the construction of Europe, the French trade unions were divided on the stand to be taken. The CGT declared its hostility to the plan; the FO, the (CFTC) CFDT and the CGC were in favour while expressing awareness of its insufficiencies. These fundamental attitudes have hardly changed in over the years.

Thus Léon Mauvais, Confederal Secretary of the CGT, said in June 1967 at the CGT Congress: "As a closed economic bloc, the Common Market has largely contributed to the development of monopolistic competition. . . . It has stimulated the monopolistic development of the economy and created new and grave economic and social contradictions. . . . It has taken measures of stabilisation and contributed to recessions and stagnation, accompanied by a growth of unemployment now affecting most of the countries which are members. . . ."

On the other hand, the FO, the CFDT, the CGC and the CFTC are agreed, apart from minor differences, in taking part in the building of Europe.

### a) Agreement in principle

While the Schuman Plan, which led to the foundation of the ECSC, was denounced by the CGT as the work of American imperialism, the FO, the (CFTC) CFDT and the CGC gave their support to this initiative. They approved above all the supranational character of the ECSC. They saw in it the foundation of a European integration that would not only be economic but also political.

This does not mean that the CFDT and the FO declared themselves in favour for any kind of Europe. In this respect, the present General Secretary of FO, André Bergeron, recently said: "A kind of Europe from which the workers are excluded is condemned in advance to failure. The economic and social problems of European integration will only be resolved in a political Europe."

### b) Priority for social aims

The trade union organisations which support European integration have firmly placed the social aims of the Rome Treaty in the forefront of their priorities. They cannot hide a certain disappointment with what has been achieved so far in this respect. Thus, *Syndicalisme*, the organ of the CFDT, wrote: "Though the businessman's Europe is being achieved ahead of the datelines foreseen in the Rome Treaty, the workers' Europe, or its social policy, is well behind schedule. . . . In the coming months, the trade union movement will have to strengthen its action so that the French workers will not have to bear the burden of the Common Market. . . . We must work for the only kind of Europe that is worthwhile, a workers' and a peoples' Europe."

For FO, "the progress achieved in elaborating a common social policy is clearly insufficient. . . . This insufficiency can only be overcome by recognizing that social policy has to play the role of a driving force. . . . That is why we need a common and dynamic employment policy and the improvement of living and working conditions by a realistic harmonisation policy in a progressive framework."

### c) Demand for workers' participation

Since the founding of the ECSC, the CFDT and the FO have made it clear that they wanted to be associated with the decision-making process at all levels. Here, too, they do not hide their disappointment at the present trends discernible in the construction of Europe. André Jean-son, Confederal Secretary of the CFDT, speaking at the Economic and Social Committee at the time of the merger of the three European executive bodies, declared: "The European economy, whose construction is being pursued, is being built up according to the same principles, the same methods and with the same aims as the national economies of the six countries. Neither on the national nor on the European level do we agree with the principles, these methods or these aims."

### d) For a greater Community

The trade union organisations backing the European idea intend to further the enlargement of the Community. They insist on one condition alone: that the country that wants to join be a democratic one. These trade union organisations particularly stress that the requests for admission made by Great Britain and the Scandinavian countries be studied with the intention of reaching an agreement. At its 34th Congress, the CFDT has also declared itself in favour of "economic and cultural co-operation between the Common Market, the Soviet Union and the people's democracies."

#### Brief bibliography

J. MONTREUIL, *Histoire du Mouvement ouvrier en France*, Ed. Aubier.  
Ed. Dolleans, *Histoire du Mouvement ouvrier* (3 vols.), Ed. Armand-Colin.

REYNAUD, *Les syndicats en France*, Ed. Dunod.

Ph. BAUCHARD et M. BRUZEK, *Le syndicalisme à l'épreuve*, Ed. Laffont.  
"Les syndicats", special number of *Liaisons sociales*.

# The trade unions in Italy

*The origins of the workers' and peasants' movements in Italy are to be found in the development of workers' associations. These were in fact friendly societies, which, exceptionally, played the role of trade union associations. These mutual aid societies developed particularly between 1840 and 1850 in Piedmont, Lombardy and the Venice region.*

## The origins of the trade union movement

The first genuine trade union organisation was born in Turin in 1848 with the founding of a printers' union which even succeeded in concluding a collective agreement. By and by, associations of printers in other towns were set up for the purpose of mutual aid or with genuine trade union aims. After many attempts, a national federation of printing workers, grouping some thirty local organisations, was set up in 1872. Its aim was to see that wage scales were being adhered to, to help the unemployed, to determine working conditions and the entry of apprentices and to maintain contact with the affiliated organisations.

The hatmakers also played a significant role in the birth of the Italian trade union movement. Their associations, first set up with the aim of providing mutual help, rapidly assumed the functions of trade unions.

In the 1860's, strikes and social struggles did not always originate from the organised trade union movement. Spontaneously formed workers' associations often only existed during strikes; frequently, the mutual aid societies supported the workers' demands and played the role of trade unions. During this period, it was the bakery workers, the building workers, and especially the masons who led the struggle.

In agriculture, the trade union movement developed mainly under socialist influence. The Po Valley, where the working population was already concentrated, was the main theatre for this process and for the many violent struggles which accompanied it.

In the 1880's, the process of change from mutual aid societies into trade unions was speeded up hand in hand with the industrialisation and the general development of the economy. At the start, the union organisations were locally and regionally based, though some national organisations of professional workers were already in existence. The growth of the workers' movement, however, made a centralisation and coordination more urgent.

Modelled on the French labour exchanges (*bourses du travail*), a number of "Chambers of Labour" were created, organisations of coordination and of social services which functioned on the regional level. They were first set up in 1891 in Milan, Piacenza and Turin. Two years later, the first congress of the Italian Chambers of Labour

assembled representatives of twenty. Next year, their number had reached sixty.

Within each Chamber, there were as many sections as the number of trades and professions practised by its members, who were either in genuine trade union organisations or mutual aid societies or cooperatives. All these Chambers did not have identical structures but in general they specialised in the services which they had to offer.

At the turn of the century, the organisational strength of the trade union movement, favoured by vigorous industrial expansion and by a general development of the economy, increased rapidly and, helped by the action of the socialist party, exerted an ever growing influence on the political and social life of the country. In 1902, twenty-seven national trade union federations, grouping 480,000 workers were in existence; by 1903, the movement totalled 500,000 members.

## The CGL and the CIL

On these foundations was set up the General Confederation of Labour (*Confederazione Generale del Lavoro*—CGL), inspired by socialist and reformist ideals. The CGL achieved notable progress in the field of organisation. At the end of 1907, it had 190,422 members; this figure went up to 383,700 in 1911. In the following year, it marked a certain regress as the result of a split provoked by the revolutionary socialists. The CGL always attempted to strengthen the Confederation's central power and to acquire a certain authority over its affiliated organisations; it did not, however, achieve a high degree of centralisation. The Chambers of Labour, on the other hand, did lose a large part of their influence on the national level, while still retaining some power on the local one which the CGL tried in vain to control.

At the same time, the catholic workers' movement grew on the impulse given by catholic organisations engaged in social work. "The Work of the Congresses" (*Opera dei Congressi*) was a catholic organisation whose "intransigent" wing, which since 1887 and especially after the publication of the Encyclica *Rerum Novarum* in 1891, intensified its activities and propaganda in catholic circles. After 1906, the catholic trade union movement scored remarkable successes, particularly in Lombardy, in the Venice

region, Piedmont, and to a lesser degree in Sicily. The catholic unions were particularly strong in the textile industry.

This catholic trade union movement gave birth to the Italian Confederation of Workers (*Confederazione Italiana dei Lavoratori—CIL*), which on its foundation in September 1917 grouped twenty national trade unions and twenty-six provincial and regional union organisations. The CIL emphasised in its programme its purely trade union character and its independence from political parties. It rejected the class struggle, revolution and collectivisation, came out in favour of collaboration between the classes and the respect of reciprocal rights and duties.

In its first phase, the new organisation entered into a dynamic competition with the socialist movement and the CGL. In its second phase, it had to defend itself against the rise of fascism and engage it in a bitter struggle.

The growth of the CIL was rapid: in 1919 it had half a million members, in 1920 the membership reached 1,190,000 (as against 2,200,000 members in the CGL) and in 1921 almost 1,250,000—79 per cent of its membership came from the agricultural sector (peasants, agricultural workers and share-croppers). Outside agriculture, its biggest union was that of the textile workers with 131,320 members.

The decisive crisis of the Italian workers' movement, which exposed its inner weaknesses and insufficiencies and which opened the road to fascism, was sparked off by a number of events among which must be counted the occupation of the factories. This reached its culmination point in September 1920 and created an atmosphere of great tension throughout the country; the middle class took fright and saw the revolution on the horizon. The fascists took advantage of the situation.

Sprung from the divisions in the reformist trade union movement, the fascist trade unions made their first official appearance at the Bologna Congress of 1921.

In 1922, the National Confederation of Fascist Corporations (*Confederazione Nazionale delle Corporazioni Fasciste*) was founded with the aim of "uniting all intellectual, technical and manual professions which consider the right of moral and economic progress as the citizen's absolute duty towards the state." The development of the fascist trade union movement took rapid strides from 1923 onwards, after Mussolini had come to power. More and more openly, it laid claim to monopolize trade union representation. At the same time, the Fascist regime openly announced its authoritarian intentions with respect to the free trade unions.

Despite a few minor achievements, the Fascist trade union experience proved to be absolutely negative. The trade unions were reduced to the level of a bureaucratic institution, politically servile to the regime. Trade unionism was sterilised and drowned within the framework of a backward, closed, centralised political structure which was fed on far-reaching conservative and retrograde ideas under a pseudo-social and pseudo-national cover.

## The Post-War Period

With the fall of the Fascist regime came the rebirth of a free trade union movement in Italy, which went hand in

hand with the resurrection of the various parties and the restoration of freedom and democracy.

The objective of trade union unity was viewed differently by the political parties which were traditionally interested in the matter, namely the communist party, the socialist party and the christian-democratic party.

The events which followed the armistice of 8 September 1943 put an end to the hopes of reconstituting the trade union movement by a democratic reorganisation of the Fascist unions. A fresh start had to be made. Negotiations among the different political groups led on 3 June 1944 to the Rome Pact (*Patto di Roma*). It decided the creation of the General Italian Confederation of Labour (*Confederazione Generale Italiana del Lavoro—CGIL*) that was to group in one organisation the trends—communist, socialist, christian-democrat—which had taken part in the negotiations. The agreement was contained in a "Declaration on the achievement of trade union unity."

The full renaissance of the free trade union movement could only come to flower after the liberation of the whole of Italy in April 1945. Collaboration within the CGIL, dominated by the communist wing, was subsequently influenced in a decisive manner when the communist and socialist parties went into opposition in June 1947, after De Gasperi, leader of the christian-democratic party, had set up a new government which included the participation of the liberals, the republicans, the social-democrats and independent personalities.

A first step towards the break-up of trade union unity came with the founding in June 1948 of the Alliance for the Unity and Independence of the Trade Union Movement (*Alleanza per l'unità e l'indipendenza del sindacato*), created by the leaders of the christian-democratic party together with two other minority groups, the social democrats and the republicans.

The Free General Italian Confederation of Labour (*Libera Confederazione Generale Italiana del Lavoro—LCGIL*) was then set up on 16 to 18 October 1948 upon the initiative of trade unionists of the christian-democratic wing. In their turn, the social-democratic trade union leaders, at a meeting held on 24 May 1949, decided to leave the LCGIL. On 22 May, the republicans withdrew from the united trade union movement. These latter two groups founded on 4 June a new organisation, the Italian Federation of Labour (*Federazione Italiana del Lavoro—FIL*).

The LCGIL and the FIL, however, declared their readiness to favour the unity of democratic workers and of all free and independent trade union forces. This led to the founding on 1 May 1950 of the Italian Confederation of Workers' Unions (*Confederazione Italiana Sindacati Lavoratori—CISL*) which grouped the LCGIL, a part of the FIL and autonomous trade unions.

However, some socialists and some groups of the FIL who had opposed the merger with the LCGIL created on 5 March 1950 the Italian Union of Labour (*Unione Italiana del Lavoro—UIL*). The same year, another organisation, the Italian Confederation of National Unions of Workers (*Confederazione Italiana Sindacati Nazionali Lavoratori—CISNAL*) was set up.

Thus ended the turbulent experiment in trade union unity which had begun with the Rome Pact. But at the same time, a new chapter opened for the Italian trade unions: the proclamation of the Republic gave them the opportunity to express themselves—though disunited—in

modern terms by promoting social progress through the conclusion of collective agreements.

As legal recognition of the trade unions is still pending—though foreseen under article 39 of the Italian Constitution, it has been resolutely held up by the CISL—collective agreements apply in principle only to the trade unions which have concluded them. In fact, however, unorganised workers and employers not covered by the agreement usually refer to them when making individual contracts.

Trade union pluralism in Italy has nevertheless acted as a break to the harmonious development of the system of collective agreements, particularly during the 1950's. It is only in the last ten years and particularly as a result of the political and economic changes which have recently taken place that unity of action in this field was developed with evident advantages to the workers.

Collective agreements are applied on the national and on the factory level to bring about improvements in wages or general working conditions. Formerly, collective agreements were nearly all concluded on the national level, but in recent years, greater interest has been shown for the collective agreements made at factory level which are meant to complete the former.

The percentage of workers who are organised in trade unions in Italy reaches about 35 to 40 per cent. The structure of the Italian national trade union centres is practically the same: vertically, they group organisations according to trade; horizontally, they have regional and local structures, especially at the provincial level. A great effort, which is also linked to the strengthening of trade union rights in the factory, is now being made to increase trade union influence at that level and to transfer to it certain competences which hitherto depended on the provincial or the national organisation.

## Present Problems

### 1. Incompatibility of trade union and political functions

One of the most burning problems is the breaking up of the historical links which existed until now between the trade unions, the parties and political representation. In this respect, the closest links were especially those which tied the CGIL to the communist party, the socialist party and the socialist party of proletarian unity. These three wings were constitutionally recognised by the CGIL before the 7th Congress which was held in Leghorn from 16 to 21 June 1969. This Congress charged the General Council to undertake "all possible measures with a view to eliminating the system of political wings." The delegates to the 7th Congress also approved the proposal which established the principle of incompatibility between parliamentary and elected duties and those of a trade union leader. The General Council was entrusted with the implementation of this principle.

In its turn, the 5th Congress of the UIL, held in Chianciano from 27 to 31 October 1969, by modifying the UIL Constitution, established the principle of incompatibility between executive functions in a trade union on the one hand and leading functions in a political party, or a parliamentary seat, or a seat in a regional, provincial or local assembly on the other. (Excepted are seats

on local councils for communes of less than 30,000 inhabitants.)

The CISL, whose very constitution already includes a proviso proclaiming the incompatibility of political and trade union functions, has gone the farthest in this direction. At its latest Congress (Rome 17-20 July 1969), it confirmed that executive functions in the trade unions were absolutely incompatible with any parliamentary mandate, or any elected function at national, regional or local level. This applied to all leading functions in the trade unions, at all levels.

### 2. Trade union unity

On this issue, the final motion of the CGIL Congress affirms that "*the progress of unitary trends shows up the necessity of making the aim of organic unity a reality in concrete terms and in the briefest delay.*" The attitude of the CISL seems particularly significant. While affirming the urgency of trade union unity, it also points out the conditions: "*The CISL considers that unification will be possible as soon as each of the three trade union organisations will have achieved complete autonomy for its own organisation and member unions, the free choice of its leaders and the elimination of internal political wings.*" The same ideas are found in the final resolution adopted by the UIL Congress which states that "*the unity theme finds its arguments in the constant reaffirmation of the irrefutable values of the democratic system and democratic methods, not only as a matter of principle but also as fundamental elements of a way of life that will be freed from the burden of misery, unemployment, illiteracy and cultural and social blackmail.*"

At any rate, trade union unity is progressing more rapidly than can be gaged from official documents. The "hot autumn" of 1969 has given an unmistakable answer to this question. Five million workers, either members of the CGIL, the CISL and the UIL, or non-union members, carried out a bitter wages struggle on the basis of claims defined in common at factory level. In joint meetings, they approved the results of negotiations on collective agreements, negotiations which had been carried out by unified delegations. It should be pointed out that the trend towards trade union unity grows proportionately stronger as rank-and-file participation in the decision-making process of their unions increases.

### 3. New trade union aims

The interest which has been shown in trade union circles for what has been called the struggle over the incompatibility between trade union functions and parliamentary and political functions is the most obvious sign of the new standpoint of the Italian trade union movement with respect to its field of activities. The statements contained in the concluding motions of the recent congresses of the CGIL, the CISL and the UIL, clearly all give notice that the trade union movement intends to assume an autonomous power in the country and in society.

The UIL calls upon the trade union movement to act as "*stimulus to further new, progressive, more balanced social structures, that will encourage other reforms.*" The resolution approved by the 7th CGIL Congress urges that

*"this need be concretised in a more coherent action with a view to forging closer and more permanent links between economic objectives and trade union aims, between the two essential elements e.g. the wages' struggle at the work place and the struggle to resolve the more general problems concerning the workers' place in society as a whole; these links will block all attempts to resolve these problems at the shop-floor level alone."* The CISL, at its 6th Congress, resolved that *"its action on the economic level must lead to a radical transformation of the mechanisms of economic expansion in order to overcome the present imbalances between different regions of the country and different industrial sectors, and put an end to the vast insufficiencies now found in the providing of public resources."*

This is the policy line which the Italian trade union movement has laid down for its action which goes beyond the scope of collective bargaining: this does not mean that it wants to discredit or ignore the role of the political parties. In this respect, the CISL hopes to establish with the political parties *"an essentially dialectical relationship by giving the support of the trade union movement to those actions of political parties which favour the workers and which oppose any return to reactionary and to authoritarian rule."* The UIL, in rejecting all attempts to create *"outdated and outmoded forms of pansyndicalism,"* recognises *"the indispensable role played by the political forces in the country's democratic life."*

#### **4. Economic planning**

As to economic problems, the Italian trade union organisations have expressed their disappointment at the poor results achieved with the first attempt at economic planning in which they had taken part. Nonetheless, their attitude to economic planning remains rather positive. The 5th UIL Congress favoured *"economic planning which is the outcome of a comprehensive synthesis of the aspirations of the social groups, and which takes pertinent priorities into account."* The 7th CGIL Congress announced its intention of *"resolutely and independently taking up the struggle on the problems of economic planning."* The 6th CISL Congress considered that *"the reorientation of development mechanisms and the achievement of full employment could be reached in a more coherent manner by correct planning in so far as it is used by the government to conciliate divergent interests. Should this not be the case, the trade unions prefer to fight out the issue with the other social groups."*

The most ambitious aim of the trade unions is to alter the present political, economic and social situation in Italy through structural reform. Successes achieved in the spring of 1969 have already led to a major reform of the pensions scheme. The next stages of this process, according to the plans announced in the trade union congresses, is the realisation of a housing policy within the framework of regional planning, tax reform, and reforms

of the health services, of education and of the public administration.

#### **5. International problems and European integration**

The Italian trade union centres are as yet separated by their membership of different international trade union organisations: the CISL and the UIL are affiliated to the International Confederation of Free Trade Unions (ICFTU). On the other hand, the CGIL is affiliated to the communist-oriented World Federation of Trade Unions (WFTU) although its Constitution states in Article 3 that *"it will attempt to establish relations of unity and trade union solidarity, and exchange experiences and information, with trade union organisations of all other countries, irrespective of their international affiliation."*

It was particularly because of its link with the WFTU that the CGIL adopted on the European Communities a policy quite different to that followed by the CISL and the UIL; it should be pointed out, however, that the policy of the CGIL in this respect has changed in the course of time.

While at this level the CISL and the UIL are members of the European Confederation of Free Trade Unions in the Community, the CGIL set up together with the French General Confederation of Labour (*Confédération générale du travail*) a Standing Committee with the task of representing these two organisations in the Community institutions.

The UIL and the CISL have always given their support to the European institutions. The 5th UIL Congress reaffirmed *"the organisation's determination to continue its efforts for building a European unity in which the democratic countries of Northern Europe should take part . . . a united Europe that will further the social and political progress of the working classes, that will be an instrument for effective solidarity action in favour of the developing countries and for concrete mediation between the opposing blocs."* Recalling the decisive role which the international trade union movement had played in the construction of Europe, the 6th CISL Congress confirmed *"its support for a political Europe that would be open to all democratic countries on the continent. . . . Within the framework of the European Confederation of Free Trade Unions, the CISL will continue to cooperate actively in a vigorous action at European level that goes beyond differences between national centres with a view to ensuring the unity and autonomy of all European trade union organisations."* As to the CGIL, its 7th Congress stated that it was necessary to start *"an action which would ensure the continuity and the effectiveness of united action of the trade union movement in Western Europe. It urges all Italian trade union forces to follow the same road in order to launch a common process that will reinforce the trade union action of the working class in capitalist Europe."*

# History and structure of the Luxemburg trade union movement

*The Luxemburg trade union movement is essentially characterised by its pluralism and by its diversity. However, since the end of the war, united trade union action, even organic trade union unity, has become one of the permanent preoccupations of most trade union leaders. An important step in this direction was taken in 1965-1966 when the "Freie Letzeburger Arbechtersverband"—FLA (Free Federation of Luxemburg Workers), of communist tendency and affiliated to the World Federation of Trade Unions, merged with the socialist-orientated "Letzeburger Arbechtersverband"—LAV (Federation of Luxemburg Workers).*

The Luxemburg trade union movement began rather timidly in the early 1860's. It was called into being by Bavarian brewery workers who, by maintaining their links with their home trade union, founded in Luxemburg their local section of the German "Brauereiarbeiter-Verband." The results of this experiment which took place in an almost entirely primary and agricultural environment were considerable. Stimulated by this success, three further organisations were founded between 1864 and 1867: a printers' trade union, a trade union of the cigar-makers of the tobacco industry, and finally in 1867, the trade union of the glove-makers.

However, the development of the workers' movement was severely handicapped from 1871 onwards by the strict application of laws restricting the right of free association. Thus the president of the glove-makers union was arrested as strike-leader and the following year twenty printing workers were condemned to heavy fines. As a result, the number of trade union members fell to below one thousand. Only in the twentieth century did the trade union movement start to grow.

Confined to the capital, the trade union movement had ignored the industrial revolution which took place between 1870 and 1900 in the Canton of Esch. The first trade union organisations were concerned less with improving the conditions of the workers, or with the ideas of the class-struggle, than with the aim of protecting their craft. A determining factor in their creation was therefore the division between craft labour and the invasion of mechanical production, the prelude to the ruin of the cigar-making and glove-making industries.

With the industrial development of Luxemburg, but especially with the first world war and its consequences of misery and inflation, the modern trade union movement began to take shape. It was at this

time, on 30 August 1916, that the "Mineworkers' and Steelworkers' Union" was founded in Esch. Simultaneously, the metalworkers in Luxemburg and the textile workers in Hamm organised themselves into unions. One year later, on 1 July 1917, the principle of permanent cooperation among all the free trade unions was decided at a meeting of the "Entente syndicale," a grouping of trade union leaders.

This was to be the key-stone for the merger of the metalworkers of the mining basin with those of the centre of Luxemburg (Berg-Metall- und Industriearbeiter-Verband) as well as the basis for a confederation grouping all industrial workers: the General Confederation of Labour (*Confédération générale du Travail—CGT*).

But this unity movement was short-lived. Two events, both on the national and international level, were to break its drive.

If the first general strike for higher wages and the maintenance of their earnings' purchase value was broken by the German authorities in 1917, three and a half years later it was the French army which marched against the strikers and made them evacuate the factories they had occupied. The repression was brutal. The trade unions underwent a crisis period, also because the CGT's links with the socialist party caused misgivings both among workers of christian-democratic tendency and workers of communist tendency. The creation of the Christian trade union international in Utrecht in 1920 was the starting signal for the resurrection of christian trade union organisations which had been set up in 1906 but which had disappeared during the first world war. Finally, with the birth of the Luxemburg communist party, mistrust was sown within the working class.

The disillusion caused by these dissensions and the lassitude brought about by the failure of the strikes left their mark on the membership figures in the

period between the two wars. From 1919 to 1920, membership showed a startling growth by passing from 8,200 to more than 26,000. Then came the downturn: 18,000 in 1921, 12,000 in 1929 and 10,000 at the nadir of the economic crisis. It is true that membership figures started to climb again at the eve of the second world war thanks to economic upswing but above all as a result of the creation of the National Labour Council and the suppression of the articles of the penal code which limited the right of free association (1936). However, at the same time, the divisions in the movement had become stronger.

## Ideological pluralism

From the ideological point of view, the working class is divided in two major tendencies, that is the socialist tendency on the one hand and the social-christian tendency on the other.

The CGT (Confédération générale du Travail), of socialist tendency and affiliated to the International Confederation of Free Trade Unions, has grown continuously in membership and political influence since its foundation in 1919 but particularly since the end of the second world war. It has succeeded in rallying most of the professional federations in Luxemburg and now groups five trade unions<sup>1</sup>.

Nevertheless, despite this upswing, the CGT strength resides chiefly in two organisations: the Federation of Luxemburg Workers—LAV and the National Federation of Railwaymen, Transport Workers, Civil Servants and Employees of Luxemburg—FNCTTFEL.

The second confederation, the "Letzeburger Chreschtleche Gewerkschaftsbond"—LCGB (Christian Trade Union Federation of Luxemburg) showed a slower and later development. It is true that on the local level there were already in 1906 workers' associations based on christian ideals, but for a long time they remained without real influence on the working class. Only at the beginning of the 1920's did these federations join into a single organisation.

Apart from these two confederations, there are two autonomous trade unions, untouched by political or philosophical considerations, which represent specific vocational interests. One is the NHV (Independent Union of Artisans) which in 1965 became the successor-organisation of a non-trade union association of artisans; the other is the FEP (Federation of Private Sector Employees) which emerged from a non-profit making association which had been founded in 1918. Politically independent—"any political or religious pre-occupation within the Federation is forbidden"<sup>2</sup>—the FEP is nevertheless internationally affiliated both to the CIC (International Federation of Supervisory Staffs) and to the FIET (International Federation of Commercial, Clerical and Technical Employees).

1 a) LAV: "Federation of Luxemburg Workers";  
 b) FNCTTFEL: "National Federation of Railwaymen, Transport Workers, Civil Servants and Employees of Luxemburg";  
 c) LVOV: Luxemburg Union of Foremen and Leading Engineers;  
 d) FTL: Bookbinders Federation;  
 e) GANYMED: Hotel Workers National Federation.  
 2 Article 33 of the FEP Constitution.

The neutrality of these two organisations implies that neither is supported by a concrete ideology. On the other hand, the CGT and the LCGB clearly define their opinions:

"The CGT proclaims that the ultimate aim of trade union activity is the transformation of the present society into a classless society where social justice rules and where labour, creator of all values, will be considered as a fundamental factor and where the workers will be able to live without social fear. The trade union movement will defend the immediate social claims of the wage-earners and strive for structural reforms, particularly the introduction of economic democracy, so that everyone may obtain the share of wealth to which he is entitled, according to his labour and his needs.

"The trade union movement repudiates false values, such as rights claimed on grounds of birth or wealth, and will carry on the struggle against the oligarchy of the banks and the monopolies which has made itself the master of the means of production.

"The trade union movement wants to make the wage-earner, now forced to sell his labour, a free participant in the common task of production."

To achieve these aims, the CGT has continuously insisted on the following claims:

- democratisation of the economy, which implies guaranteed full employment and an equitable share-out of the national product. However, these aims can only be attained in the degree in which it will become impossible to take unilateral decisions, inspired only by the profit-motive, concerning the means of production.

It is therefore necessary to introduce effectively workers' co-determination in the directing bodies of companies. At the national level, an Economic and Social Council must be given the task of controlling and studying the development of prices, tax legislation, and general market conditions.

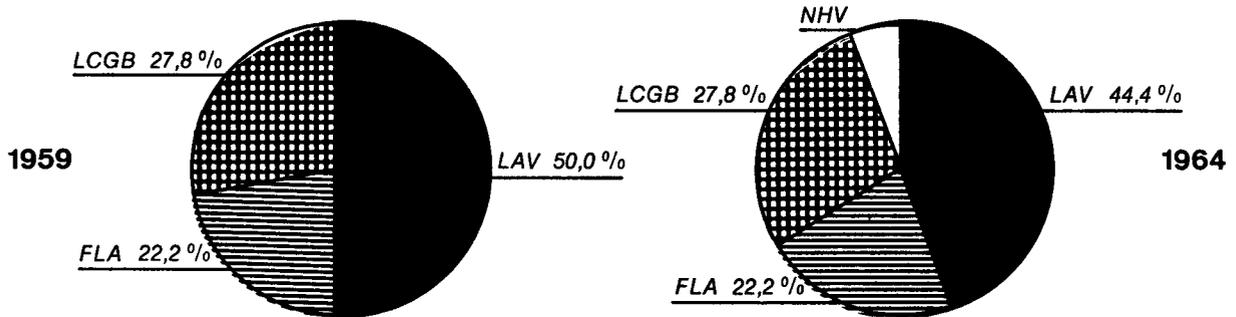
- democratisation of education and information as necessary conditions of any political and economic democracy;

- promotion of social security, that is, the creation of a national health service and the development of labour legislation, but particularly the harmonisation and generalisation of the system of social insurance, including the right of the insured persons to an autonomous administration of the system.

The ideology of the LCGB, far less intransigent than that of the CGT, is resolutely based on the principles of the christian social doctrines formulated by the popes' encyclica. In this sense, the christian trade union movement of Luxemburg seeks in the first place an improvement of the worker's social and economic conditions, guaranteed full employment and the organisation of society on the basis of christianity. On the other hand, it refuses to advocate the overthrow of the established order, either economic or political.

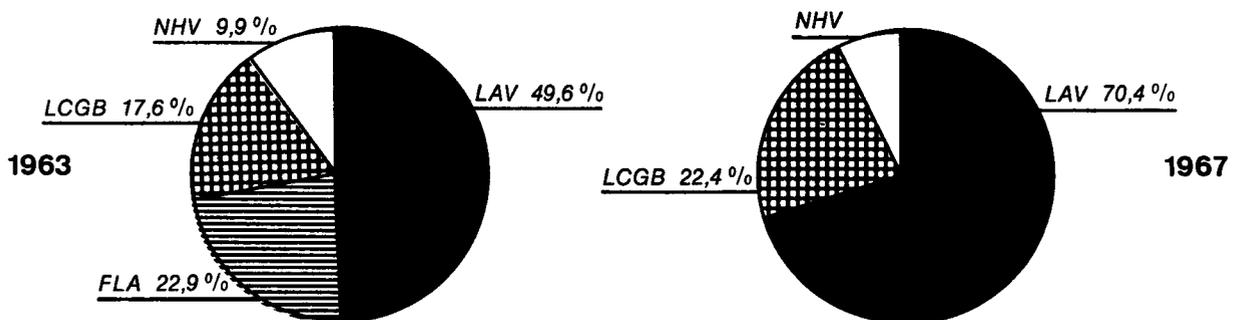
From this springs a less homogeneous programme, which however is not an antithesis of the CGT programme. On the contrary, there is a certain identity of views between the two confederations relating to short-term objectives: co-determination and profit-sharing, democratisation of education, furthering permanent vocational training, expansion of social legislation and of preventative medical care. The LCGB,

## Results of election to chambers of labour

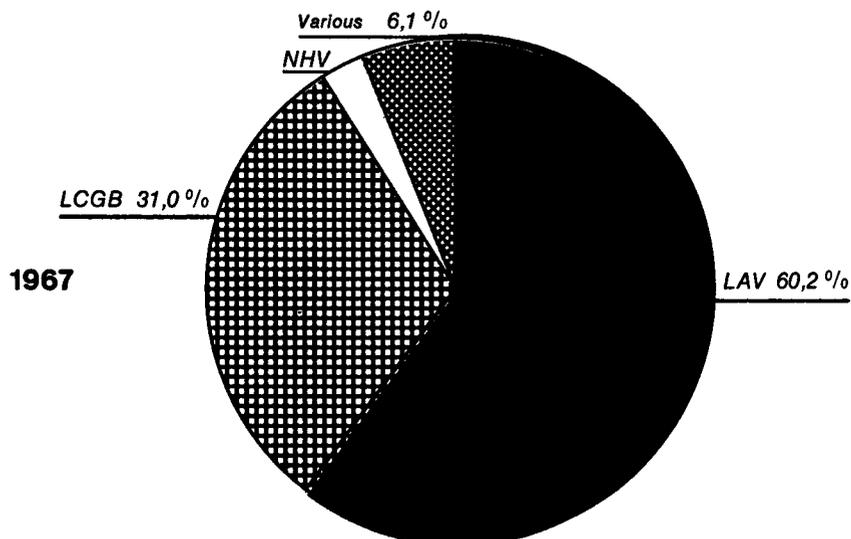


Source : Mémorial 1959, page 399 – Mémorial 1964, page 495

## Works delegates Steel industry and iron ore mines



## Works delegates Small and medium enterprises, public services





however, rejects the idea of the class-struggle and is formally opposed to principle of nationalisation and of collectivisation.

As to the fundamental aims of the FEP, they are mainly directed towards safeguarding the professional interests of the employees in the private sector and towards an equitable solution of the old-age pensions' problem. In addition, the Federation demands the introduction of the 40-hour week by legislation, a review of the legislation concerning apprentices, vocational training and labour inspectors, and also the creation of joint committees in the enterprises.

This identity of views of the three confederations in respect of solutions to the most immediate problems—and this despite fundamental differences in ideology—has had the consequence to bring them closer together. This tendency is strengthened by the fact that their ideas on European integration largely coincide.

Indeed, both the CGT and the LCGB declared themselves in favour of the Schuman Plan right from the start and later for the construction of a new Europe.

Security of employment, the guarantee of a high living standard, but also the elimination of armed conflicts and the protection against all forms of dictatorship were the determining factors in obtaining the support of the Luxemburg trade union movement for the European Coal and Steel Community.

"Without the Schuman Plan, there is no security in the European economy and without economic security in Europe, social security for the workers cannot be envisaged," Antoine Krier, President of the LAV, declared in 1952.

Five years later, the very same motives were invoked to decide the trade union standpoint on the Common Market, which was welcomed as a necessary stage on the road towards European unity and as an indispensable instrument for achieving permanent social progress. At the same time, however, the trade unions expressed their regret that, in the new Community institutions, they had not been granted the right to co-determination which corresponded to their genuine economic and political importance.

From that time on, the trade union view with respect to Europe does not undergo any fundamental change: European integration should be achieved on a democratic basis, taking into account in particular the workers' aspirations. The Treaty merging the European executive bodies, however, came in for severe criticism.

Thus in a statement adopted on 27 October 1965, the CGT condemned "the recent events which disclose a tendency to return to narrow nationalistic ideologies. The CGT calls upon the governments to support henceforth all efforts likely to bring a solution to the present crisis, in full respect for the letter and the spirit of the European treaties.

"The trade unions vigorously affirm . . . that they still favour the widening of supranational competences for the European institutions under the control of a parliament elected by direct suffrage. They deplore the tendency of the Council of Ministers of the EEC to lessen the influence of the trade unions on the occasion of the merger of the European executive bodies; they fear that this tendency may be strengthened when it comes to the time of the merger of the treaties and that of the Communities.

"That is why they again demand . . . direct trade

union representation in the executive bodies of the Community, trade union participation in the preparation of a common economic and social policy which will take into account not the specific interests of industry and of agriculture but the general interest."

For the Luxemburg trade union organisations in their entirety the economic unification of Europe can only go in the sense of "the effective participation of the trade unions in the decision-making process of the Communities," for it is out of question "to create a prosperous Europe at the workers' expense and against the resistance of their organisations."

## Trade union structures and rights

Luxemburg's small size and the concentration of heavy industry in the mining basin as well as the monolithic unity of its economy have profoundly influenced the country's trade union structure. They have in fact imposed an advanced centralisation, even more marked in the case of the LCGB and the FEP than in the CGT.

The second common characteristic is that the three organisations have at the same time a horizontal structure—the professional federations<sup>1</sup>—as well as a vertical structure whose smallest unit is the local section. While neither the LCGB nor the FEP have autonomous youth sections, the LAV has one, the LAJ (Letzeburger Arbechter-Jugend) which has its own constitution, approved by the central committee.

The LCGB is again the only federation to have a strike fund which pays a daily allocation equal to twice the monthly dues in case of strike.

In the third place, it is important to point out that none of the three confederations has a civil status in law. The Luxemburg trade unions are in fact free associations having no legal status; though the law recognises specifically their existence and their representative character. There is one exception to this general rule: the FNCTTFEL which in 1915 constituted itself as a consumer cooperative in accordance with the dispositions of the law of 10 August 1915 on commercial societies.

In Luxemburg, freedom of association and the internal organisation of trade union movements are not limited by any legal provisions. But this does not apply in respect to the right to strike.

These rights, however, were only acquired through a long-lasting struggle which lasted until 1936. It is true that the right to free association was formally guaranteed by the Constitutions of 1848 and 1868. but

<sup>1</sup> Employees in the banks, financial institutions and insurance companies are grouped within the FEP in the ALEBA—Luxemburg Association of Bank and Insurance Employees.

The LCGB regroups the following professional federations:  
FCML: Christian Federation of Luxemburg Metalworkers;  
FCML: Christian Federation of Luxemburg Mineworkers;  
FCOUL: Christian Federation of Luxemburg Factory workers;  
FCPSP: Christian Federation Public Service Workers;  
FCEF: Christian Federation Employees and Civil Servants;  
FCCA: Christian Federation Craftsmen and Apprentices;  
FCOBC: Christian Federation Building and Quarry workers;  
FCTPAS: Christian Federation Social insurance pensioners;  
FCPT: Christian Federation Transport workers;

in practice it was seriously restricted by articles 414, 415 and 416 of the French penal code of 1810 against the right to assembly, which subsisted in Luxemburg until 1879. Though from then onwards, striking became legal as such, article 310 of the new penal code<sup>1</sup> severely repressed any physical or moral constraint from the part of the trade union organisations as an infringement of the right to work.

This is why the working class considered article 310 as "one of the worst monuments of exceptional legislation," all the more so because until then "the country had never been troubled by serious agitation of the workers." The first strike worth mentioning in the country's social history—that of the printing workers—did not take place until 1898. To tell the truth, with this article of the penal code, the legislator aimed in the first place at the repercussions of social movements on neighbouring industrial centres and at the influence of migrant workers. But whatever the motives for the vote, the trade union organisations continued to fight article 310 for having instituted a state of exception against the right to strike. They had to wait until 1936 for its abrogation under the influence of a new fact: the creation of the National Labour Council which had the task "of preventing and to settle collective labour conflicts."

According to the Grand-ducal decree which instituted this body, conciliation procedure is not optional but obligatory. This means in fact that anyone who causes a suspension or stoppage of work, without having first brought the case before the Council, is liable to be fined.

The right to strike is thus subjected to a rigid procedure even though article 11 of the Constitution "guarantees trade union rights" and that—according to the rapporteur on the constitutional law of 1948—"the right to strike is one of the attributes and a corollary of trade union rights."

The regulation for the collective cessation of work, with the introduction of the trade unions in the negotiating procedure, is one of the most important events in the social history of Luxemburg. It would however be a mistake to conclude that the trade union movement seeks and accepts negotiations within four walls as the natural limit of its activities.

Strikes are certainly exceptional in Luxemburg, but this is because collective contracts normally contain clauses dealing specifically with social peace.

It is therefore impossible to judge the representativity of trade union organisations on the basis of strike

<sup>1</sup> Art. 310 (as amended by the law of 10 June 1898): "Will be punished by imprisonment from one month to two years and by a fine from 100 to 2,000 francs, or only one of these penalties, any person who with the purpose of enforcing an increase or decrease of wages, or of infringing the free exercise of industry or labour, commits violence, utters insults or threats, imposes fines, interdictions or proscriptions of any kind either against those who work or those who give work.

"This punishment will also apply to those who infringe the freedom of masters or workers, be it by assemblies near the place of work or the dwelling of those who direct the work, be it by acts of intimidation against workers who go to work or return from it, be it by causing explosions near the work place or in the localities where the workers live, be it by destroying the fences of the work place or the workers' dwellings, be it by destroying or damaging the tools, instruments or machines of industry, with the exception of steam-engines for whose destruction the provisions of article 523 of the penal code will still apply."

(Penal code 1927.)

movements. That is why the authority of the trade unions must be measured by other criteria.

In the first place comes their participation and their influence in state and para-statal institutions: Social Security Office, National Labour Office, Luxemburg Office for Higher Productivity, Economic and Social Council, etc.

In the second place it can be gaged through elections for the Chamber of Labour, the Sickness Insurance Fund and the works councils (See enclosures). It must be added that these elections reflect the relative weight of each organisation better than the membership figures, estimated at 29,000 for the CGT, 11,000 for the LCGB and 10,000 for the FEP.

Political differences have not up to now hindered close cooperation among the trade union organisations in the field of practical achievements, particularly in the "Trade union committee of contracts," which has the task of negotiating collective agreements. This cooperation has become more necessary than ever since the growth of the Luxemburg economy is now reduced to a very slow pace, firstly because of its monolithic structure and secondly because all long-term economic planning is lacking. The question of employment, which is now posed in completely new terms, is another factor requiring trade union cooperation. Luxemburg, as an over-industrialised country, is more sensitive to market fluctuations and economic fluctuations than its five partners in the Common Market.

The question for tomorrow is how and to what degree Luxemburg will succeed in maintaining its living standard and safeguard its future. This problem is of special importance for the trade unions. It is therefore perfectly legitimate to raise the question of unity of action of the Luxemburg trade union movement, and even organic trade union unity.

## List of abbreviations

CGT	Confédération générale du Travail (General Confederation of Labour)
LAV	Letzeburger Arbechter-Verband (Federation of Luxemburg Workers)
FNCTTFEL	Fédération nationale des Cheminots, Travailleurs du Transport, Fonctionnaires et Employés luxembourgeois (National Federation of Railwaymen, Transport Workers, Civil Servants and Employees of Luxemburg)
FLA	Freie Letzeburger Arbechterverband (Free Federation of Luxemburg Workers)
LCGB	Letzeburger Chreschtliche Gewerkschafts-Bond (Christian Trade Union Federation of Luxemburg)
FEP	Fédération des Employés Privés (Federation of Private Sector Employees)
NHV	Neutraler Handwerker Verband (Independent Union of Artisans)

# The Trade Union Movement in the Netherlands

*Out of a total population of 12.8 million inhabitants of the Netherlands, 3.7 million are wage and salary earners (figures as on 1 November 1968). Of these, 1.5 million, or 40 per cent of the wage earners, are trade union members.*

*The three national trade union centres are the Nederlands Verbond van Vakverenigingen—NVV (Netherlands Federation of Trade Unions) with 556,117 members, the Nederlands Katholiek Vakverbond—NKV (Netherlands Federation of Catholic Trade Unions) with 425,567 members and the Christelijk Nationaal Vakverbond—CNV (National Federation of Christian Trade Unions) with 240,106 members (figures of 1 July 1968).*

*In addition, there are several professional organisations which are not affiliated to any recognised national centre. Altogether, they grouped about 300,000 members on 1 July 1968.*

In the Netherlands, the workers organised themselves in trade unions only in the latter part of the nineteenth century. The trade union movement thus developed later than in other European countries. The country's economic growth was slow at the time and the workers were in a state of misery. The ban on free association stopped workers, as well as employers, from getting together and working conditions were fixed unilaterally.

## Birth of the Trade Union Movement

Even before the ban on free association was lifted in 1872, some trade unions had already come into existence. The first national union was that of the printers, founded in 1866. This union later joined the *Algemeen Nederlands Werkliedenverbond*—ANWV (General Federation of Dutch Workers), created in 1871, which grouped other national and local trade unions and became the first Dutch national trade union centre.

In the development of the first trade unions in the Netherlands, a Lutheran priest, Ferdinand Domela Nieuwenhuis, played a significant role. He left the church in 1878 to devote himself entirely to socialism. Many workers left the ANWV to join the *Sociaal-Democratische Bond*—SDB (Social-Democratic Federation).

Following a decision of the Second International, which had been founded in Paris in 1889, the *Nationaal Arbeids Secretariaat*—NAS (National Labour Secretariat) was set up in 1893 to coordinate the action of the political and trade union groups.

The social-democrats or "parliamentary group", united in the *Sociaal-Democratische Arbeiderspartij*—SDAP (Social-Democratic Workers Party) in 1894, opposed the policies of the anarchists because they hoped to achieve concrete results through political action. They considered that the local trade unions should give up their independence and become merely branches of a powerful central

trade union organisation. These differences of views were also fought out in the NAS with the result that the latter became a genuine trade union centre. The NAS leaders believed in direct action by the workers, spontaneous solidarity to finance strikes, and the idea of revolutionary strikes; they rejected parliamentary action and the system of paid union officers. The tactics of strike at any cost, adopted by the NAS, led to failures and revived the struggle between anarchists and social-democrats.

Disillusioned, a number of workers left the NAS; the crisis in the trade union movement reached its height in 1903 when it broke up as a result of the consequences of the railwaymen's strikes in January and April of that year.

At the beginning of 1905, the Executive Committee of the Netherlands Diamond Workers' Union, founded in 1894 and led by Henri Polak and Jan van Zutphen, called upon the workers to resume serious and organised co-operation. Some thirty trade unions responded to the call at a meeting held on 25 February 1905. It led to the foundation, on 30 July, of the *Nederlands Verbond van Vakverenigingen*—NVV (Netherlands Federation of Trade Unions) which took up its activities on 1 January 1906.

## The Christian Trade Union Movement

Apart from the ANWV and the Netherlands section of the International Workingmen's Association (the First International), founded in 1864, a third tendency emerged in the Netherlands trade union movement after 1871: the *Protestant-christelijke Vaderlandse Werkmansvereniging* (National Association of Protestant Workers). Its aims were to defend the worker's interests on the basis of God's teaching; it grouped workers and employers in the same organisation.

In 1877 was created the Federation of social-christian workers, called *Patrimonium*, which also grouped workers and employers. At the first social-christian congress in 1891, it set up sections according to trade. It could not yet, however, be considered a trade union centre, in the proper sense of the term.

In May 1909, the *Christelijk Nationaal Vakverbond*—CNV (National Federation of Christian Trade Unions) was set up. Based on Christian principles, it rejected the class-struggle. At the start, the CNV was interconfessional; protestants and catholics both had seats on the Executive Committee. The same was true for a number of federations such as *Unitas* which grouped textile workers.

In 1906, however, the Dutch bishops expressed the wish that the members of the Church “should group themselves in catholic organisations”. In 1912, catholics were forbidden to be members of *Unitas*. The CNV, which remained theoretically interconfessional, became in fact a protestant trade union centre. At its foundation in 1909, the CNV had 6,452 members; in 1940 when the second world war broke out in the Netherlands, it grouped more than 120,000.

### The Roman-Catholic Trade Union Movement

The birth of the catholic workers' trade union organisation came about several years after that of the ANVV and of the protestant workers' organisation.

The Encyclica *Rerum Novarum* of Pope Leo XIII (1891) condemned the class-struggle which was advocated by the socialists; private property was to remain intact. But the Encyclica also underlined the need for creating catholic organisations. It contributed in a decisive manner to the development of the catholic workers' movement whose bureau, set up in 1909, controlled 10 unions with a total of 9,000 members.

The independence of the catholic trade union movement was recognised for the first time in 1916 when the bishops decided that the general interests of the workers should be defended by professional organisations and the special interests of the workers in each trade by the unions.

In October 1924, the bishops approved the creation of the *Rooms-Katholiek Werkliedenverbond*—RKWV (Roman-Catholic Workers' Federation) which grouped the trade unions and associations of the different dioceses. The Federation developed rapidly; from a starting membership of 107,000, it grew to almost 210,000 on the eve of the second world war.

### Developments after 1906

When the NVV was founded, it decided to base its organisation on three principles: national trade unions run by paid, full-time officials, high union dues and solid strike funds. The logical application of these principles and the leadership's firm attitude seemed to impress the workers, who steadily abandoned the NAS. When the first world war broke out in 1914, the NVV grouped 80,000 members and the NAS hardly 10,000. It is true that after 1918, NAS membership grew up to 50,000 in 1920, but it was already evident that its role was over.

It became more and more obvious that the NVV and the christian trade union organisations, the Roman-Catholic RKWV and the Protestant CNV, had to face the same problems, a recognition which accentuated their need to take up contacts and to work together. Thus in 1933, they undertook a common action to improve methods for finding employment for workers. In 1938 members of the three organisations' leading bodies acted in concert for the conclusion of collective agreements.

The period of 1906 to 1940 was marked by the growing significance of the trade union movement in the life of the Dutch workers. By representing and defending the workers' interests, the trade union movement steadily gained in recognition over the years. Through its influence, Parlia-

ment voted legislation which had a profound bearing on the workers' life and their position in society. More and more, the worker received the respect due to his human dignity and recognition as a citizen; the trade union movement played a large part in his integration in society.

The years between 1930 and 1940 were extremely difficult ones for the Dutch trade union movement. The economic crisis which shook the world and which did not spare the Netherlands caused mass unemployment; at its height it plunged 500,000 workers and their families into darkest misery.

On 10 May 1940, the Netherlands were engulfed by the second world war and occupied by the Germans. On 16 July, the NVV was placed under the orders of the national-socialist Woudenberg. On 30 April 1942, he was entrusted with the direction of the *Nederlands Arbeids Front*—NAF (Netherlands Labour Front) which replaced the NVV by decree of Dr. Seys-Inquart, Reichskommissar for the occupied Netherlands. The intervention of the German occupying power thus halted for a time the activities of the free trade union movement.

### Developments after 1945

Already during the German occupation, the leaders of the NVV, the RKWV and the CNV had met clandestinely to discuss the rebuilding of the trade union movement after the war. All rivalry between the trade union centres in the post-war period could only harm the defence of workers' interests. The secret contacts based on this idea and the links forged at that time between the representatives of the various trade union centres led to the joint decision that they would cooperate after the war in the economic and social field. Formal “Rules for Cooperation” on joint actions between the trade union centres and their affiliated national unions and local branches were adopted. It was also agreed to levy dues at the same rates to avoid rivalry between unions.

A coordinating body for the three trade union centres, entitled “Council of Trade Union Centres”, made its public appearance on 5 May 1945, the day on which the Netherlands were liberated from German occupation.

But in 1954, the cooperation of the three centres within the framework of the Council was brought to a sudden end by a pastoral letter of the bishops. This forbade all catholics to join unions affiliated to the socialist NVV under the threat of being refused the holy sacraments. This letter led the NVV to withdraw from the activities of the “Council of Trade Union Centres” despite the considerable results achieved through this collaboration.

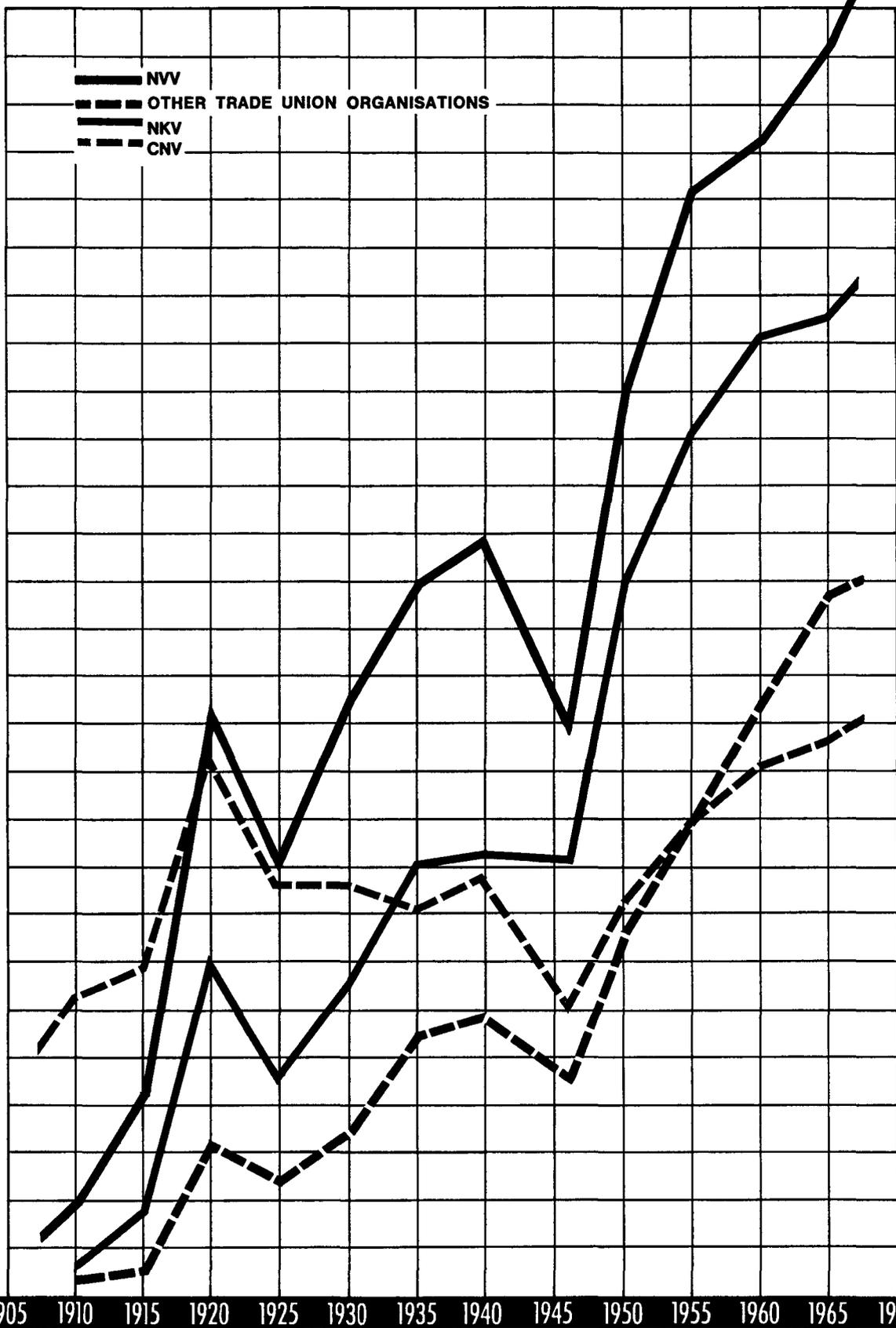
### Trade Union Coordinating Body

After secret talks between the bishops and the NVV in 1957 (the bishops' ban on membership in NVV unions was lifted only in September 1965), cooperation between the three trade union centres was re-established in January 1958. However, this cooperation which implied regular consultations was confined to the highest level of leadership of the three trade union organisations and excluded their member unions and local branches. The name “Council of Trade Union Centres” was replaced by the “*Overlegorgaan*” (Trade Union Coordinating Body).

This Coordinating Body consists of the presidents and general secretaries of the three trade union centres, as well as an executive committee member from each of them. A deputy secretary, paid and appointed by the Coordinating Body, is entrusted with the task of preparing the meetings and carrying out its decisions.

# GROWTH OF TRADE UNION MEMBERSHIP

x 1000





The Coordinating Body can set up committees for specific questions; it meets regularly. One can say without fear of contradiction that cooperation between the trade union centres is growing steadily. On essential social and economic problems, agreement can nearly always be reached.

Resumption of cooperation between the three trade union centres resulted in a common action programme being adopted in 1963 by the NVV and the *Katholieke Arbeidersbeweging*—KAB (Catholic Workers' Movement), the former RKKWV. Originally, it had been hoped that the CNV would also take part in the preparation of this programme but it finally decided to publish its own. But one year later, the three federations came together to publish jointly the report on "workers' capital-formation through profit-sharing" and in February 1967 the three trade union centres decided to publish a new common action programme.

### A fourth trade union centre

In 1945, another trade union centre was set up with the name *Eenheids Vakcentrale*—EVC (Trade Union Unity Centre); many workers joined in the hope of thus achieving a united trade union movement. Among them were former members of the NAS and the communists. Though favouring unity, they attempted nevertheless to link the EVC to their policies with a view to achieving their aims. The EVC found itself unable to share the common policy of the other trade union centres which aimed at a rapid reconstruction of the Dutch economy. The EVC proved this by organising a number of strikes which sometimes had a political background.

After the bloody repression of the Hungarian revolution in 1956, the NVV once more clearly declared that there was no place for communists in its ranks. A few years later, the EVC no longer had the power to attract anybody; it had lost its value as an instrument of the communist party and the organisation was dissolved.

In addition, the year 1948 witnessed the foundation of the *Nederlands Vakcentrale*—NVC (Netherlands Trade Union Centre). Membership of this centre, which is now entitled *Federatie van Werknemersorganisaties*—FWO (Federation of Worker's Organisations), and which groups a number of professional unions, remained between 10,000 and 20,000 for a number of years. Only recently has this central federation shown a tendency to grow by finding members, mainly among supervisory staff.

## Progressive integration

The integration of the trade union movement in society progressed rapidly, especially after 1945. The second world war gave the impetus to this process.

### The Foundation of Labour

Apart from secret contacts among representatives of the three central trade union federations, discussions between the latter and national employers organisations regularly took place on urgent questions to be answered immediately after the country's liberation. Efforts were made to achieve a form of cooperation that would encourage good industrial relations. It was decided to set up a permanent joint body, which was presented to the people of the Netherlands on 19 May 1945 as the *Stichting van de Arbeid* (Foundation of Labour). It consisted of representatives—on a parity basis—not only of the three trade union centres but also of all major employer's organisations, of the middle classes and of agriculture.

The Foundation, a private association in law, is the highest and most important private body in the organisation of industrial relations in the country; it is a form of cooperation between workers' and employers' organisations that is exceptional in Europe. At the Foundation, the presidency is held alternately by a representative of the employers and a representative of the workers.

The Foundation's aims are to ensure regular consultations between employers and workers, to act as mediator between the state and the two sides of industry, to give counsel and advice, and to promote social justice, peace and order. The Foundation was recognised by the Government as a consultative body on social questions.

When the *Sociaal-Economische Raad*—SER (Social and Economic Council) was instituted in 1950, an important part of the Foundation's functions were taken over by this public body. There is no doubt that after 1945 the Foundation contributed to a considerable extent to the rapid restoration of the Dutch economy which had been shattered by German occupation. From 1945 to 1962, the Foundation acted as consultative body of the *College van Rijksbemiddelaars* (College of State Mediators) which consisted of lawyers and other experts appointed by the Government for ratifying collective agreements reached between workers and employers. Before taking a decision, however, the College had to consult the Foundation of Labour.

The College of State Mediators operated in this manner until 1963. Many changes which occurred since brought about the resumption of a system of free bargaining between workers and employers. Under this system, the Foundation of Labour can be considered as the body which in its wages committee formally ratifies collective agreements or wage settlements concluded between workers and employers. The Minister of Social Affairs has, however, reserve powers to hold up agreed wage increases in the three weeks following ratification of the agreement if he considers that this rise constitutes a danger to the national economy.

### The Economic and Social Council

The text drawn up by the trade union organisations during the occupation (1940-1945) included a plea for the creation of official economic policy bodies. In the manifesto of 17 May 1945 which brought the Foundation of Labour before the public, reference is made to an agreement concerning the setting up of an official economic policy body: employers and trade unionists considered it appropriate for the trade union movement to be strongly represented on an economic national council that would assist the Government and that a number of official subordinate bodies should also be created in this field.

In December 1945, the Government tabled the first draft of a bill on the organisation of the economy which foresaw the setting up of central bodies, consisting of representatives of the Government, employers and workers, to lay down rules applicable in various branches of industry in the economic and social field.

The law on the organisation of the economy came into effect in mid-February 1950 simultaneously with the Economic and Social Council. It has 45 members: 15 experts chosen by the Sovereign, 15 representatives of the employers and 15 representatives of the three recognised trade union centres. The Council's chairman is appointed by the Sovereign. One of its most important tasks is to advise the Government, either at the latter's request or spontaneously. Since the differential wages policy was abandoned in 1962, the Council advises the Government at half-yearly intervals—in addition to occasional briefings—on the immediate possibilities of improving working conditions. The discussions which are thereby regularly started off bring the struggle for a fair share-out of the national income to the highest level.

This so-called "*Half-yearly social and economic weather*

report" is based on forecasts of the *Centraal Planbureau*—CPB (Central Planning Office) which comes under the orders of the Minister of Economic Affairs.

In addition, the Economic and Social Council must advise the Government on all measures which the latter wants to take in the economic and social field.

### **“Produktschappen” and “bedrijfschappen”**

Apart from the Economic and Social Council, the law on the organisation of the economy also created other economic bodies, called *produktschappen* and *bedrijfschappen*, grouping employers and workers on a parity basis. The *produktschappen* (vertical organisations) are public institutions for two or more groups of enterprises which in the national economy assume a different function according to a determined product or groups of products (e.g. wheat, flour, bread).

The *bedrijfschappen* (horizontal organisations) are public institutions which group all enterprises which in the national economy assume an identical or related function (e.g. butchers, bakers, the shoemaking industry).

Integration of the workers in the field of social security has also progressed rapidly. Representatives of the trade union movement were given seats on the Social Security Council, on the Social Insurance Bank, on the Sickness Insurance Fund, and on the General Unemployment Fund. In this manner, the workers in the Netherlands have reached a social status protected by numerous legal guarantees.

### **Education and information**

It is evident that if the trade union movement wants to carry out its manifold and various tasks successfully, at the national, regional or local level, its officials must be competent to do so. These officials must be ready to do their work in all sorts of bodies, such as works councils or shop-floor committees; they must also know their duties when they assume a post in an executive committee of a union or a central trade union organisation, or when they have to represent their union or their national centre in a public body. They must be able to judge as experts the problems which are studied at all these levels. They must further acquire expert knowledge in social questions to enable them to act with competence on all occasions. Finally, it is necessary to keep officials and members continually informed to reduce as much as possible the gap between the leadership and the rank-and-file. This is done in the trade union movement not only by organising courses and meetings for passing on the information concerning all sorts of social problems on whose subject decisions are taken at a higher level or in small committees but which affect large groups of workers. It is also effected by the trade union papers which generally appear every fortnight for the different professional groups and through periodicals intended specifically for the officials of the unions and the central trade union organisations. Advantage is also taken of the mass-media (daily newspapers, weekly papers, radio and television) to express the views and opinions of the trade union movement.

### **International activities**

The trade union movement in the Netherlands does not act on the national level alone, it also plays a role abroad. By its very principles, the trade union movement has always favoured international cooperation. It welcomed the setting up of the European Economic Community and cooperates with vigour for the realisation of its objectives, although on several occasions in recent years it had to warn against certain developments which might have harmed the interests of the workers in the six countries. However, for the trade union movement, economic integration within the framework of the EEC is an important factor for rapidly improving living standards. It is in this sense that the trade union movement will continue to make a positive contribution to the development of the Community while reserving its right to criticise where necessary.

This international activity is also undertaken at world level. Thus the trade union movement is always represented in the Netherlands delegation which takes part in the Annual General Assembly of the United Nations in New York and in the International Labour Organisation at Geneva. It is also represented in the Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD).

Finally, the Netherlands trade union movement takes part in various international organisations such as the International Confederation of Free Trade Unions, to which the NVV is affiliated, and the World Confederation of Labour, of which the NKV and the CNV are members. The ICFTU has a European Regional Organisation and the trade union centres of the six member countries have set up together a European Confederation of Free Trade Unions. The World Confederation of Labour has also a European section which defends the interests of the workers in the six member countries of the EEC.

### **Conclusion**

The role of the trade union movement has changed radically in a little more than half a century; this change runs parallel to a social revolution implying the development of a new legal order. The trade union movement is not an end in itself; its existence is justified only if it fulfills a positive function in the service of social progress by achieving material and moral improvements for the group it represents. Its policy will also in the future continue to be directed along these lines.

The trade union movement is not merely concerned with concluding collective agreements; it also attaches great importance to a structured employment policy, to equal wages for men and women, to a prices policy, to housing. Other subjects of major importance for the trade union movement are a well-organised health service, co-determination in economic affairs, the right to strike, reduction of the working hours and the defence of the consumers' interests.

The trade union movement cannot allow itself to rest complacently on the results achieved. It has become a pillar of the social structure but, on the other hand, it remains a movement which contests the established order. The fuel called “discontent” is abundantly available to feed the motor of progress. One of the most important tasks of the trade union movement is to direct this discontent to positive ends.



**S** 