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**President: Mr. Hernán SANTA CRUZ (Chile).**

*Present:* The representatives of the following countries:

Belgium, Canada, Chile, China, Czechoslovakia, France, India, Iran, Mexico, Pakistan, Peru, Philippines, Poland, Sweden, Union of Soviet Socialist Republics, United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, United States of America, Uruguay.

The representatives of the following specialized agencies:

International Labour Organisation, Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations, United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization, International Bank for Reconstruction and Development, International Monetary Fund.

**Trade-union rights: allegations regarding infringements of trade-union rights (E/1882, E/1882/Add.1 to 4, E/1922 and E/1922/Add.1) (*continued*)**

[ Agenda item 14 ]

1. The PRESIDENT announced that the Secretary-General had just transmitted two additional communications, one from various trade unions in Bucharest concerning infringements of trade-union rights in France (E/1882/Add.3), and the other from the World Federation of Trade Unions, which concerned a number of countries (E/1882/Add.4).

2. Although those communications had been submitted after the debate on the item had begun, the President had decided to place them before the Council, since no time limit was specified in resolution 277 (X). The questions they raised would be discussed after the debate on the four categories of allegations set out in the memorandum by the Secretary-General (E/L.142).

COMMUNICATION RELATING TO A STATE MEMBER OF THE INTERNATIONAL LABOUR ORGANISATION BUT NOT A MEMBER OF THE UNITED NATIONS (*concluded*)

3. The PRESIDENT recalled that the debate concerned the communication from the International Con-

federation of Free Trade Unions (E/1882/Add.1), with regard to Hungary.

*At the invitation of the President, Mr. Saad, the representative of the World Federation of Trade Unions, took his seat at the Council table.*

4. Mr. SAAD (World Federation of Trade Unions) said that the allegation against Hungary was part of the campaign organized by the International Confederation of so-called Free Trade Unions against the workers of countries which had successfully freed themselves from the capitalist system.

5. The PRESIDENT requested the representative of the World Federation of Trade Unions to abstain from bringing charges against another non-governmental organization recognized by the Council.

6. Mr. SAAD (World Federation of Trade Unions) said he had been charged with defending the Hungarian trade unions, which were affiliated to the WFTU. The voluntary character of those trade unions had been questioned. The statement made by the Secretary-General of those trade unions showed, however, that one of their main functions was not only to preserve their voluntary character, but to increase the democratic nature of their organization by electing all officials by secret ballot. The statements attributed to Rakosi had been distorted; he had merely said that the function of trade unions was to protect the interests of the workers. The Hungarian workers' party had also requested the trade unions to extend their activities to improve the situation of the working class. The seventeenth congress of Hungarian trade unions had adopted resolutions to that effect with a view to extending trade-union activities to protect the workers and to meet their social and cultural needs.

7. Trade-union freedom was guaranteed by the Hungarian Constitution, while, in accordance with the Labour Code, all collective agreements concluded between the management and works committee required trade-union endorsement. In conjunction with the Ministry of Health, the trade unions also supervised the execution of measures envisaged in collective agree-

ments, while the same function was exercised within each undertaking by the works' committee.

8. The social insurance benefits available to Hungarian workers were superior to anything which existed in the capitalist countries. The allegation that the Chairman of the Hungarian trade unions had been dismissed by the government was untrue; he had in fact been dismissed by decision of the Central Council of Trade Unions.

9. The allegations against the trade unions of the USSR and the peoples' democracies were designed to divert attention from infringements of trade-union rights in capitalist countries. In 1945 James Carey, Secretary of the CIO (Congress of Industrial Organizations), had confirmed the wholly democratic character of Soviet trade unions. His statements were also applicable to the peoples' democracies, which had eliminated unemployment and the exploitation of the workers. The workers had assumed power; it was therefore natural that there should be no conflict between the working class and the government, which represented it. The contradiction which existed in the capitalist régime had thus been eliminated. But the government and the trade unions had their separate functions; it was the function of the trade unions to represent all workers, including the many who were without political affiliation.

10. The International Confederation of Free Trade Unions was not fighting the enemies of the working class, but the greater part of the working class itself. The statements made by Bernard Weisman, a State Department official in charge of labour questions, showed that the United States trade unions and the International Confederation of Free Trade Unions had the function of supporting American policy and of winning over the workers of other countries to its side. That was the real purpose of the campaign launched against Hungary.

11. Baron VAN DER STRATEN-WAILLET (Belgium) recalled that his delegation had already urged the Council at its tenth session to refer the question of trade-union rights to the International Labour Office, which, by virtue of its long experience, was the competent organization to deal with the matter. If that course had been followed, the current debate could have been avoided.

12. With that same object in view, his delegation had just submitted, jointly with the delegation of Sweden, a draft resolution (E/L.144), which followed the classification adopted by the Council. In the case of the first category of allegations, it simply adopted the procedure laid down in resolution 277 (X) — transmission to the International Labour Office. In the case of the allegation against the USSR, the draft resolution addressed a further appeal to that government and requested it to reply before the next session of the Council. As regards States which were members neither of the United Nations nor of the International Labour Organisation, the draft resolution was based on the principle that the Council was called upon to defend trade-union liberties wherever they were assailed. On the strength of a broad interpretation of resolution 277 (X), he requested the Secretary-General to bring to the attention of the go-

vernments concerned the allegations made against them and to invite them to submit their observations on the matter. It was in the interest of those governments to reply, since their silence would be interpreted as implicit admission of the charges made against them. The Secretary-General was also requested to report to the Council at its next session on the conditions in which the procedure laid down was applicable.

13. As regards the allegation by the Union des syndicats confédérés du Cameroun, the draft resolution stated that it was already under consideration by the Trusteeship Council and that no action was therefore required by the Economic and Social Council.

14. Lastly, the draft resolution requested the Secretary-General to transmit to the Council only such communications from non-governmental organizations in category A regarding infringements of trade-union rights as reached him not less than seven weeks before the date of the first meeting of the session in conformity with the provisions of paragraph 1 (c) of rule 10 of the rules of procedure. That provision already applied to communications from Member States and was essential to enable governments to reply with a full knowledge of the facts and also to ensure that the discussion took an orderly course.

15. As regards the allegation by the World Federation of Trade Unions regarding the order for its dissolution issued by the French Government, that dissolution did not represent an infringement of trade-union freedom, which was unimpaired in France. The issue was one between a government and a non-governmental organization in category A. The allegation could not be referred to the International Labour Office. It was for the Council to take a decision in the matter and he proposed that it should confine itself to taking note of the communications received.

16. Mr. MICHANEK (Sweden) also wished to comment on the draft resolution sponsored by his delegation together with that of Belgium. He recalled that the purpose of the procedure proposed by the United Kingdom representative was to limit the debate to questions of procedure, and to refer the examination of substance to the International Labour Office. The debate had however tended to concentrate on questions of substance and had convinced all those whose main concern was not political propaganda that questions of that nature could far better be examined by the International Labour Office, a technical body in which the trade unions were directly represented, than by the Economic and Social Council, in which they were not. The distinction was admittedly of greater importance to the countries with free trade unions than to those in which they formed part of the structure of the State.

17. As regards the allegations made by the World Federation of Trade Unions against the French Government, the measures taken by that government did not, in his opinion, represent an infringement of trade-union liberty and should not, therefore, be retained on the Council's agenda.

18. Mr. NOSEK (Czechoslovakia) recalled that at the 441st meeting his delegation had supported the draft resolution submitted by the World Federation of Trade

Unions regarding the infringement of trade-union rights in a number of countries.

19. He had submitted a draft resolution based on the allegations made by the Federation (E/L.143 and Corr.1).

20. The PRESIDENT announced that the Czechoslovak draft resolution would be circulated shortly and the debate on the two draft resolutions would begin after the discussion of the four categories of communications set out in the memorandum by the Secretary-General (E/L.142).

21. Mr. KORNEYEV (Union of Soviet Socialist Republics) wished to discuss the substance of the joint draft resolution of Belgium and Sweden.

22. The question of trade-union rights was the most important question on the agenda of the current session, since it affected human rights as a whole. It had been raised as far back as 1947 by the World Federation of Trade Unions,<sup>1</sup> but had not yet been solved by the Council. The situation was continuing to deteriorate. For example, in a number of capitalist countries, including the United States of America, the United Kingdom, France, Greece, Brazil and Japan, and also in the British and other colonies, infringements of trade-union rights continued. They took the form of the enactment of undemocratic laws directed against the trade unions, of the restriction of the right to strike, of interference by State and administrative organs in the internal affairs of trade unions, of the persecution of trade-union leaders and members, of the creation of obstacles to the development of international co-operation by trade-union organizations, and so forth. That policy represented one form of the offensive by the capitalist monopolies upon the rights and standard of living of the workers and was designed to strangle the democratic movement. A typical example of the offensive against trade-union rights was the Taft-Hartley law in the United States, which was directed against the workers.

23. Mr. KOTSCHNIG (United States of America), speaking on a point of order, inquired whether the question on the agenda related to infringements of trade-union rights in the United States of America or in Hungary.

24. The PRESIDENT reminded the representative of the USSR that the Council was considering a communication relating to a State which was a member of the International Labour Organisation, but not of the United Nations. He had given the floor to the representatives of Belgium, Sweden and Czechoslovakia so that they might introduce their draft resolutions. The allegations just made by the World Federation of Trade Unions in document E/1882/Add.4 would be discussed after the debate on the four categories set out in the Secretary-General's memorandum (E/L.142). Observations of a general character could be made at the same time.

25. He accordingly requested the representative of the

USSR to defer his general observations until the conclusion of the debate.

26. Mr. KATZ-SUCHY (Poland) reserved the right to return to the questions in the first category, on which the debate had not been concluded, as well as to speak on the draft resolutions. He wished to make a number of remarks on the communication under discussion.

27. When the question of including the allegation regarding Hungary in the Council's agenda had been under discussion, he had opposed its inclusion on the grounds that a representative of Hungary was not present and also that the allegation had not been submitted with a view to promoting international co-operation, but with a view to attacking the peoples' democracies; the so-called International Confederation of Free Trade Unions had made itself the instrument of that campaign, a fact which had been borne out by the statement made by its representative. That statement had been far from objective and had been solely inspired by a profound hostility towards the non-capitalist countries.

28. The Hungarian working class had a great trade-union tradition and in the past had fought for its freedom under all oppressive régimes. Since the end of the war it had succeeded in creating a democratic régime and the trade unions had played a prominent part in the struggle for democracy and social justice. The Hungarian trade unions, which were voluntary associations, were playing an important role in improving the economic, social and cultural position of the working class. The Hungarian working class was represented and defended by trade unions.

29. The results obtained testified to the success of those efforts and the evidence of visitors from the West also indicated that the position of the Hungarian workers was better than they had been at any previous stage in the history of Hungary. Two British trade unionists who had visited Hungary in 1949 had stated that the trade unions were free and that they genuinely represented the workers.

30. As a result, a noticeable improvement in the position of the workers had been achieved. The employers, for example, were entirely responsible for social insurance; workers received substantial social security benefits and paid holidays organized by the trade unions for themselves and their children. Those were concrete results, which could not be misrepresented.

31. The communication from the International Confederation of Free Trade Unions made no concrete charges but merely stressed the fact that the trade unions were dominated by the Communist Party. He did not wish to discuss that aspect of the question, but pointed out that the struggle for Hungarian liberation had been led by the working class under the direction of the Communist Party. The communication from the ICFTU was not motivated by a desire to protect trade-union rights; it was purely and simply a political attack. The Hungarian Government and people had been the victims of a malicious slander and it was deplorable that the Economic and Social Council should have demeaned itself to discuss a document of such a nature.

<sup>1</sup> See *Official Records of the Economic and Social Council, Fourth Session*, annex 31.

32. Mr. CORLEY SMITH (United Kingdom) did not wish to reply to the representatives of Poland and the WFTU, but that did not mean that he in any way accepted their contention that any real trade-union freedom existed in Hungary. It was the view of his delegation that far from defending the workers, the trade unions there had become an instrument of state policy. However, the question before the Council was one of procedure.

33. Since Hungary was a member of the International Labour Organisation, the allegation should be transmitted to that body, which could then refer it to its Fact-Finding and Conciliation Commission. Both sides of the case presented could then be heard and Hungary need not fear the verdict, if it genuinely felt that right was on its side.

34. He therefore suggested that the communication should be referred to the International Labour Organisation.

35. Mr. KATZ-SUCHY (Poland), replying to the United Kingdom representative, pointed out that, to be referred to the International Labour Organisation, an accusation must be deemed to have been made in good faith. In his view, the complaint regarding Hungary did not fulfil that condition.

36. The PRESIDENT invited the Council to proceed to the second category of allegations as set out in the memorandum by the Secretary-General (E/L.142).

COMMUNICATION RELATING TO A STATE MEMBER OF THE UNITED NATIONS BUT NOT A MEMBER OF THE INTERNATIONAL LABOUR ORGANISATION

37. The PRESIDENT noted that the discussion concerned the communication from the International Confederation of Free Trade Unions with regard to the USSR (E/1882, section IV).

38. Mr. KORNEYEV (Union of Soviet Socialist Republics) recalled that he had already protested against the examination of that lying and slanderous allegation, which was intended to stir up hostility against the Soviet Union. He wished to make that protest once again.

39. Mr. KATZ-SUCHY (Poland) said that before the debate on that item was begun he wished his protest against the discussion of the communication to be recorded in the summary records.

40. The communication had been submitted not for the purpose of defending trade-union freedom but to encourage feelings of hostility against the Soviet Union. He wished to protest against the fact that the Economic and Social Council should thus become an instrument of anti-Soviet propaganda.

41. Mr. NOSEK (Czechoslovakia) also protested against the discussion of the communication and asked that his protest should be included in the summary record.

42. The PRESIDENT called on the representative of the International Confederation of Free Trade Unions to report on the communication which her organization had addressed to the Secretary-General on 20 July 1950 (E/1882, section IV).

43. Miss SENDER (International Confederation of Free Trade Unions) said the International Confederation of Free Trade Unions, the most powerful and only really democratic trade-union organization in the world, considered it its duty to defend the rights of all workers in all parts of the world, whether they belonged to democratic countries or to dictatorships. The International Confederation of Free Trade Unions had 51 million members paying their dues regularly and belonging to fifty-eight countries. Among them were the CIO (Congress of Industrial Organizations), formerly a member of the WFTU, and the AF of L (American Federation of Labor), together with a number of other large American trade-union organizations which, for the first time, were associated in a single international organization. The ICFTU also included the trade unions of the United Kingdom, which had formerly belonged to the WFTU, and the trade unions of Belgium, the Scandinavian countries and numerous other countries Members of the United Nations.

44. The International Confederation of Free Trade Unions was convinced that trade-union rights were the most important factor in securing an improvement in the welfare of the men and women of the working classes, whether possession of the means of production was in public or private hands. It was also of the opinion that the welfare of the individual depended on his personal and social freedom, to the extent to which such freedom did not violate the rights and freedoms of others.

45. The existence of free trade unions was the most important factor in securing the prosperity of a country, and, in the last resort, the peace of the world. It was therefore justifiable to display a certain amount of concern in face of the absence of truly free workers' organizations in a country as large as the USSR.

46. The communication sent to the Secretary-General by the International Confederation of Free Trade Unions (E/1882, section IV) described in broad outline the operation of trade-union organizations in the USSR. Though called "trade unions", those organizations bore very little resemblance to real trade unions. All the facts mentioned in that communication were drawn from Soviet sources, and it would therefore be very difficult to deny them.

47. The information referred to showed that the so-called trade unions of the USSR were under the control of the Government, which was in charge of industrial and all other undertakings. It appeared that, for seventeen years, the trade unions of the Soviet Union had not been permitted to call a convention. Decisions had indeed been taken, but they had been taken by the Government itself. Thus, in 1934, it had been decided to abolish the practice of fixing wages and working conditions by means of collective contracts. In 1947, after a twelve-year period during which no collective contract had been concluded, the practice had been reinstated, but was more apparent than real. The fact was that the collective contracts at present negotiated in the USSR fixed

48. The Soviet Constitution of 1936 gave a "monopolistic" position to the Communist Party, and defined it neither wages nor working conditions.



as "the leading core of all organizations of the working people both public and State".

49. The submission of the trade unions of the USSR to the orders of the Communist Party had been expressed by a statement of their chairman, Mr. Kuznetsov, published in the newspaper *Trud* on 20 April 1949. It stated that "the strength of the Soviet trade unions lies in the wise leadership they receive from the Soviet Communist Party and Comrade Stalin". The submission of the trade unions to the dictatorship of the Communist Party had also been expressed by the Secretary of the Central Council, who had stated in *Trud* on 27 April 1949: "The source of the strength of the trade unions and of their authority among the large masses of manual and office workers is the fact that our glorious Bolshevik Party day by day directs the trade unions... The Soviet trade unions are proud and happy that their entire activities are directed day by day by the Communist Party, the wise leader and teacher, the great Stalin".

50. Other Soviet publications showed the consequences of such a situation. In particular, reference might be made to *Soviet Labour Law* published in Moscow in 1946, and to *Labour Legislation*, published in 1947 by Aleksandrov and his collaborators.

51. It appeared from those publications that in the USSR the workers were not free to choose their place of work or to leave the place of employment that had been assigned to them; that employers were authorized to transfer workers from one factory to another anywhere in the entire country, with no right of protest on the workers' part; that workers had to possess a labour book in which were entered the dates of engagement and discharge and the reasons for discharge; and that the labour book remained in the possession of the Board of Directors of the enterprise. That last condition made the Russian worker entirely dependent on his employer. The freedom of the worker and his conditions of existence were entirely subject to the will of the employer, that is to say of the State, which was dominated by the Communist Party. Workers who could not present a labour book absolutely in order were not allowed to be employed. The representative of the government was "the foreman", who had the right to impose disciplinary penalties upon workers who violated working discipline and disorganized production. The decree of 20 December 1938 set out the disciplinary rules relating to the penalties which might be imposed on workers who were late for work without valid reason, or left work to go to lunch too early, or were late in returning after lunch-time, or slacked during working hours. Those provisions applied only to those who were less than twenty minutes late, since anybody more than twenty minutes late was liable to criminal prosecution.

52. How was it possible to describe as a "trade union" an organization which did not even have a word to say in fixing the wages of the workers? Actually, a government decree prohibited all fixing of wages by collective contract and stipulated that wages should be established by the government by normative acts (that is, acts having the character of a binding legal rule) and not by contract. Under that decree it was expressly forbidden to include in contracts any system of pay for the work

of manual workers, engineers, technicians or office workers which had not been approved by the government.

53. To those conditions must be added the system known as Stakhanovism, which led to piece-rate cutting and speed-up methods. The foreman was obliged to encourage Stakhanovite methods and establish increasingly high standards of output, standards which for physical reasons some workers could not reach.

54. Originally, such conditions existed only for men and women in the Soviet Union, but unfortunately, they had come to apply to trade unions in all the countries under Soviet domination. That fact was demonstrated by reports from countries dominated by the Communist Party. A few examples were quoted in document E/1882/Add.1.

55. It might be claimed that in a socialist society, where everything was planned, human energy should be regulated in the interests of production. To that argument it might be replied that the aims of a truly socialist society were not material, but humanitarian. Actually, in countries like the United States of America, the United Kingdom and the Scandinavian countries, productivity had reached a very high level and the workers received a relatively large proportion of the national income. Their living conditions were improving continuously. Such results had been achieved without any pressure on the workers, but under a discipline freely accepted. Considerable progress had been achieved in democratic societies while maintaining the fundamental freedoms.

56. She was perfectly aware that her statement would be attacked by delegations which did not like the truth to be published. She would like to reply to them in advance that the only way of finding out on which side the truth really lay was to raise the iron curtain and allow an investigating commission to go to Eastern Europe.

57. In that connexion, she would like to say that her organization put forward no request that the investigations should be confined to the countries of Eastern Europe: they should be conducted in all countries where trade-union rights were not respected. She was thinking in particular of the countries of Latin America under military dictatorship. The truth should be disclosed in all countries, whatever their political system.

58. Mr. KOTSCHNIG (United States of America) said he would first like to point out that the basic fact about the Soviet trade unions was that they could not be regarded as trade unions at all. They were the tools of the single-party State, and were used by the party and its rulers for their own purposes. Such trade unions were not free associations of workers like those in the democratic countries.

59. There had been a time when the trade unions of the USSR tried to act as the defenders of the workers' interest. Lenin himself had admitted that the régime in the USSR displayed strong tendencies towards bureaucracy and that it was therefore necessary for the proletariat to organize to protect itself against such a government. Some years later, however, a great change had taken place in the role of the trade unions. The old trade-union leaders had been ruthlessly purged. Kaganovich

declared that democracy should not be a fetish of Bolshevism. As early as 14 October 1925 Stalin had said that the trade unions had been organized by the Communist Party, a circumstance which explained "why the authority of the Party stands much higher than the authority of the trade unions". Fifteen years later another theoretician in the USSR had said that the trade unions were the instruments of the Communist Party.

60. It was in accordance with that principle that more than one half of the trade-union officials were chosen not among the workers, as in the United States, but among the engineers, the administrators and the bureaucrats. Furthermore, the election of trade-union officials had not escaped what, in the USSR, they were pleased to call the system of free elections. In many cases, the trade-union leaders had been appointed rather than elected, as could be read in a number of articles in the Soviet newspapers.

61. Moreover, during the seventeen years from 1932 to 1949, there had been no trade-union congress in the USSR, and during that period decisions affecting the trade unions had been taken without consultation of their members. In 1949 a trade-union congress had again been convened, but it had taken good care not to criticize the situation that had prevailed up till then. It had done no more than sing the praises of the Soviet Government for all that it had accomplished up to that date, and it had drafted a number of rules establishing the duties of the trade unions in the life of the country.

62. Those rules were as follows:

(a) The trade unions had to organize socialist competition among the workers so as to ensure the realization of the production plans drawn up by the State, if possible before the date fixed for their expiry. The placing of that rule as the first rule was very significant: it proved that the main purpose of the trade unions was to ensure increasing production, and not the welfare of the workers they were supposed to represent.

(b) The trade unions were allowed to "participate" in drawing up wage scales for workers and employers, respecting the socialist principle that wages should be in accordance with the volume and quality of the work. In free countries wage-fixing negotiations were one of the most important functions of real trade unions, but the Soviet trade unions had only a consultative voice in the matter. Actually, it was the government which established wage scales. In that as in other respects the trade unions acted merely as "transmission belts" from the governing party to the masses.

(c) Trade unions had to help the workers to increase their productivity and professional qualifications, and they must encourage application of new techniques. Again the emphasis was on whipping the Soviet worker into greater productivity without regard for his individual well-being.

(d) The trade unions were empowered to conclude collective agreements with the administration of enterprises. That called for a brief survey of the history of collective agreements in the USSR. In 1920 and the following years, collective agreements made in the Soviet Union had been similar to those concluded in the

United States. Later that practice had fallen into disuse and Soviet authors had subsequently explained that experience had demonstrated the inefficacy of collective agreements. Collective agreements had been suddenly re-established by a decree of 4 February 1947, very possibly for the purpose of furthering Soviet propaganda among workers abroad, who at that time were wooed by the World Federation of Trade Unions. An active campaign had been conducted to promote the conclusion of contracts of that kind, so that towards the end of 1948 about half the total non-agricultural labour in the country had been employed under collective contracts. Those contracts had laid obligations on the administration and the trade unions with regard to measures of organization and techniques likely to increase production. The wage scales drawn up by the competent governmental services had been incorporated in such contracts, but the parties could not change them in any way.

(e) The trade unions had to control labour safeguards and safety techniques and contribute to the settlement of labour conflicts. That provision showed that there were labour conflicts even in the workers' paradise. Strikes, of course, were virtually non-existent as a means of serving the interests of the workers. They were not prohibited by law, but actually there had been very few cases, since strikes were frowned upon by the Party. The last incident of that kind had occurred in 1946.

(f) The trade unions had to take charge of the State social insurance system, organize medical assistance for the workers in the best possible way, protect the health of women and children, build sanatoria and rest homes, and supervise the execution of the plans for erecting houses and buildings for cultural purposes, and the operation of restaurants, shops, municipal social service institutions and municipal means of transport. Up to 1933 the services responsible for social security and protection of the workers had been under the Commissariat of Labour. On the abolition of the Commissariat, its functions had been transferred to the trade unions, which had thus become a true governmental organ. Since the social insurance benefits paid to non-union workers were very much smaller than those paid to members, it was not surprising that all the Soviet workers had become trade-union members, thus enabling the trade unions to claim that they represented the largest group of workers in the world.

(g) The trade unions had to help their members to raise the standard of their ideological and political education, disseminate political and scientific knowledge, set up clubs, cultural circles and libraries, and encourage amateur artists. That was obviously a very important function: in a way, the trade-union leaders had thus become the clergy of the communist religion of the State.

(h) The trade unions had to try to secure the participation of women in the social, industrial and political life of the country, and help the workers and employees to educate their children in the communist ideology and represent the working class before State and social agencies on problems of labour, living conditions and culture.

63. In conclusion, he pointed out that the Soviet trade unions were obviously not organizations of the workers,

for the workers, by the workers. They were instruments used by the State to make the worker more productive and docile, and to indoctrinate him.

64. The Council had heard some representatives say that trade-union rights had never been infringed in the USSR. Perhaps that was true in one sense, for the simple reason that properly speaking there were no trade unions in that country. The facts he had just adduced could not be refuted. They would serve to place on their guard all those who still thought that the Communist leaders of today were the defenders of the workers' rights.

65. Mr. KORNEYEV (Union of Soviet Socialist Republics) said he would like first to protest against the fact that in spite of the categorical objections of the USSR and other delegations, the Council was examining the communication dated 20 July 1950 addressed to the Secretary-General by the so-called International Confederation of Free Trade Unions (E/1882, section IV).

66. That communication had been submitted under pressure by the United States and the United Kingdom. It was but one more instance of the campaign of slander conducted by those Powers against the USSR so as to conceal their own policy of aggression and rearmament. The sole purpose of the alleged complaints of the International Confederation of Free Trade Unions was to alienate the sympathies of the workers in the capitalist world from the Soviet Union and to divert the attention of the world public from the fact that the first tangible results of the war-mongering policy of the United States of America was to lower the standard of living of the working classes in the capitalist world.

67. The USSR delegation would show that the charges against its country were pure slander without the least foundation; and that no one would be deceived as to their real purpose. It would be enough to recall what the role of the trade unions in the Soviet Union really was.

68. In the first place, it should not be forgotten that the Constitution of the USSR guaranteed all workers, whether manual or office workers, the right to form trade unions. The Soviet trade unions were absolutely voluntary organizations, including among their members manual and office workers without any distinction whatsoever.

69. Article 151 of the Labour Code defined the role of the trade unions as a party representing the workers in collective contracts. Other parts of the Code provided that the trade unions were responsible for defending the interests of the wage-earners they represented.

70. Trade-union activity was directed towards developing production and improving the living conditions of the workers. In a manner which revealed his genius, Lenin had predicted that socialism would stimulate emulation and result in an expansion of the productive powers of the masses. Socialist emulation to increase and improve production had become a vast movement involving more than 90 per cent of all the workers, employees and technicians. The trade unions played a very important part in that emulation.

71. The trade unions also took a very active part in the drafting of legislation relating to production, labour

and cultural development. They helped to carry the legislative provisions into effect. They participated in the planning and fixing of wage-scales. They supervised the adjustment of wages to the nature of the work and the application of progressively increasing bonuses. They assisted the workers in their professional training and helped to generalize the methods used by the most able workers. Furthermore, they administered social insurance, organized medical assistance, established sanatoria and rest homes, allocated housing and helped to develop technical and political education.

72. The trade unions had the right to authorize the opening of new undertakings, and their inspectors drew up regulations for the safety of the workers which undertakings were bound to observe, on pain of penalty. The trade unions maintained a large number of research centres responsible for devising methods of ensuring the safety of the workers and the protection of their health.

73. Thus, Lenin's prediction that technical progress due to socialism would improve the conditions of labour of the workers and employees was being fulfilled.

74. Conditions of labour in the USSR were not comparable with those existing in the capitalist countries, where the sole thought of the masses of unemployed was to obtain work, whatever the conditions in which the work was to be done. That was the explanation of the increasing number of industrial accidents to be observed, for example, in the United States of America. In 1949, John L. Lewis, President of the miners' union of the United States, had said that in the course of nineteen years the number of miners killed or injured had reached a total of 1,250,000. In the USSR, on the other hand, the number of accidents at work and occupational diseases was continually decreasing as a result of the action taken by the State and the trade unions.

75. Collective contracts between the trade unions and the managements of undertakings were concluded with the participation of the wage-earners themselves. Thus, during the discussions that had taken place at the time of the conclusion of some 50,000 collective contracts in 1950, more than 1,250,000 persons had expressed their views.

76. The Soviet trade unions also controlled the execution of plans for the building of houses, the activity of the communal undertakings, the network of distribution and collective food undertakings. Under a decree of 1933, the trade unions also administered social insurance, which, in Generalissimo Stalin's words, was intended to preserve man, the most precious capital asset in the world. The Soviet State devoted a large part of the national income to social insurance. So far as the working classes were concerned, social insurance was one of the main results of the October Revolution. The development of the national economy and industrialization had made it possible for social insurance to become an essential factor in the improvement of the material and cultural situation of the working class. The amount of the social insurance funds, consisting solely of contributions by undertakings, was in 1950 more than double the amount paid in 1940.

77. The trade unions administered "pioneer" camps, where millions of children spent their annual holidays.

They also administered 1,195 spas, sanatoria and rest homes, which were in addition to those controlled by the Ministry of Public Health, and in which more than 2,500,000 workers spent their annual holidays in 1950. The trade unions were also responsible for the administration of 8,300 clubs, more than 9,000 libraries, 5,500 cinemas and more than 5,000 sports grounds. The importance of their action in the cultural field was considerable. The Soviet Government's contribution to this improvement in the situation of the wage-earners was considerable; the amounts expended under that head represented more than one-third of total wages.

78. The importance of the part played by the Soviet trade unions had been recognized by many foreign trade-unionists who had visited the Soviet Union. Thus, the trade-union leader James Carey, who had visited the USSR in 1945, had paid a tribute, in his report, to the action of the Soviet trade unions in defending the workers and to their participation in the work of reconstruction. Similarly, in the introduction to that report, Philip Murray had written that he had hoped the document would help to prevent the separation of the world into two hostile camps and would put an end to the feelings of hostility towards a great nation whose collaboration was indispensable in peace, as it had been in the securing of victory. After such statements, the slanders against the USSR which were currently being spread by Messrs. Carey and Murray were particularly regrettable.

79. Another delegation of American trade-unionists, which had visited the Soviet Union in 1948, had stated that the Soviet trade unions were much more democratic than those affiliated to the AF of L and certain members of the CIO. A British workers' delegation, which had visited the USSR in 1950, had declared that the working class in the Soviet Union was the master of the country and that in that country the trade unions had an importance which they did not have in any other country.

80. The organization of the Soviet trade unions was perfectly democratic. Their leaders were elected by

secret ballot, whereas in the capitalist countries the trade-union leaders were often bureaucrats, sometimes maintained in office without democratic election. The Soviet trade unions were infinitely more democratic than those in the capitalist countries.

81. The slanders against the Soviet trade unions spread by the International Confederation of Free Trade Unions were intended to divert attention from the repressive measures against the workers and the infringements of their fundamental rights in the capitalist countries, and particularly in the colonial territories.

82. In conclusion, he reserved the right to speak again during the discussion on infringements of trade-union rights in the United States of America and other capitalist countries.

#### **Membership of the Committee on Negotiations with Specialized Agencies**

83. The PRESIDENT recalled that the Council had decided, in adopting the report of the Agenda Committee (437th meeting), to refer two matters to the Committee on Negotiations with Specialized Agencies. That Committee had not met since 1948, so that its composition no longer corresponded to that of the Council.

84. He therefore proposed to appoint as members of the Committee the representatives of the following countries: Belgium, Czechoslovakia, China, France, India, Mexico, Sweden, the United Kingdom, the United States of America, the USSR and Uruguay.

85. Mr. KATZ-SUCHY (Poland) suggested that the decision should be deferred until the Council's next meeting, because it would be wise to study the composition of the Committee in the light of past experience and taking into account the nature of the work to be entrusted to it.

86. The PRESIDENT accepted the Polish representative's suggestion.

The meeting rose at 6.5 p.m.