# FOR THE UNITY OF THE TRADE UNION MOVEMENT

## Against the Split in the Revolutionary Trade Union Movement in Czechoslovakia and Those who Cause it.

By A. Losovsky.

The danger of a split in the revolutionary trade unions in Czechoslovakia has again become a question of the day by reason of the refusal of **Hais, Sykora** and **Nadvornik** to accept the proposals made them by the committee of the R. I. L. U. There did not appear to be any reasons for refusing our suggestions, since they really represent a way out of the existing difficulties. Meanwhile Hais and his adherents have compiled a very lengthy memorandum, the purport of which may be briefly summed up as follows: "We don't care a pin for the opinion of the members. The devil take proletarian democracy." There is no other way of interpreting the memorandum, which treats of a great variety of things but postpones the Congress of the International Workers' Federation indefinitely. The attempt of the R. I. L. U. to conduct the fight within the limits of proletarian democracy and to appeal to the members of the I. W. F. as arbiters in the contest has suffered a reverse. The agreement suggested by us was declined. Hais, Sykora, Nadvornik, and their adherents desire to measure their strength with that of the Comintern and the Profintern. Let them do so.

For us it is now of importance to ascertain the reasons of the crisis and to remove them as soon as possible. The reasons of the crisis lie in the fact that the C. P. and the revolutionary trade unions of Czechoslovakia have many democratic traditions and remnants in their ranks. These are all the more noticeable the greater the fierceness of the class struggle. The social storm-clouds are coming on and the Communist philistine — a type to be found pretty frequently in Czechoslovakia — is already preparing a comfortable retreat. The philistine is afraid of the fight and is ready to take refuge in any shelter (independence of the trade unions, "peaceful" fight, renunciation of strikes, etc.). What is at present in progress in the I. W. F. is nothing less than a purely trade-union dispute .The points at issue are the directives of the Communist Party and of the revolutionary trade unions. Are we to steer towards an aggravation of the class struggle or towards its mitigation; are the masses to be prepared for a fight or for a retreat; are the resolutions of the Comintern and of the R. I. L. U. to be carried out in fact or only on paper? That is the matter at issue. This nature of the struggle cannot be eliminated by a mere reference to the mistakes of the C. C. of the C. P. Cz. It is not a question of the mistakes of the C. C.; mistakes there undoubtedly are and will continue to be. The object of contention in Czechoslovakia is not how the mistakes can be corected but whether directives different from those of the Comintern and the R. I. L. U. are to be adopted.

If it were only a question of correcting mistakes, they could all be overcome very speedily within the confines of a uniform Party and trade-union organisation. It would not be necessary at all to arrange coups, to adopt a provocative attitude in relation to the entire membership, and — in the place of an honest, direct, proletarian answer — to reply to the suggestions of the R. I. L. U. with a lengthy memorandum and to demand the convocation of a new Party Congress of the Communist Party of Czechoslovakia. What would be the use of a new Party Congress? Perhaps for the purpose of making the C. P. subservient to your wishes? What, in your opinion, could be effected by another Party Congress? Could it change the composition of the C. C.? Obviously that is what you desire, since you brought it up at the discussions. What you are after can hardly be a mere personal change. You desire the Party to change its policy. There is the rub. But it is strange that you should apply with such a demand to the R. I. L. U., knowing quite well that the Comintern alone is competent to decide such a matter. Altogether Hais, Sykora, Nadvornik, and their friends have a very curious conception of the relations between the Party and the trade unions. They demand non-interference of the Party in the affairs of the trade unions, but they themselves desire to change the policy and the personal composition of the controlling organs of the Communist Party. All this is naturally highly original, but it reveals opportunism in such a transparent form that no worker is likely to be hoodwinked thereby.

Do you want to quarrel about the policy of the Party? Do so, if you like. Apply to the Comintern. Send a delegation there and have the courage to defend your opinion before the International. If you have special directives, then be so good as to set them forth in writing, clearly and precisely, so that every worker may understand what you desire. But you are acting in a double-faced way, declaring on the one hand that you are for the Comintern and the R. I. L. U. while, on the other hand, not bothering about its resolutions and suggestions and **building up your own Party and your own trade unions.** If you are really in favour of the R. I. L. U., why did you not accept the suggestions of the Commission? What was there about our eleven points that could not be accepted? The Commission met you so so far as not to express any opinion on the nature of the points at issue. It worked out a suggestion which purported an appeal to the membership of the I. W. F. to arbitrate in regard to the controversial points. The R. I. L. U. can surely not assume the standpoint that Hais, Sykora, and Nadvornik have a sole right to permanent leadership and that the members of the I. W. F. have no right to change their leaders. We are opposed to life-long functions in the trade unions, we are opposed to a hereditary bureaucracy, we are opposed to a dynastic principle in the trade unions. Therefore we suggested that the matter be settled on the basis of proletarian democracy.

The decision of Hais, Sykora, and Nadvornik renders it hard to maintain unity in the I. W. F. But, nevertheless, we are doing our utmost to prevent a split. The R. I. L. U. calls on all its members most emphatically to repel any attempt at a split in the I. W. F. and its sections. If in any of the sections the adherents of the R. I. L. U. are in the minority, they must remain in their ranks, they must form no parallel organisations, they must continue to pay their membership subscriptions, and wage an ideologic fight for the realisation of their directives. The adherents of the R. I. L. U. must make no exclusions, which can but prove detrimental. The sections must carry on a feverish activity for the recruiting of new members; they must win over the members of the local organisations of the respective reformist trade unions and work with tenfold energy at the extension and consolidation of their ranks. The more speedily the sections draw additional thousands and tens of thousands into their ranks, the sooner will the crisis be overcome. The more members there are in the sections, the more difficult it will be for the disruptors to influence them.

Simultaneously with this feverish activity, an energetic fight must be carried on against such as sabotage the resolutions of the R. I. L. U. under whose banner they are enrolled, as seek to build up a "centrist" Party on the strength of arguments in favour of the independence of the trade unions and split the revolutionary trade-union movement for the sake of personal or group interest. We are interested in making all workers who still support Hais, Sykora, and Nadvornik and thus commit mistakes in all good faith, fully understand whither they are being led. The fight against the Comintern and against the R. I. L. U. is welcomed by all our class-enemies. The bourgeois and reformist papers rejoice at the attitude of the oppositional deputies, senators, and publicists and publish triumphant reports of the "heroic" deeds of Hais, Sykora, and Nadvornik. This support will soon turn into a united front, then into a political bloc, and finally into real unity; that is the logic of the fight. Whoever opposes the Comintern and the R. I. L. U. finds his way, willy-nilly, to the camp of the enemies of the international revolutionary labour movement. We did our utmost to prevent Hais, Sykora, Nadvornik, and their friends from treading this slippery path. We told them that path would lead them into the slough of Amsterdam. They refused to accept our advice and our suggestions. So much the worse for them. The international revolutionary trade-union movement and that of Czechoslovakia will succeed in maintaining the unity and compactness of their ranks and in breaking the resistance of the disruptors.

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