

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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