

INTERNATIONAL ORGANIZATIONS DIVISION

WEEKLY SUMMARY NO. 21

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Volume III

The International Week

The US, UK and France announced their decision to take immediate action both within and outside the UN to prevent any threatened violation of frontiers or armistice lines either by Arabs or Israelis. Secretary General Lie returned to Lake Success, his Odyssey having apparently failed to effect any immediate progress toward resolving the UN impasse. Meanwhile Hungary and Czechoslovakia quit the fifth annual UNESCO conference over the Chinese seating issue.

Unaffiliated labor organizations being absorbed by WFTU and ICFTU. As the World Federation of Trade Unions (WFTU) and the Free Trade Union Confederation (ICFTU) hold major meetings, a number of national labor organizations which have thus far pursued an independent course are aligning themselves with one camp or the other.

In Budapest, the now completely Sovietized WFTU is preparing to admit to membership Communist-oriented labor federations from Nigeria, Guatemala and Pakistan. By exploiting these latest accessions, together with the application of the Burmese Trade Union Congress and the still recent affiliation of the nationalist Tunisian labor organization (UGTT), the WFTU leaders will probably attempt to divert attention from counterbalancing losses in their worldwide strength. The withdrawals of the national labor federations of Israel (Histadruth) and of Venezuela (CTC) have deprived the USSR of effective channels of influence for consolidating local Communist strength, and the decision of the Finnish Socialist labor federation last week to cease paying WFTU dues hits even closer to home.

In Brussels, the Western-oriented ICFTU, already representing an estimated 50 million trade union members from 48 countries, is likely to gain new adherents in the near future. The Socialist Australian Trade Union Congress, until recently apathetic to Western overtures, is now angling for affiliation with the ICFTU. Furthermore, the Western labor international's position in Southeast Asia may be improved when ICFTU and US labor missions en route to this strategic area complete exploratory talks with Indonesian, Thai and other native labor leaders.

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Highlights of TC agenda. Outstanding on the agenda of the forthcoming Trusteeship Council session will be a decision on the draft statute for Jerusalem, examination of annual reports on certain trust territories (including the US Pacific trusteeship) and debate on the unification of the Ewe tribe. Israel's rejection of the Jerusalem statute, together with Jordan's refusal even to discuss it, insure its return to the GA; while the recent Israel proposal for a UN authority in charge of specific Holy Places, though it may be discussed, is outside the TC's present instructions and presumably will not come to a vote. Debate on the Ewe tribe, now divided between French and British Togolands and the Gold Coast, may prove to be the session's highlight if France and the UK present the far-reaching proposals which some months ago they intimated were under consideration.

WFTU drive to organize petroleum workers stalled. The efforts of the World Federation of Trade Unions to interfere with essential oil shipments to the US by organizing a Petroleum Workers International in Mexico City have apparently been impeded by Communist losses in the Mexican petroleum unions. These losses, following the ejection from the petroleum unions of the supporters of the CTAL leader, Lombardo Toledano, have reportedly forced the WFTU to postpone the Mexico City conference at which it intended to organize the new international. It is probable that the arrest of key Communist union leaders during the recent Venezuelan petroleum strike and the outlawing of the Venezuelan Communist Party will still further delay execution of this WFTU project. However, the USSR, which has a vital interest in the recent CTAL resolution to deny essential shipments to the US, can be expected to give increasing assistance to Lombardo's attempts to rebuild Communist influence in the Mexican Petroleum Union and to organize a Communist-oriented petroleum workers federation for all of Latin America.