



## SHIFT IN THE EUROPEAN TRADE UNION MOVEMENT

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## Background of International Union Movements

[Article series by Leif Hovelsen, 22 April 1974]

CPYRGHT

[Text] There are disturbing signs that the western union movement will abandon its democratic basis and go along with the Soviet-inspired program for East-West cooperation. Developments have occurred here that are little known outside -- among other things the entry the Soviet viewpoints have gained in the Norwegian trade union movement. In order to get a complete view of this picture we have asked Leif Hovelsen who is an expert in this field to explain these developments. Here is the first of six articles on this subject.

It was an important day for Europe, 19 January 1974. Whether that day will turn out to bode well or ill for the future is something history will be able to determine some day. It happened in connection with the second European regional conference of the International Labor Organization (ILO) in Geneva on 14-24 January. The meeting place was the Palais des Nations, Room XII, the first official summit meeting of trade union leaders from East and West since 1948. They were all there, the leaders of the national trade union federations in western and eastern Europe, the leaders of a good 150 million union-organized workers.

"It is 25 years since we talked advantageously together," said a Scandinavian participant. "It is phenomenal and it is hard to grasp the fact that this top-level meeting has occurred."

To understand the significance of what occurred in Geneva on 19 January let us look back at the tension-filled years of the postwar period and follow the development of the international and European trade union movements.

## Conscious Communist Infiltration

In 1945 the World Federation of Trade Unions (WFTU) was formed. This occurred on the initiative of the Soviet Union, supported by the English and American trade union movements. The headquarters was in Paris. It soon became clear that the goals of those taking the initiative had not been solely those of promoting union interests. A conscious communist infiltration began to be noticeable. Conditions also intensified internationally. The communist power takeover in Czechoslovakia and the thrust of the Marshall Plan in Europe led in 1949 to a splitting of the international trade union movement. It divided into three groups.

The WFTU continued under the dominance of the Soviet Union, still using Paris as its headquarters. Besides the union federations of eastern Europe, that of the French Communists (the CGT) and the Italian communist-ruled union organization (CGIL) remained in the World Federation of Trade Unions -- hereafter referred to as the Communist Union International.

with headquarters in Brussels.

The Christian trade union movements in the West formed their own international organization, also with Brussels as its headquarters.

The contact was broken between West and East. The international union movement followed the pattern of international politics and the "cold war."

In 1951 the Communist Union International had to give up its Paris office. The French government regarded its activity as hostile to the state and the headquarters was moved to Vienna, a city still occupied by the big four powers. Today the Communist Union International is directed from Prague. It has a membership of 140 million, of which the Soviet Union makes up about 100 million.

#### ICFTU

The International Confederation of Free Trade Unions (ICFTU) came to have great importance for the reconstruction of western Europe and for the development of the trade union movement in the third world. From the very beginning the ICFTU had a strong anti-communist motivation, perhaps somewhat stamped by the noted figure of the American union organization (AFL-CIO), George Meany. In 1969 however the American labor organization withdrew from the ICFTU -- which today has a membership of close to 50 million people.

The Christian international union organization gradually abandoned any narrow ideological basis, dropped the word "Christian," and since 1968 has been called the World Confederation of Labor (WCL). It plays quite an important role today in the third world, especially in South America. It has around 15 million members.

One could first mark the tendency toward contact between the international union movements in the mid-Sixties. The conditions mainly responsible for the desire to make closer contact were the policy of relaxation of tension between East and West, the necessity of cooperation on a union level within the European Community, and the rapid development of the multinational companies.

The Communist Union International began the campaign for closer contact with the West. This was a matter of following up the Kremlin's policy of relaxation of tension on the union level. The first results came in 1965. Then a delegation of West German national union representatives went to Czechoslovakia. They introduced a new phase of bilateral contacts. The German trade union paper ARBEIDETS VERDEN described this "opening up to the East" as an event "making an end to the Ice Age."

To be sure the Communist Union International as a branch of the Kremlin's policy of relaxing world tensions has made attempts to bring about cooperation on the international level, but these tactical onslaughts have found no echo in Brussels. In July 1973 the ICFTU clarified its position once again. It stated that no contacts would be made with trade associations whose policy is diametrically opposed to the goals pursued by the free and democratic trade unions -- a clear statement from the center in Brussels to the center in Prague.

Free Hand on the National Level

It is different on the national level. Here the leadership in Brussels has given its various national labor organization members a free hand to seek bilateral contact. Thus it is that the same labor leaders who favor a limitation on the international level are encouraged to make contacts with the East on the national level. This may seem inconsistent. The idea is probably that it is all right on a bilateral level to make an attempt at a pragmatic approach, but as soon as one meets on the international level, it is impossible to avoid discussing the more deepseated ideological questions -- which basically are the real problems in the relationship between the free democratic trade union movement in the West and the communist trade union movement in the East. To believe that in the long run a confrontation can be avoided here is unrealistic. One thing is clear -- the basic problem itself will not be solved simply by displacing it.

While the ICFTU and the WCL pursue their goals through a pragmatic attitude toward conditions, the Communist Union International has a very different motivation for its action program. Here a tactical and long-range strategic attitude toward international questions plays a much greater role. If one studies the documents from the 8th congress held by the Communist Union International in Warna, Bulgaria, on 15-22 October 1973, one will find that the congress was mainly concerned with the situation in the "capitalist countries" and in the third world, despite the fact that 90 percent of the members in the organization belong to the communist nations! And if one follows the policy it has pursued during the last 5 years, one finds a close connection between the relaxation of tension policy pursued by the Kremlin and the campaign of closer contacts the Communist Union International has gone in for.

Marxist Goal

Furthermore one can follow a long-range plan that seems to be worked out according to a tactical move in three stages: 1. To develop bilateral contacts with the objective of achieving unity of action between communist and non-communist trade unions. (This stage has already been achieved.) 2. To prepare through the bilateral contacts multilateral contacts on the continental level. (During the last 4 years the Communist Union International in consequence has urged multilateral conferences of national union leaders on the European, South American, and Asian continents.) 3. These multilateral conferences on the continental level would then lead to closer international contacts which would form the basis for a united world union movement -- with the establishment of an international union secretariat or a co-ordination committee as the first stage.

It is not unlikely that such an international union secretariat could be set up in the course of a few years and that the Soviet Union even now intends to exert its dominance there. At any rate Moscow does not conceal the fact that in the long run these contacts will serve the purpose of promoting Marxist-Leninist principles. (ARBEIDERKLASSEN OG NATIDEN, No 3, p 91, Moscow 1972)

Shelepin Meets Secretly with Scandinavian Union Leaders

[23 April 1974, p 3]

last October in Warna, the top leader of the Soviet national labor federation, A. N. Shelepin, made a program speech. He referred to the improved contacts with the World Confederation of Labor and individual members of the International Confederation of Free Trade Unions and then offered active collaboration on the following basis to these international union organizations: 1. A mutual fight for peace and disarmament and for economic, technical-scientific, and cultural cooperation. 2. A mutual fight against multinational corporations. 3. A common fight to utilize scientific and technical advances to serve the interests of the workers and a mutual effort to improve environmental protection, primarily the environment of the workers. (PRAVDA, No 244, 17 October 1973)

Shelepin then went more closely into the various points and was especially concrete on the question of environmental protection. Here he said among other things: "To an increasing extent the entire world of the working class is affected by the issue of environmental protection, especially when it concerns factory surroundings. We propose in the name of the (Warna) congress to send all the unions in the world an appeal to unite our efforts in protecting our environment and job surroundings, to hold mutual seminars and 'symposiums,' and to exchange our experiences on a regular basis. It would be useful to summon a world trade union congress to discuss environmental protection problems. At the same time this could be an important contribution toward developing cooperation between trade unions of all countries in this area."

In the program speech Shelepin appealed repeatedly to the ICFTU and the WCL for closer cooperation. He also stated that the Communist Union International would go in for the establishment of a united world union movement, that they will hold conferences on the continental level in Europe, Asia, Africa, and South America, and that they will go in for setting up an international trade union secretariat. (TRUD, No 244, 17 October 1973)

I will not deal here with whether the international union movement could achieve a cooperation like the one envisioned by Shelepin or with the extent to which such a cooperation in the long run would serve and promote the interests of free Europe, but one thing is certain -- the question of cooperation between East and West will be determined to an important extent by future developments in the European union movement. Here new tendencies are brewing that it is both important and necessary to keep up with.

The development of the European Community, the rapid growth of multinational corporations, and the increasing importance of environmental protection and resources in today's industrial society all challenge the union movement to coordinate and synchronize its forces. This has led among other things to the formation of independent European union organizations out of the international union groups.

In 1958 the members of the ICFTU belonging to the European Community formed a European trade union secretariat. This gradually

developed into a permanent organization which in 1969 became the European Confederation of Free Trade Unions (ECFTU).

At about the same time the European members of the WCL joined together in a European Organization (EO).

The Communist Union International has had a lively interest in these formations inside the West European union movement. It did not want to remain outside what was happening. In 1965, therefore, the two West European members of the Communist Union International opened a secretariat in Brussels. A move not without interest, since both the French communist labor organization (CGT) with 2.2 million members and the Italian Communist-led labor organization (CGIL) with 3.5 million members had previously opposed the European Community as a "driving factor in the cold war" and as the "alliance of the monopolies."

Finally the ECFTU and the European labor organizations in the European Free Trade Area (EFTA) went together to form the European Trade Union Coalition (ETUC). This occurred on 28 February 1973.

With 17 national labor organizations and a membership of almost 28.5 million the ETUC intends among other things to coordinate and guard employee interests with respect to European institutions and pursue a joint policy toward the multinational corporations.

When ETUC first saw the light of day on 28 February 1973 people expected that this "newborn child" of ECFTU and EFTA -- both having the ICFTU as midwife -- would also be baptized the European Free Trade Union Association. But this did not happen. A bare majority supported dropping the word "free." A strange thing to those of us outside.

In light of the period's policy of relaxation and an eastern Europe which secretly feels more tied to the West than desirous of being tied to their powerful neighbor to the East, was the majority aiming at getting eastern European national labor organizations with them in pragmatic cooperation on common European problems and tasks? Did they have a vision of an all-European trade union in which eastern Europe would eventually be tied more closely to the West? Or did the majority wish to tempt the strong communist labor organizations in France and Italy? Whichever motives got the majority to drop the previously so noticeable "free" -- and whether that was a wise decision or a serious mistake -- will not be discussed here. Nor what consequences it may have for western Europe, I wish only to show that the line marked so strongly by the ICFTU has been broken and the door is now open to the possibility of developing an all-European union movement.

Because of the policy of relaxing tensions between East and West and a Europe closely interconnected in a common future for good or for ill, the international and European union movements are in motion. Old ways are being abandoned, new ways are opening up -- with opportunities for both East and West. Which forces then will be the guiding and dominant ones in the years to come? Time will tell which men in the West will distinguish themselves as the notable leaders of the European tradition. In the East one man in particular has helped shape the new development, the chairman of the Soviet national labor federation, A. N. Shelepin. He is also a member of the Politburo and the central council authorities.

With great cleverness Shelepin has advanced the Kremlin's policy of relaxation of tension and coexistence on the international union level. As early as 1970 he promoted through "Polish feelers" the idea of an all-Europe union conference along the lines of the European security conference, but at that time the idea did not fall on ready soil on the part of western national labor organization leaders. The next move came during the Finnish national labor organization congress held in Helsingfors at the end of June 1971. There Shelepin went in strongly for the idea of an all-Europe trade union conference and hinted to western union leaders at the congress that Soviet Russia had revised its ideas about such a conference and was open to changes in its previous views. This apparently paved the way for a minimum goal of contact between the communist and non-communist national labor organization leaders and the idea of holding an all-Europe union conference in one form or another took root. Some people threw out the idea that such a conference should be held within the ILO framework. The ICFTU which formerly had clearly opposed such meetings saw a possibility there. With the ILO as patron of such a meeting there would be a certain guarantee that negotiations could be limited to purely union matters while at the same time there would not be any direct confrontation between the two union internationals in Brussels and Prague.

The proposal gained new strength when the general director of ILO, Wilfred Jenks, visited Moscow in July 1972. In talking with him, Shelepin stressed very emphatically that such a conference as the one under discussion would be an invaluable support for the European security conference and for a constructive development in Europe.

During 1973 Shelepin had thorough conversations with German and English national labor organization leaders. In particular the chairman of the West German labor federation, Oscar Vetter, has supported an all-Europe conference -- the union movements in West and East Vetter claims must "support the process of relaxation of tensions which the government is pursuing." And it was Vetter too who presented Shelepin's idea when ETUC was formed along with his wish that the eastern European national labor organizations could also be part of the newly-formed trade union movement. A statement which incidentally was retracted a few days later in the Soviet union newspaper TRUD -- probably for tactical reasons.

Scandinavia has also been part of the picture. On 29-30 September 1973 Shelepin held a secret meeting with Scandinavian national labor organization leaders in Obnas, a town in the outskirts of Helsingfors. In October 1973 Shelepin also took the initiative in a similar meeting in Vienna. Here national union leaders from the Soviet Union, Hungary, East Germany, England, West Germany, and Sweden worked out a joint statement about the desirability of holding an all-Europe meeting of national labor organization leaders during the ILO 2nd European regional conference in Geneva during January 1974.

In other words the purpose of these secret meetings in Obnas and Vienna was to plumb the possibilities for a cooperation between eastern and western union organizations and to lay the foundation for the top-level meeting that would take place in connection with the ILO's 2nd European regional conference in Geneva.

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## Hectic Atmosphere Surrounds Top-Level Meeting

[24 April 1974]

~~CPYRGHT~~ It is Saturday morning, 19 January 1974. The meeting place is the Palais des Nations in Geneva, this traditional conference center so closely tied to Europe's eventful history during the last 60 years. In connection with the 2nd European regional conference of the ILO, which has been assembled for a week, this Saturday is dedicated to a certain group of men. That something important is about to happen is evidenced by the gathering of press, radio, and TV reporters who have suddenly turned up. Even two Norwegian Broadcasting Corporation journalists are in position.

We sit in the coffee bar and discuss the day's topic -- the top-level meeting of national union organization leaders from western and eastern Europe. Prominent leaders of 35 Social Democratic, Christian, and Communist labor organizations and three union internationals have set a meeting for the first time since 1948. Then the international union movement split into three parts, following in the traces of the cold war.

So this first official meeting in 25 years, with 200 delegates from East and West, is an event both television and press reporters in the West and in the East have come to cover. But it won't be easy. The meeting is to be held behind closed doors, to be more precise behind the big double doors of Room XII. So the newsthirsty men of the press have the entire 200-meter long hall leading up to Room XII as their open hunting ground.

The coffee bar is a kind of "seismograph" that registers everything that happens, even the "smallest tremor" can be read in the expressive or expressionless faces behind a cup of coffee, a glass of whisky, or a transparent cloud of tobacco smoke. Here top policies are pursued, here all kinds of agreements are made -- in brief, here is where the action is.

It is difficult to describe the atmosphere before this important meeting -- a somewhat uncertain expectation, perhaps. Or a certain degree of selfconsciousness toward each other resembling that before the big dance, the first reluctant steps out onto the mirror-smooth parquet, firmly determined not to step on each other's toes!

Suddenly he is standing there, relatively short, wearing dark clothes, with an odd smile and coal-black eyes that are difficult to penetrate -- former Komsomol leader and KGB chief, Alexander Nikolaevitch Shelepin, chief leader of the national labor organization of the Soviet Union.

Interpreters and close colleagues swarm around him. The one in the lead is Pyotr T. Pimenov, the Soviet Union's labor representative and the first communist member of the ILO council. He is somewhat of a giant, but there is something jovial and human about this mighty figure. Pimenov is on the offensive, slapping everyone on the shoulder, chewing gum persistently, very reminiscent of an American salesman as he presents his chief to the many labor leaders who have gathered in the coffee bar. A couple of TV cameras whir, the sharp light bulbs blink, and eventually the main stream of delegates moves toward



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Room XII. Norway's Aspengren, Sweden's Geijer, and England's Murray are seen in the distance. Last comes the one who has put so much into bringing this meeting about, West Germany's labor organization chairman, Oscar Vetter. And don't forget, in front of, behind, and beside these important leaders an eager pack of press men follows hunting for news. The doors to Room XII close. The top-level meeting can begin.

After a good 2 hours the doors are opened. Shelepin is among the first to emerge. He isn't smiling any longer, looks tired and somewhat selfconscious. Immediately some people guess that the negotiations have broken down and perhaps there will be no cooperation between East and West! The delegates are not inclined to talk, this was a closed meeting after all and was to continue in the afternoon.

Now it was time for lunch -- more concerned with getting a bite to eat and a little rest than with talking and in this stream of people one could also notice the Norwegian labor organization quartet, Aspengren moving rapidly with the gleam of battle in his eye, Hojdahl a little behind him in stoic calm, the international secretary, Sandergren, striding rapidly and in conversation with a European colleague, and alone, as solid and fixed as Dovrefjell itself comes Sunde, judicial adviser of the Norwegian LO [Federation of Trade Unions] and Norway's representative on the ILO council. He sent a nod as a signal that the meeting had gone well.

Although the news was not plentiful, it was possible to glean before the meeting resumed that the atmosphere during the negotiations had been a good one, factual and constructive, and that a communique would be issued at the close of the meeting.

A cunning newsman from Rome was the first to bring concrete news. "They've agreed on a new meeting for late fall 1974," he was able to say. "There is no agenda set up yet, but a meeting will take place." A delegate from eastern Europe had divulged this -- in the lavatory after all the doors had been checked!

Late in the afternoon the delegates streamed out of Room XII. The journalists rushed up and a group gathered around Vetter, the West German labor chairman. "There will be another meeting in the fall," he said. "A technical committee will plan it. We will try to cooperate on humanizing the working environment, security on the job site, and pollution problems."

Vetter became silent again and walked on.

The words "humanizing the working environment" began a train of thought. My glance fell on the garden outside the Palais des Nations. In the semi-darkness I could glimpse the handsome cedars of Lebanon planted in 1872. It was as if my thoughts had a momentum of their own -- "humanizing the environment," how about humanizing the labor camps in the Soviet Union? Just tearing down the guard towers and the barbed wire fences would provide a more friendly environment! Would that be on the program? Hardly. That wouldn't be relaxation of tension, much less friendship and solidarity! That would be intervention in the affairs of others!

These thoughts are broken by a deep, powerful voice obviously trying its best Russian. A Finnish delegate and TV reporter had succeeded

in getting Shelepin to talk to him. The Finn told us later that Shelepin had commented on the meeting with a laconic, "The cold war is over."

The delegates appeared satisfied with the meeting. The atmosphere had been free and open. "A step toward relaxation of tension," most of them commented. "This will be a test for those in the East just as much as for us in the West," said a Scandinavian delegate. "We must be sober and vigilant," said another. "We must stick to the purely factual problems of environmental protection, health and welfare work, and safety on the job site."

One experienced labor federation man, a Social Democrat from central Europe, had these ideas:

"We must not overestimate what has happened. No politically explosive issues were dealt with. It was plain that the communist delegates were avoiding burning issues. Nor is it surprising; they are making long-range plans. If the doors closed now, they would remain barred for a long time. Nor should we overestimate the spirit of cooperation that prevailed at the meeting. Shelepin is merely carrying out the policy that suits the Kremlin at the moment -- and that is cooperation in the framework of relaxation of tension and coexistence. We must not overlook the basic problem even if there is happy cooperation just now. Both sides are falsely informed. The illusions must be ripped away. We must comprehend what the Soviet Russians want. In the East they have to learn that they cannot do whatever they want to us in the West. What happened today might very well encourage the avoidance of dealing with real political issues, being satisfied to open the door to further contacts." The real problems will first begin when the concrete issues are taken up, as we have seen during the negotiations on the European security conference and on relations between East and West Germany.

The joint communique did not say much that was new. It established the fact that the summit meeting had taken place, that it occurred in a good and constructive spirit, that there was a mutual desire for expanded joint consultations, and total agreement on holding an all-Europe union conference on humanizing the working environment and safety issues -- health and welfare on the job -- by the end of 1974.

The communique said nothing about a new meeting place. A number of rumors were flying. The East German national union organization chairman, Herbert Warnke, thought it would be held in Vienna or Helsingfors -- perhaps an expression of what he would prefer himself. Norway's Sunde, who is a man one can rely on, said it would be in Geneva. And the four members of the technical committee who now have the task of preparing the next meeting are the four labor representatives on the ILO council -- England's Murry, West Germany's Muhr, the Soviet Union's Pimenov, and Norway's Sunde. They will now make contact with the national labor organizations in Europe and plan out the next summit meeting which it is hoped can be held in Geneva in late fall 1974.

For this reporter, 19 January was a challenge, a day that brought more questions than answers. The problems of the very policy of relaxing international tension hit close to home. This question has so many aspects that it will be dealt with separately in the next article.

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## Shelepin Wants "Friendship and Cooperation"

[26 April 1974, p 3]

The unique thing about the conference held under the auspices of the ILO is just this, that here were gathered not only representatives of the various governments of the world, but also responsible people from production life -- employees, employers, and trade union leaders. This provides an insight into the social, economic, and ideological forces competing in the world community and a mirror image of the many human opinions and feelings that are alive just now.

The ILO conference can also serve as a kind of barometer of relations between East and West. The "weather" can change from one conference to another. About 6 or 7 years ago one could feel the icy blasts of the cold war both in plenary sessions and on the many executive committees, deliberate attacks that were precisely planned and well coordinated. Then came some years with "lighter breezes," and then last January, during the 2nd ILO European regional conference and the all-Europe union summit meeting, good weather set in.

Relaxation of tension and cooperation sent a mild thawing wind through the many rooms and halls of the Palais des Nations. It was striking how the representatives of the Soviet Union and the countries of the eastern bloc at all levels made an effort to offer constructive cooperation. This positive attitude on the part of the communist countries made this a very effective conference -- in contrast to the first ILO European regional conference in 1955 when the delegates of the communist countries put all manner of crude hindrances in the way.

This somewhat unexpected change of climate was so striking that it created some uncertainty among the western European delegates.

"What did it mean?" many asked themselves. "Was it genuine or were there tactical motives behind it?"

A Scandinavian employer delegate commented: "It is much easier when the communists attack us than when they just smile."

It was equally striking that this constructive spirit also prevailed at the all-Europe summit meeting scheduled by the 200 labor organization leaders during the 2nd European regional conference. This meeting which took place on 19 January was an event in itself. After 25 years of cold war and separation, people were now looking for connecting points for cooperation.

In the preceding articles we followed the developments that led to this union summit meeting and some of what happened during that important meeting. How then is one to evaluate what happened in Geneva on 19 January and in what context should we comprehend the spirit of relaxation that so characterized the 2nd European regional conference?

The speech everybody was most anxious to hear, the one that will be studied and discussed more than anyone else's, was the address by the Soviet national labor organization chairman, former Komsomol leader and KGB chief, A. N. Shelepin.

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the joint communique issued after the meeting ended did not contain

anything informative nor would any of the western labor federation leaders provide any exact information on what Shelepin had said. Certainly we heard generalities about its being a mild and moderate speech, but otherwise nothing. The principle was respected that what was dealt with at a closed meeting should not be passed on to newsthirsty reporters. Besides it is customary in the West not to publish speeches given under such conditions, especially when important international questions are involved.

However the speech Shelepin made in Room XII on 19 January appeared in its entirety in the trade union paper TRUD, Moscow, 20 January, under the title, "In the Working-Class Interest." In its introduction TRUD said an historic event had taken place in Geneva "the importance of which can scarcely be overestimated."

Shelepin referred to the great tasks of this period -- to secure peace, promote relaxation of tension, and improve the climate in Europe.

"We believe," he said, "that today there are enough, even that there are unusually favorable prior conditions for cooperation between European trade unions, regardless of their ideological views and international ties. And such a cooperation need be feared by no one. No one will benefit from it unilaterally. On the contrary, everyone will and the working class in particular will benefit from such cooperation. We do not pursue a goal -- as some people think -- of being able to play a 'leading communist role' in the European union movement or of making all our western colleagues into supporters of the communist ideology, but we hope equally that you have not set the goal for yourselves of making us into supporters of a different ideology. . . . Ideological differences have always existed -- they are there and will always be there, but this does not need to stand in the way of our good relations, of our cooperation in serving the interests of the working class and all workers. . . . We are in favor of looking ahead, not looking back."

Shelepin then pointed out that in past years there have been many bilateral contacts between national labor federations in East and West, but that now the time is ripe to "take new steps to advance multilateral cooperation of union movements in Europe. . . . It is clear that such cooperation must be based on the principles of nonintervention in each other's affairs, full equality, mutual respect, and recognition of the realities that exist today. . . .

"I would like to emphasize," Shelepin continued, "that we place the main stress on cooperation, joint actions, and not on an organizational unity because we think that at present the conditions for this are not ripe."

"What does the Soviet labor federation want from the European union movement? A good deal! First of all -- friendship and sincere cooperation. That is what we want. That is our sincere desire."

Shelepin then made certain proposals -- which were later made the basis of the joint communique issued by the top-level meeting and were by and large the basis of the plans now being worked out for the next proposed top-level meeting to be held, if possible, before the end of 1974.

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an act of true friendship and cooperation. And perhaps there are those who will take him at his word and believe it. In his Nobel prize speech author Alexander Solzhenitsyn quoted a Russian proverb that says: "Don't believe your own brother, believe your crossed eye." The reason is this: Shelepin is pursuing larger goals than friendship and cooperation. His speech in Room XII on 19 January was a tactical ploy, a step in a larger context -- and shaped accordingly. One must plumb deeper in order to comprehend the move that is being made. In other words, what purposes would the all-Europe union summit meeting serve?

One can draw certain conclusions from the reports and press accounts printed in eastern publications concerning the Geneva meeting.

On 24 January TRUD ran an article entitled, "Unity of Action in the International Union Movement a Vital Necessity" which said: "The position of those forces who have wagered everything on unity of action and cooperation within the labor movement without regard to orientation and international affiliation has been strengthened. . . . A highly important stage for the development of cooperation within the union movement on the European continent was reached in the gathering of national union federation leaders from the European countries which took place in Geneva within the framework of the ILO regional conference. The importance of this assembly can scarcely be overstated. . . . Unity of action in the union movement has become a vital necessity and is in step with the times."

The organ of the East German national labor federation, DIE TRIBUENE, commented on 25 January: "This Geneva meeting is an important event in the life of the international union movement. Even though one would have to call the Geneva meeting the first step, we are talking about a very important step."

NEUES DEUTSCHLAND, the East German government newspaper, had an interview entitled "European Union Movement Must Be Factor in Assuring Peace" with the chairman of the East German labor organization (FDGB), Herbert Warnke, writing among other things: "As our subject emphasized, the Geneva meeting was a clear step forward, a success for the workers' and labor organization representatives who have long supported cooperation."

On 16 February TRUD brought a detail account of the summit meeting in Geneva written by P.T. Pimenov, the Soviet Union's labor representative on the ILO council and one of the four men who will arrange the next all-European union summit meeting before the end of 1974. The article is called "Forge Working-Class Unity." Pimenov views the meeting in Geneva as a logical result of the developments taking place since 1970-71 -- relaxation of East-West tensions and the bilateral contacts the Communist Union International has made with western union organizations. Again and again Pimenov emphasizes that the Geneva meeting was the beginning of an all-Europe union cooperation and that now it is a question of proceeding further. Now it is a question of carrying out the decisions made in Geneva and utilizing the favorable conditions of the present in the greatest possible cooperation and unity of action between the European union movements.

The underlying note we see in all these accounts is this: the

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crises in the capitalist world all compel with historical necessity the gathering of "a union mass organization founded on the class struggle."

They confirm the fact that all efforts for union unity and cooperation in action will serve the purpose of promoting Marxist-Leninist principles.

The purposeful moves of recent years on the European and international union levels can only be understood in connection with what is happening on the political level.

#### Moscow Hopes to Use New Situation to Win Victory in West

[29 April 1974, p 3]

The situation in Europe must be seen in context. Brezhnev's and Shelepin's efforts are parallel moves. The Geneva meeting and the continued fight for the free European union movement are steps in the Kremlin's vast efforts to get into a position where it can exert a constantly increasing influence over all Europe.

Informed sources in Bonn who have negotiated with the Soviet Union and the eastern European countries and are still kept informed about what is going on in the negotiations on European security claim that the governments of the Warsaw Pact countries are united on bringing about a security system and a permanent European secretariat that can provide them with the legal framework (by means of so-called consultations) so they can help determine conditions in all Europe.

When Brezhnev was on a state visit to the German Federal Republic last summer, two prominent German politicians asked him about what he would prefer to emerge from the European security conference. The answer was: "The ideal result of the conferences in Helsingfors and Geneva would be the establishment of a permanent European secretariat."

French journalist Rene Debernat confirms that the Kremlin is seeking to expand its influence westward. He writes:

"During the recently held top-level meeting between Pompidou and Brezhnev, shortly before the president's death, the Soviet Union confirmed for the first time since the end of the war that it wants to gain a foothold on a lasting basis in West European affairs. This is the impression of the French delegation on its return from Geneva." (MORGENBLADET, 5 April 1974)

Here we are touching the very kernel of the difficulties of the policy of relaxing international tension. On the one hand we have a community of communist states who want relaxation of tension, peace, and coexistence but at the same time are working to conquer the world or at the least to make sure they can shape it as they wish. On the other hand we have a world in the West also desiring relaxation of tension, peace, and coexistence, a world that does not appear to grasp the dimension of the challenges confronting it or to do anything effective to counteract them -- on the contrary, a world that takes such great liberties that liberty itself is endangered.

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wage a pragmatic, almost static policy of relaxation of tension, the Soviet Union and the states of the eastern bloc are waging a dynamic and offensive policy of relaxation of tension. We in the West want to secure peace in the world. They in the East want to secure the world for communism. Relaxation of tension and coexistence does not mean that the Kremlin has given up the idea of world domination or that the world revolution is finished. It is still going on, using other means, the tactics of relaxation of tension and peaceful coexistence.

The point is we are in a new situation, a new stage of warfare and we in the West must learn to comprehend its significance. Protected by an "armed peace" in the years ahead we will have to live in a situation where an "irreconcilable and incessant" ideological rivalry will spread into all areas of life -- and on a global front. "The onset of friendship and cooperation" during the 2nd European regional conference and the all-Europe union summit meeting in Geneva was only one of the many moves in the fight to draw Europe into the Kremlin's sphere of interest.

One could ask with some justification what is the basis for coming to such conclusions? Isn't this stating the case at its most extreme and besides, isn't the age of ideology past?

From years of studying material which has been available from the Soviet Union and the countries of eastern Europe, it seems clear that the champions of Marxism-Leninism are still on the offensive. Since the 24th party congress was held in Moscow in March 1971, there has been a consolidation of the eastern bloc around a joint foreign political line, a clear ideological line of demarcation between the non-communist world, and a constantly growing diplomatic assault in the framework of the policy of peaceful coexistence. Not to mention military preparedness which has grown in strength and experience.

But let us go to the source itself to hear what the leaders of the eastern bloc have to say about relaxation of tension, coexistence, and relations with the non-communist world.

"We live under the shadow of an unceasing ideological war waged by imperialist propaganda against our country and the socialist world in which they use the most refined methods and the most advanced technical means." (L. I. Brezhnev at the 24th party congress, Moscow, March 1971)

"The ideological struggle will increase in extent and intensity not in spite of but as a result of the policy of peaceful coexistence." (Erich Honecker, East German party leader in his closing speech to the 8th meeting of the central committee, December 1972)

On 5 January 1973 the Polish news bureau PAP made this comment on the European situation: "The closer Europe moves toward a practical coexistence and the more the continent is involved in the gradual dissolution of the two blocs, the sharper and more uncompromising the ideological confrontation between the two systems will be."

On 14-15 February 1973 a seminar was held in East Berlin on "Peaceful Coexistence and Ideological Struggle." The main speech was delivered by professor Herbert Haerber, director of the East German Institute of International Politics and Economics. Among other things

he said: "It is necessary that we always be in complete control of what is at the very core of the policy of peaceful coexistence between states with differing social systems. We profess this. . . [line missing] wage the inevitable class struggle whose goal is to avoid an atomic war, but at the same time to wage the inevitable class struggle between capitalism and socialism. In this struggle we allow ourselves to be guided by the interests of the workers, by socialism, and by the desire of all people for peace. Our opponents follow their capitalist class goal. Therefore peaceful coexistence is no idyll. It is a hard, tough fight."

As the policy of relaxation has developed, the Kremlin and the eastern bloc seem to have gained more confidence in the policy they are pursuing.

"The insuring of peace and the development of cooperation between all peoples and states in accordance with the principles of peaceful coexistence provide the community of socialist states highly favorable external conditions for all-round expansion of international ties and the drive toward communism." (Kurt Hager, secretary of the East German CP central committee and member of the Politburo, NEUES DEUTSCHLAND, 29 December 1973)

"Peaceful coexistence does not mean the end of the struggle between the two social systems in the world. The fight will continue between the proletariat and the bourgeoisie, between world socialism and imperialism, until the complete and final victory of communism on a worldwide scale. Under present conditions, all forms of class struggle between the two systems -- political, economic, and ideological -- are closely interconnected in such a way that one form supplements another and according to the concrete conditions present, first one and then another form moves into the foreground. The enormous struggle for men's ideas that has developed in the world today will undoubtedly be decided in favor of socialism which proves its undisputed superiority in all areas of social life." (From an editorial in PRAVDA, 22 August 1973, by professor Fedo Ryshenko: "Peaceful Coexistence and the Class Struggle")

#### West Must Prepare for Inevitable Confrontation

[30 April 1974]

We also read with interest a decision made by the East German Politburo on 7 November 1973 concerning "Agitation and Propaganda." This lengthy document was discussed during a conference held by the central committee of the East German CP on 16-17 November. Among other things the decision about "Agitation and Propaganda" says:

"The task of agitation and propaganda, with our superior spiritual weapons, is to destroy anti-communism -- the main tool of imperialist, bourgeois political ideology -- bourgeois nationalism, Social Democracy, revisionism, and leftist opportunism. The purity and unity of Marxism-Leninism must be defended consistently against all attacks. As conditions are today, the fight between socialism and imperialism is raging with special bitterness and intensity on the ideological front. Here there is no coexistence, here none can exist. Socialist and bourgeois ideologies cannot be reconciled. In this particular area of the strug-



also an important factor for new victories in the class struggle and in the confrontations with imperialism, a struggle that increases in intensity. occurs on various levels and in different forms. and thus includes all areas of social life.

"Our steady compass is and will remain the doctrines given us by Marx, Engels, and Lenin. It is precisely in the present phase of the international class struggle that the spreading of our ideology is a task of the first priority." (Kurt Hager, secretary of the East German CP central committee, Politburo member, NEUES DEUTSCHLAND, 4 November 1973)

In many ways Kurt Hager's convictions sound like a modern version of what Vishinskiy, Stalin's foreign minister, used to say some 25 years ago: "We will conquer the world not with atomic bombs but with our ideas, with our sagacity, and with our tenets."

Against the background of the offensive attitude that seems to prevail in the "community of socialist states," this question is forced upon us:

With a western Europe that is self-sufficient, plagued by strikes and internal political strife; with a United States that has been weakened in authority and in striking force, and a NATO that is no longer what it used to be, why shouldn't the Kremlin pursue its goal more consistently and deliberately than ever?

That is a challenge that we in the West must struggle with for a long time to come. It is precisely here that the policy of relaxation of tension between East and West comes to our aid. The strong emphasis in the East on making Europe into a continent of peace provides us in the West with a unique chance.

That is to say, the chance is there if we understand how to use it.

Through the policy of relaxation of tension, we in the West have come into a true and practical conflict and confrontation with communism -- at the negotiation table, in committees, during the working out of the many concrete questions that will eventually have to be solved in a peaceful fashion.

Let us bid the chance welcome. For when you get right down to it, it is here the fight must be waged. On motivation, goals, human values, freedom. Let us look the truth in the eye. This confrontation will be no easier for us than it has been and still is for those champions of human rights, Sakharov and Solzhenitsyn. They have manned a more exposed outpost than any of us in the West, but the heart of the struggle is the same. It will require just as much courage, just as much insight, just as much inner strength -- and not least a new way of thinking and a responsibility extending over the entire world.

It would be unnatural to avoid the confrontation. The champions of communism are building up to it. Confrontations exist in order that they can be met. What is important is that perhaps this is the only hope and chance the West has of being able to survive as a free continent.

Where will Europe take its place in the power constellation now being developed in the world? Will the next 25 years bring all Europe into a vassal relationship to the Soviet Union? To the United States?

Or will our divided continent succeed in finding its own way -- in becoming a Europe creating peace, promoting freedom, acting as a stabilizing factor between East and West, North and South.

In the fight for Europe's existence or nonexistence as a free continent, the labor movement and the labor organizations of free Europe will stand in the front line of the confrontation that the policy of relaxing East-West tensions will produce in the years to come.

At the first important top-level union meeting which took place in Geneva on 19 January the leaders of western labor organizations were equal to the challenge. Shelepin and the Communist Union International did not achieve the goals they had set themselves. They did not succeed in setting up a joint union secretariat or an all-Europe action community to discuss questions of mutual interest.

The question is, what will happen at the next top-level union meeting this fall?

For the time being it is right for western labor organization leaders to pursue a pragmatic policy of rapprochement. But in the long run this will not lead forward. It is not possible to avoid confrontation. It will come sooner or later.

The free European labor federations should be better prepared for confrontation and struggle than most. They know from experience that it takes a tough tenacious fight to carry human rights and basic freedoms to victory.