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1. There was only one trade union in Bulgaria which embraced all gainfully-employed persons. It was called the General Workers' Professional Union (Obsht Rabotnicheski Profesionalen Saiuz - ORPS) and was subdivided into branches for the various types of work. The supreme organ of the General Trade Union was the Trade Union Congress; the executive body was the Central Trade Union Council.
2. Every business enterprise, office, or factory had a trade union organization comprising the entire personnel. In enterprises employing fewer than 15 persons, the employees were organized into trade union groups. Each trade union organization or group was directed by a committee composed of a chairman and his deputies, i.e., a deputy for cultural work and instruction, a deputy responsible for the protection of labor, and so forth.
3. The Trade Union was not officially a political organization, but it was common knowledge that the Trade Union blindly followed the policies of the Bulgarian CP and every member had to show complete agreement with such policies.

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4. All gainfully-employed persons in Bulgaria automatically became members of the ORPS; I did not know a single employed person who did not belong, although it was not expressly stated that membership in the Trade Union was obligatory.
5. The tasks of the Trade Union were ostensibly to protect the workers' interests, take care of the workers' retirement, and settle all problems arising in employer - employee relations. In reality, the Trade Union did not seem greatly concerned with the workers' real interests. A case in point is the new labor code which was adopted in 1951 or 1952. This code was drawn up with the full approval of the Trade Union and may even have been drawn up by the Union itself.
6. Everyone realized that the new code deprived them of the rights which they had enjoyed even during the war years. For example, before the new labor code went into effect, employees of the State worked a seven and one-half hour day five days a week and one-half day on Saturdays. The new labor code increased the work week to six full eight-hour days.
7. The new code also changed the sick leave policy, to the disadvantage of the worker. Prior to the adoption of this code, a worker who was ill was entitled to his full salary. The new code provided for a sliding pay scale for workers on sick leave. This sliding scale was based on each worker's salary and his time in service. A person who had been working less than three years received 50% of his salary. After three years of uninterrupted work, a worker received 60% of his salary. The maximum was reached when, after 20 years of uninterrupted work, a sick worker was to receive 90% of his salary. He would never be given his full salary while on sick leave. In addition, the worker had to obtain the consent of his own trade union organization or group in order to get sick leave benefits.
8. Trade union groups organized special courses for workers. These were known as circles, and were organized with the collaboration of the basic unit of the Bulgarian CP in each individual enterprise. Attendance at these courses was not compulsory, but it was desirable. These circles met once a week. The courses given included the history of the Communist Party of the Bolsheviks, the history of the Bulgarian Communist Party, the accomplishments of Communism in the Soviet Union, the problems of Socialism in the Soviet Union, political economy, protection of labor, and so forth.
9. There was also a weekly meeting of the trade union organization or group in each enterprise or office. When an important state decree was proclaimed, special meetings of the trade union organization were called for the purpose of explaining to the members the significance of the new decree. For example, when the new labor code went into effect, meetings were held in all basic trade union organizations, at which the speakers tried to explain the new labor code and to convince the workers that it was to their advantage.
10. Trade Union organizations or groups also organized mass meetings in memory of the deaths of DIMITROV and STALIN and for the celebration of Liberation Day on 9 September and Workers' Day on 1 May. The trade union organization or group supervised and checked the attendance of members at meetings organized by the CP and other mass organizations.
11. Trade union members paid dues according to their salaries. I had a gross salary of 800 leva per month. My trade union dues amounted to eight leva per month. All members of trade unions were given membership cards.

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