

Constituting the organized working classes resisting the different, united possessing classes' power, unionism should not be considered as the end goal.

It should not be interpreted as an ideal, but as a means of struggle between the two antagonistic classes, as a force to obtain for the time being advantages that permit the working class to be able to intensify this struggle inside the present state-of-things to obtain the entire working class's complete economic emancipation by revolutionarily expropriating the capitalist classes as soon as unionism—that is, the organized working class—considers itself numerically strong enough and intellectually qualified enough to expropriate the social wealth that the capitalist classes arbitrarily and illegitimately possess, and to carry out the direction of production that follows thereafter.

Ángel Martín

Juan Gil

Francisco Ferroni

Salvador Marcet

Luis Plaza

Tomás Herreros

Martín Vilanova

Comrade Farré (Tarrasa) requests the floor to speak against the motion.

Debate opens over the topic. Various comrades participate. After long debate, the Draft Committee's motion carries.

In view of the late time, the evening session's officers are appointed. Comrades Belis as president and Ferrer, Marcet, Vidal, and Rovira as secretaries.

The session adjourns at 6:45.

## The Founding Congress of the Spanish National Confederation of Labor

CNT

1910

The affiliation of the Huelva Workers' Union and various comrades (Játiva) are put on record.

Debate moves to the 14th and 15th topics' motions.

**14th Topic. The method to achieve organizing all workers of a same trade; the abolition of piecework.**

The topic is divided into two parts for better debate, one over organization and the other over the abolition of piecework. The first carries in the following form:

That each union put in its bylaws an article that requires all members to unionize their family in their respective trade union, in an amalgamated trades' union or in the nearest union. Furthermore, that every worker be obligated to engage in active propaganda in favor of the union.

The second part of the 14th topic is the pending item of business. Because the Draft Committee did not present its motion, fellow Draft Committee member Marcet (Sabadell) issues his own. After light debate and after rejecting another motion, the following carries:

To abolish piecework with remarkable success all means will be used that direct action recommends, such as boycott, sabotage, etc., against strategic objectives at the firm where struggle ignites.

**15th. Which method is believed to be quicker for preventing youth of both sexes under the age of 14 from working?**

It is also decided to strictly prohibit the employment of manual child labor.

Afterwards, debate moves onto

**\*\*5th Topic. Must unionism be the means or ends of working-class emancipation? \*\***

Congress declares that:

manner within present society the wages necessary to satisfy their more pressing needs.

Therefore, for the purpose of realizing these wishes, it is earnestly recommended that the collectives mentioned in the first paragraph set extraordinary quotas to create schools made possible by the organized working class' own efforts.

P. Sierra Álvarez

Tomás Sala

Juan Satorra

Juan Rovira

The above is discussed, and after various comrades speak, the following carries:

1st. The creation of a daily union paper of the confederation is indispensable. But in view of the economic situation through which workers' unions are passing through, all possible aid will be lent to the newspaper Solidaridad Obrera whose publication is forthcoming.

2nd. The creation of groups of young workers dedicated to union propaganda and that frequently distribute leaflets guided by the same objective.

3rd. Commissions will be appointed within committees concerned with the creation of schools.

The session adjourns at 12:30.

#### Fourth Session

The session begins at 4:00 in the afternoon.

The previous session's minutes are read and approved after slight modifications.

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Third. Publish pamphlets of good and clear union propaganda, with the same fund raised, that will be sold at a price that can never exceed five céntimos in order to make dissemination more feasible.

Should Congress find itself to be in agreement with this opinion, the Draft Committee deems it necessary to constitute within the national federation's administrative council a propaganda committee to be in charge of putting these decisions into practice, so others can do the same if necessary, provided that they are in agreement with the standards expressed in these motions.

Tomás Sala

P. Sierra Álvarez

Juan Rovira

Juan Satorra

Pedro Mayol

**10th Topic. The necessity of establishing schools within workers' unions; the practical manner of carrying this out.**

Motion:

The Draft Committee expresses complete agreement that unions or local federations immediately found schools for educating the working class.

In regards to the teaching method, we believe it more practical that the schools are inspired by the rational dissemination of scientific knowledge and the application of technical-professional education to make students into workers at the same time that they are made into people stripped of all prejudices and defenders of their rights, workers capable of winning in a dignified

P. Sierra Álvarez

Tomás Sala

J. Rovira

Juan Satorra

Pedro Mayol

\*\*6th Topic. Can union propaganda yield better results that would justify the efforts and energies used? In the affirmative case, what forms and manners are believed to be more practical to achieve said results? \*\*

Motion:

The Draft Committee recognizes that union propaganda can yield better results than those obtained up to now. For that purpose, it proposes the following methods to Congress:

First. Create in all populations where it is possible groups solely dedicated to spreading union principles among the working class, especially among the working youth. These groups should also serve as an educational school for setting up a school to train comrades capable of speaking to the public in rallies, of lecturing in conferences, of writing in newspapers, and for all other forms of union action.

Second. Publish simple-written leaflets for free distribution to all the exploited in workshops, in the countryside, and in the mines. The expenses of these leaflets will be defrayed by a special, single pro rata of one céntimo per federate, whose total costs are always able to stay within funds available because the leaflets will be sold at 25 céntimos per hundred to groups and comrades who will be put in charge of distributing them in various localities.

## Translator's Notes

### WHAT IS TRANSLATED

This is a Spanish to English translation of most of the contents of Congreso de constitución de la Confederación Nacional del Trabajo (CNT) (Barcelona, Spain: Cuadernos Anagrama, 1976).

### FROM SOLIDARIDAD OBRERA TO THE CNT

In Spain, Catalan workers founded the Catalan regional workers' union federation in 1907, calling it Solidaridad Obrera (Workers' Solidarity). Solidaridad Obrera had its second congress in 1910.

At this same congress, delegates from all over Spain attended to decide whether or not to create a new nationwide-union based on the particular militancy, horizontality, anti-capitalist and anti-statist qualities found in Solidaridad Obrera.

This transcript covers the affirmative decision to create this new organization, La Confederación Nacional del Trabajo de España—The National Confederation of Labor of Spain (the CNT).

As will become a recurring issue, the CNT's workers were faced with the burning question at this founding congress: should they just join the already-existing, nation-wide General Workers' Union (the UGT) founded in 1888?

By 1910, the hierarchical, treacherous, and government-collaborating UGT had earned the indignation of many workers. The CNT would come to represent the anti-government, horizontalist revolutionary union alternative.

It is not until later that the CNT declared its unionism's explicit objective to be the creation of anarcho-communist society, which manifested in subsequent anarcho-communist CNT insurrections and its 1936 anarcho-communist revolution.

### THE TERMS "FEDERATION" AND "CONFEDERATION"

Delegates refer to what will eventually be the National Confederation of Labor of Spain as a "federation" and "confederation" in this transcript. This can cause confusion.

They also refer to Solidaridad Obrera as a “federation” and “confederation” at times, which can cause confusion. This, too, can be confusing.

#### THE TERM “UNION”

The term “union” in this text can refer to multiple things: a workers’ union (recognized by the employer or not) based in the workplace, a workers’ union consisting of one or similar industries in an area (town, city, county, nationwide), or a workers’ union consisting of all workers in a town, city, county or region.

I claim responsibility for all errors and inaccuracies and apologize for the inferiority of this translation, having no one to help me.

All bracketed text and footnotes are the translator’s.

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## Notes of Historical Interpretation

By Francesc Bonamusa

The apolitical revolutionary union movement preceding assimilation by different leaders of Bakuninist collectivism has lasted through many decades with its fluctuations and distinct organizational and combative qualities.

The subsequent and non-exclusive penetration of principles and forms of action of a collectivist, communist, or revolutionary unionist nature influenced the organized workers’ movement and shaped the most general form of what has come to be known as the anarchist movement.

Strictly speaking, we cannot describe the Catalan workers’ movement, much less the working class of collectivist, anarcho-communist, or revolutionary unionist Catalonia in most cases.

These often unconnected streams of thought affected the form of action of some leaders and the nuclei most connected to the cultural and theoretical publications of most workers.

\*\*13th. The usefulness of workers being organized by crafts and trades—and that related trades or trades converging toward a common objective establish federations. \*\*

The majority motions of said topics carry unanimously. Once the confederation is organized it is extremely necessary to establish federations of trades and related trades.

Immediately after, the fourth, sixth, and tenth topics are discussed.

**4th Topic. How to publish a daily union paper for the confederation.**

Motion:

The Draft Committee considers the publication of a daily newspaper that is a true defender of the working class to be indispensably necessary. But, nevertheless, it believes that the economic circumstances through which union organization is passing through are not suitable for undertaking such a great of propaganda effort.

Yet, the committee wishes for Congress to grant responsibilities to the federation’s administrative council, so that once the number of member collectives is known, the council will study the most practical method of carrying out the work of funding the newspaper. With that purpose, in the next congress or before if possible, the council will present a summary of its work based on the strictest truth of the situation.

While this does not exist, Congress should agree that Solidaridad Obrera publish weekly and regularly a circulation even greater than now to be able to give greater attention to current social struggles and the grand development that working-class organization is taking in Spain.

upon becoming national because it would constitute another national federation.

I must present three concrete facts that prove that we should care little about the decrees that they want to give us: the [Argentine?] General Confederation of Labor regarded the national federation of Buenos Aires as yellow and in spite of it, it was stronger than that already federated. The same thing was repeated in Belgium. And in finishing, I will have to mention the case of Vigo. A union composed of eleven individuals belonging to the General Workers' Union exists at the same time as that of another of the same trade. This non-federated union has a number of eighty-six individuals. This is what the decree of being declared yellow means, that which has more force.

The Ebonists' delegate believes that the two tendencies have already been expressed here sufficiently, and he repeats what has been previously expressed.

At the chair's pleasure the majority and dissenting motions are read again. Voting takes place immediately after, producing the following results: 84 votes in favor, 14 against, 3 abstentions.

The session adjourns at 1:30.

The next session's officers are as follows: Sierra Álvarez as president and Ferré, Salud, and Herreros as secretaries.

### Third Session

The session begins at 10:30 in the morning. Comrade Carreras presides.

He opens the First Draft Committee's eleventh and thirteenth topics up for debate.

**11th. Once the nation-wide confederation of labor is organized, does it require the establishment of federations of trades and related trades?**

In any case, it is true that some tendencies mentioned had a greater connection with the working class' material reality at some point in time.

We cannot forget that collectivism had a strong influence as a result of the 1870 Barcelona workers' congress or that revolutionary unionism was hegemonic as a result of the 1918 Sants Congress. We also include anarcho-communism, which gained prestige as a result of the 1936 Zaragoza Congress.

Nevertheless, we cannot forget that anarcho-collectivists had to strike a deal with unionism; that it was difficult for revolutionary unionists to get a hold of the direction of the Catalan workers' movement; and that anarcho-communists had to confront the end of the century's calamities and its 30 years of crises.

There was a constant in the entire process: the Catalan workers' movement found itself firmly in the middle of the social and economic reality, and the movement was generally apolitical and federal.

The extent to which different theoretical or pragmatic anarchist or anarcho-syndicalist tendencies came closer to these realities was the extent that they were able to obtain influence, if not hegemony.

The Catalan workers' movement's federalism, its varying apoliticism, or sometimes its rejection of political or unionist centralism were the openings through which anarchist or anarcho-syndicalist ideas were introduced. Their influence succeeded to the degree that they adapted to daily realities or else they provoked strong crises within unionism.

The Catalan workers' movement represented the more revolutionary unionist tradition in Spain, and without being corporatist, it maintained a long experience of aggressive protest. Its forms of struggle were forged in the context of industrialization.

It was not just marked by the singular process of industrialization in Catalonia, but acquired some forms of action and struggle independent from organized politics—although more independent

still from some primitive forms of agrarian anarchism and some anarcho-communist manifestations.

With the formation and development of the National Confederation of Labor, we not only witness the reorganization of the union movement based on trade unions and *Solidaridad Obrera*, but also an epoch in which the flexible and pragmatic ideas of revolutionary unionism positively influenced Catalan unionism.

The people born in the epoch where anarcho-communist theory predominated and where there were crises in the organized union movement began to concern themselves with the direction of unions. The movement was forged in the general strike's theory and practice on the one hand and in the struggle against Lerrouxism on the other hand in support of a union movement developed by *Solidaridad Obrera* and French revolutionary unionism.

All of this was done with the support of one part of the collectivist old guard, such as Anselmo Lorenzo, for example. In 1904 Anselmo Lorenzo already translated Emile Pouget's pamphlet *The Union for the library of La Huelga General*.

Revolutionary unionism's general principles spread during a number of years through translations by Lorenzo or José Prat of the works of Emile Pouget, Emile Pataud, Fernand Pelloutier, etc. These were spread by means of the library of *La Huelga General*, of *Tierra y Libertad*, *The Modern School's* publications, as well as through articles or private books.

José Prat, for example, already presented before the CNT's founding congress the revolutionary union tactics of boycott and sabotage (boycott and sabotage according to Prat and with evident French influence). According to him, revolutionary unionism "does not accept anything from the present order; it suffers through it while it waits for the union strength to overthrow it. With strikes becoming more general each time, the working class progressively revolutionizes and proceeds toward the general strike. Retaining the right to snatch from capitalist bosses all those immediate improvements that are positive, its action dispenses with

He stresses his prior statements, underlining the extreme need that there is for the creation of this national federation. He says that the daily persecutions suffered by workers affiliated with *Solidaridad Obrera* palpably demonstrates the emancipatory work that this federation accomplishes and the terror that capitalists feels at the sole announcement of any economic struggle.

He adds that this national federation will not fail because conscious and resolute workers must join it. Those opposing this federation have said that it is composed solely and exclusively of anarchists. This is not true because the strictest neutrality is observed in the unions' decisions and because they are made up of workers of different shades. He finishes by saying that during difficult times for *Solidaridad Obrera* those who defamed it instead of defending it, as was their duty, are worthy of being despised.

Comrade Sala takes the floor. He begins by declaring that as much of *Solidaridad Obrera* and other bodies of a local character should logically merge into a sole national entity. It seems that there is a marked interest in putting Barcelona above the level of other regions without taking into account that Catalonia rose thanks to the impulse of workers in the rest of Spain and not, as is trying to be demonstrated, on account of its own isolated efforts. I do not want to say that I deny that there has been a lot that Catalan workers have struggled through on account of their resolve, but it was always done with the effective help of workers from other regions.

Sierra Álvarez says that it causes him great surprise that some comrades take the floor against our arguments, wanting to show us the UGT's goodness, completely forgetting the punishable actions carried into effect by this entity, actions that could have resulted in our striking comrades' defeat. And in demonstration of this assertion, he recalls this entity's attitude in 1902, on the occasion of the Barcelona metal workers' general strike.

Additionally, those who have taken the floor assert before me that the *Solidaridad* regional federation would be declared yellow



Comrade Salas (Hairdressers) states that he is in favor of the minority vote. He argues that the creation of a Spanish workers' confederation would be the division of the proletariat.

Comrade Álvarez (Gijón Workers' Unions) speaks in support of creating the national workers' federation. Toward that end he offers immense statistical data as proof that outside the General Workers' Union there are many more unions than belong to said union. He says that palpable proof of the desire to create the Spanish confederation is the great number of unions that are attending the present congress. Furthermore, the tactics employed by the General Workers' Union up to the present have not satisfied the conscious proletariat's aspirations. He finishes by saying that the unions he represents completely conform to the creation of the already-mentioned national workers' confederation.

After greeting the congressists Comrade Cabaña (Ebonists) makes some statements with the concrete objective of combatting the majority motion. He says that even though his union does not belong to the General Workers' Union, he views said body with sympathy and proposes Solidaridad Obrera continue to be a regional confederation.

Comrade Farré takes the floor to confirm support for the majority motion. He says that the Tarrasa Unions as a whole are opposed to the tactics followed until the present day by the General Workers' Union and are therefore in favor of the Spanish federation's creation.

Comrade Puig (Cylinder Engravers) says that none of the arguments expressed by his rivals have convinced him, and he finishes by saying that the General Workers' Union would modify its tactics if the Catalan federation joined it.

Comrade Negre rises to confirm support for the motion and tells our colleagues not to be distressed during debate. After listening to those who have spoken in favor of and against the creation of a national workers' federation, they will decide with their vote on the necessity or not of creating the federation mentioned.

political intermediaries. Its objective is the complete transformation of present society into socialist society: social-economic revolutionization."

With the CNT's foundation we witness, then, an important moment in the reorganizing process of the Catalan union movement and the beginning of an epoch in which revolutionary unionism—supported much more by the struggling masses, much closer to the working class than anarcho-communism—obtained a strength superior to any politically organized working-class force.

Revolutionary unionism's hegemony in the Catalan workers' movement still did not exist in this 1910 congress, but was forged in the years following 1911 when the CNT was outlawed, and, above all, between the years 1914-1918.

The majority of delegates in favor of creating a Spanish nationwide union based on class struggle, parallel to the UGT [the General Workers' Union], were shaped by the apolitical, federal, and revolutionary union currents stable in the Catalan workers' movement, although some leaders were already trained in revolutionary unionism, such as José Negre, author nine years later of a pamphlet about this tendency.

Perhaps only in this way can one understand the broad victory that was obtained with the proposal to create a confederation—and not a hierarchical union—in favor of revolutionary unionism, "that is, working-class organization", as the means of working-class emancipation and doing so in the name of the First International.

We can expect that the 14 votes against the creation of a national confederation paralleling the General Workers' Union came in great majority from socialists such as Juan Durán or Jacinto Puig. It does not seem clear that the 84 votes in favor of the creation of this confederation came from revolutionary unionists. But we can more safely conclude that there was a convergence of traditional unionism with new principles of revolutionary unionism. Once more and perhaps from the epoch where collectivism was predominant, an agreement was arrived at between the real strength

from the working class' grassroots and a more or less elaborated body of ideas.

In this convergence of positions, however, there was not a majoritarian reorganization of the old anarcho-communists into revolutionary unionists. Rather, as far as the union leaders' cadre was concerned, these would spring from men born between 1880 and 1895: Salvador Seguí, Joan Peiró, Camil Piñón, Ángel Pestaña, Simó Piera, Salvador Quemades, Josep Canela, Sebastiá Clara and so many others.

The progressive introduction of direct action ideas into trade unions and their reorganization into general unions of a sector or industry as a result of the Sants Congress (1918) regenerated the Catalan union movement. The beginnings were found in the 1910 congress, and its fullness in 1918-1919.

## Introduction

By José Peirats

The present text was published by Barcelona's Solidaridad Obrera in its 39th issue of 4 November 1910. Its reproduction is due in part to concluding an interesting discussion struck up between confederal militants in exile in regards to the birthdate of the CNT.

A book published in 1928 (Manuel Buenacasa's *El Movimiento Obrero Español, 1886-1926*) gave regrettable confusion to the CNT's origins. In that book the following was put on record: "The Bellas Artes Congress took place on the 8, 9, and 10 of September 1911. We cannot say anything documentally of that memorable, founding assembly of the National Confederation of Labor. From the comments given by delegates of the Zaragoza federation on their return from Barcelona. . . I can infer that the Barcelona assembly was more than a congress, more than a simple exchange of impressions between delegates from different Spanish counties. It did not stop at amply discussing or formulating motions on princi-

workers' confederation, its purpose is to group into one federation unions that exist outside of the General Workers' Union.

Comrade Puig (Cylinder Engravers) has the floor to defend the minority vote. In his support he claims that the General Workers' Union would admit the Catalan workers' federation. In consequence, he asks that the dissenting opinion be approved and the majority motion rejected. Furthermore, he says that if the Solidaridad Obrera federation declared itself national it would be qualified to be considered yellow.

Comrade Negre has the floor. He begins by begging all delegates not to be afflicted by debate because division is not what is being looked for here. But on the contrary, what is being sought is light and harmony among all the exploited.

He adds that the initiative to convert Solidaridad Obrera into a Spanish confederation did not start from Solidaridad Obrera but from many entities outside of Catalonia that are eager to be in solidarity with unions that are not found in the General Workers' Union today, unions that are sympathetic to direct methods of struggle.

He adds that the foundation of a Spanish regional confederation does not contradict the General Workers' Union, since the confederation would never be at odds with it, but would aid it in all of its struggles.

Furthermore, he explains that once the national workers' federation is founded, it will be seen which methods are more practical, those employed by one or the other union.

Comrade Negre rebuts what comrade Puig has said, saying that since past events, from July until the present, more than twenty unions have joined Solidaridad Obrera, palpable proof of the fruitful labor employed by the same.

He finishes by saying that if the working classes of other regions had been assembled during the July events, they would have seen a different outcome. The brutal repressions that took effect in Catalonia and other Spanish regions would not have taken place.

the purpose of uniting the entire working class into a single organization.

Barcelona

30 October 1910

José Carreras (San Martín Hairdressers)

Jerónimo Farré (Tarrasa Woodworking Craft)

Joaquín Zuferrí (Zaragoza Workers' Federation and Wood Workers' Union)

José Belis (Badalona Amalgamated Workers)

Juan Cuscó (Barcelona Carpenters)

The dissenting motion of members (Sitges Agricultural Unions and Cylinder Engravers Union) in the same Draft Committee accompanies this motion, which is as follows:

That the regional confederation of unions that make up Solidaridad Obrera continue being regional with the understanding to try to have immediate talks with the Spanish General Workers' Union to secure a union with other federations and for the aim of federating those who are not currently in one nor another body.

Barcelona

30 October 1910

Juan Durán

Jacinto Puig

Debate over this topic opens up, for which the assembly allows three turns in favor and three against.

Comrade Farré (Tarrasa) has the floor first. He says that the majority motion should not be received as hatred against the General Workers' Union, but, on the contrary, as the issue of a national

pledge, ideas, tactics, and aspirations. The most essential thing it accomplished was creating the confederation according to the norms outlined by the 'International' first and by the regional federation next. But those motions, which have not been published because of the suspension of the federative organs hours after the congress, must have gotten lost. . .”

In my book *The C.N.T. in the Spanish Revolution* in which I embraced comrade Buenacasa's incautious evaluations, I gave 1911 as the CNT's founding date. I could get my hands on neither the documents nor the fountains of information accessible to historians in 1928. Among those documents was the *Solidaridad Obrera* collection that was conserved intact until the 1939 catastrophe.

I am interested in putting this mistake on the record because professional historians who have peeked into our annals, taking myself as a recent testimonial, have unavoidably fallen into the same error that I was not able to avoid.

Based on contradictions found in minute books of subsequent CNT congresses and some separate publications, the suspicion seized some of us comrades that we had been riding on a chronological error. The question was taken to our press, and elderly comrades there spoke who, passionately fond of the topic, refreshed their memory. Having decided by logical deduction that it was an error, the material evidence was lacking that would definitively resolve the question. Spanish comrades provided us with conclusive proof by ensuring the arrival of the issue of *Solidaridad Obrera* mentioned above, dedicated entirely to reporting the activities of such a rare event. The report was published in serial form in the confederal organ CNT, and today we offer it collected in a small volume to those interested in its social historiography.

On the other hand, our modest enterprise is not just to fill a chronological pothole, but to revive those initial, sublime moments and to demonstrate what the tactical spirit and ideological characteristic of our beloved organization were from its glorious origins to the half-century of its existence.

That which the CNT has done during fifty years of doctrinal propaganda, of epic struggles, and educating the proletarian masses—its virtues praised on account of its selflessness and sacrifice taken to extreme limits—is in the memory and flesh of every one of its militants. It pertains to everyone to consider if we are being consistent with the wishes of he who was our father and teacher, Anselmo Lorenzo, who told us in the inaugural session of the memorable congress, "You are going to draw up a pact destined to influence the ever progressive march of humanity. The book of history presents a blank page before you; prepare to fill it with honor, for yourselves and for the benefit of everyone, present and future."

José Peirats  
[circa 1976]

## Founding Congress of the National Confederation of Labor of Spain

The national workers' congress held on the days of 30 and 31 October and 1 November in the Palacio de Bellas Artes can qualify as a glorious event in the annals of the Spanish proletariat. A vivifying breath of emancipation has aerated this congress' assemblies, creating a glimpse for even the most incredulous that human emancipation is a feasible and easy thing if all the exploited joined forces.

This congress can specifically express the road blocks facing our classes' demands. The exploited of the earth, of the factory, and of the workplace have exhibited briefness in their speeches in these assemblies, demonstrating a highly judicial sense of the reality of things. Not a single voice was discordant in this harmonical assembly of the working classes. Everyone spoke. Some explained their evolutionary theories; others described the truths of direct action; and one and another school, the revolutionary and the paci-

modern slavery to prepare and plan this human endeavor while you consider the great value that the acquisition of an international language represents to the proletariat.

Laborers, working comrades! To you who are gathered in great assembly who are going to discuss great matters, you are going to lay the road for the Spanish proletariat to follow, a road which marks out firm and useful directions.

We address this small writing to you, so that you fuse what is expressed because it is an easy-structured language for we who have manual jobs and do not have enough time to study; so that you do not let it fall on deaf ears in those sectors that unionism needs in order to make international cooperation feasible; and to arrive at the celebrated expression, 'workers of the world, unite.'

With a language universal and common to all peoples and races we will reach human emancipation tightly united.

The Free Esperanto Group

First Draft Committee

### 3rd Topic. Is it necessary or advantageous for unionism that Solidaridad Obrera becomes a nation-wide confederation?

Motion:

That a Spanish general confederation of labor is created, temporarily made up of all unions that do not belong to the UGT, on the condition that once the Spanish general confederation of labor is created it tries to arrive to an agreement between the two unions with

that were spoken in antiquity in past civilizations, languages that died with their peoples, never to be revived.

These men should have been concerned with something new, with something practical, with creating and developing philology so that it evolved like other sciences. Knowing such science they would have been able to contribute something beneficial.

But everything has acquired a new spirit; everything has discovered itself.

Humanity will need a tuneful, melodic consonance in fraternal hosanna—the fraternal love song of siblings.

A person amidst their people's miseries and hatreds perceived the idea that before they developed they were only a mythic creature, a shadow, something unreal manifesting in the real world.

When the difficulties for realizing such a grand task become greater, our enthusiasm for propagating it becomes more intense and more lively. We shall never be frightened. We will not surrender to anything. We will not abandon it. We will continue strong, decisive, fiery, and powerful at all times.

Standing straight with our heads held high we will propagate and sow the beautiful, good, and fruitful seed, which, growing rapidly increases by the minute. It is already pointless to risk its death or its disappearance. Very much to the contrary, see it as alive, as growing, as rising beautifully and freshly, slowing little to reach reality's summit and laying down its dominions in the world.

Comrades, because of this we address you, we address all workers, all who are suffering from the yoke of

fist, were heard respectfully and with consideration by the large audience that attended the deliberations.

That delegates from different Spanish regions participated in the congress and that the agreement was adopted in this congress' first session that Solidaridad Obrera become the Spanish national confederation evidently demonstrate that workers, convinced of the uselessness of indirect methods as a result of their own experiences, will resolutely proclaim revolutionary union action as the only means needed to raise the intellectual level of the working classes and carry them to their complete social emancipation.

Those who had casually proclaimed working-class division in books and periodicals will clearly see that such division does not exist, that today's exploited with full consciousness of their social rights will forget their small, silly scruples. They will resolutely and determinedly set off on the straight path of liberation without giving a damn about the howls of capitalists who gaze angrily and impotently. Firmly, we will struggle despite all obstacles.

Workers, resolute and determined, will achieve liberation in a not distant period of time, despite opposition, come what may.

We could also say other things about the national workers' congress, but time constraints and lack of space deprive us of the ability to be more extensive. Instead, we reserve for ourselves the task of discussing to a greater extent the transcendent agreements adopted at Congress for the future and limit ourselves today to saying: Let us get to work, comrades!

### **First Session**

In the hall of Bellas Artes, the national workers' congress began its business the Sunday prior under the provisional chairmanship of Solidaridad Obrera's Council.

Solidaridad Obrera's General Secretary comrade Negre calls the session to order.

The Credentials Commission's appointment results in the following comrades' election: Vicente Plaza (Bookbinders and Related Trades), Rafael Bernabeu (Alcoy Textile Union), Pedro Martí (Jewelry and Silversmithing Workers' Union), Timoteo Herrer (Tapestry Trades), Juan Bautista Esteve (Bujalance Workers' Center), Tomás Sala ("Progress" Hairdressers and Barbers), and Julián Esteban (Barcelona Masons).

Immediately after, credentials are reviewed and the credentials commission rejects two delegations: the Mechanics Workers' Union and the Typography Workers' Union, both of Barcelona, because they are considered yellow.

Some comrades request the floor to address this. It is agreed to suspend all debate until next session.

After distributing identity cards to each delegate, the appointment of the Draft Committees takes place. They are tasked with making motions over the topics presented to Congress.

### Topics and Draft Committees

Immediately after and by unanimity, comrades are elected as shown below for the purpose of forming Draft Committees for the congress' topics.

The topics are grouped into five different sections. Each Draft Committee is tasked to make motions for three topics in order to facilitate Congress' business and the debate of these topics brought before Congress.

#### First Draft Committee

##### Topics

3rd. Is it necessary or advantageous for unionism that Solidaridad Obrera becomes a nation-wide confederation?

11th. Once the nation-wide confederation of labor is organized, does it require the establishment of federations of trades and related trades?

in pure comprehension of ideas and in fraternity of spirits, struggle is created, so that the victory mantle covers all who struggle.

The international language Esperanto exists to put all peoples—who because of present, disgraceful human laws are distant—in direct communication.

To deny the necessity of an international language is to deny progress and modern civilization. If distance has been shortened today in such a way that we can be transported in a short space of time to different countries by railway, automobile, large ships, and modern systems of aerial navigation, why in these physically convergent material activities is it not necessary to establish the morality so that borders between peoples—those obstacles to the advance of human progress—are thus rendered useless and disappear, establishing the beautiful goal of one people and one family?

It is the pattern of human traditions. Every epoch's crimes have unleashed bloody wars where peoples have mutually annihilated and destroyed one other under the fiction of one race being different from another and of the terrible love for a piece of land. This has been accompanied with the creation of the most execrable hatred in all parts. It extols and manifests different ensigns, making them serve as symbols to perpetuate peoples' tyrannies.

Everything unfolds and develops, creating and evolutionizing toward a state of relative perfection. Philology has remained most hindered and sunken in humanity.

Almost all philologists have not had any other concern aside from studying dead languages, languages

proletariat, the strike usually is as well. And bear in mind when the strike can be dispensed with.

Yes, widespread it will be our salvation. Before that fortunate day arrives, to stay afloat, capitalist society's evolution requires an evolution in struggle, in the strike itself because proletarian progress is far from being able to use it successfully today.

Proletarian intelligence is lacking very much, and here the best step that can be taken is the creation of rationalist schools in all unions. We will have the chance to discuss the easiness of its realization.

A handshake.

V. García

The letter from the Esperanto group enclosed in the same communication is also read:

Dear Spanish Workers' Congress

Making most of the circumstances in which representatives of the entire Spanish labor movement are gathered in this congress, we, supporters of a universal language, have believed in the unavoidable necessity that the Spanish proletariat listen to our vibrant voice in these moments of struggle—beautiful and grand toward the final outcome they are devoted to.

All the world's workers, all the victims of wage slavery fight in one or another form for their emancipation. Being an aspiration of everyone, it is useless to do without a formula that establishes moral contact with all the exploited around the globe. The international language Esperanto contributes toward this objective.

The international language Esperanto is for humanity, for the exploited, for all the world's outcasts, so that

13th. The usefulness of workers being organized by crafts and trades—and that related trades or trades converging toward a common objective establish federations.

<center>Draft Committee Members</center>

J. Cuscó (Barcelona Carpenters), J. Durán (Sitges Farmers), J. Belis (Badalona Crafts and Trades), F. Farré (Tarrasa Woodworkers), J. Puig (Cylinder Engravers Union of Barcelona), J. Carreras (San Marín Hairdressers), J. Zuferrí (Zaragoza Workers' Federation).

#### Second Draft Committee

##### Topics

4th. How to publish a daily union paper for the confederation.

6th. Can union propaganda yield better results that would justify the efforts and energies used? In the affirmative case, what forms and manners are believed to be more practical to achieve said results?

10th. The necessity of establishing schools within workers' unions; the practical manner of carrying this out.

#### Draft Committee Members

A. Perún ("Harmony" Barcelona Shoemakers), P. Sierra Alvarez (Gijón and La Felguera), J. Rovira (Sant Feliu de Codines Amalgamated Trades), P. Mayol (Tarrasa Febrile Craft), T. Sala ("Progress" Hairdressers), J. Satorra (Barcelona Skein Dyers, Bleachers, and Preparers), A. Magriñá (Cylinder Engravers).

#### Third Draft Committee

##### Topics

1st. Unionism as a multipurpose tool.

14th. The method to achieve organizing all workers of a same trade; the abolition of piecework.

15th. Which method is believed to be quicker for preventing youth of both sexes under the age of 14 from working?

#### Draft Committee Members

S. Graña (Barcelona Knitwear), F. Suriñachs (Glass Makers), Magín Marcet (Sabadell Metallurgical Union), J. Urdinas (Palma Masons), J. Mora (Zaragoza Shoemakers), J. Xercavins (Sabadell Carpenters), L. Serra (Barcelona Rollers and Preparers).

#### Fourth Draft Committee

##### Topics

5th. Must unionism be the means or ends of working-class emancipation?

8th. The emancipation of the working classes must be conquered by the working classes themselves. What is the single, truthful interpretation that should be given to this phrase?

12th. The method of attaining price reductions in housing and suppressing odious deposits.

#### Draft Committee Members

T. Herreros (Barcelona Printing Craft), J. Gil (Cervera del Río Alhama Espadrille Makers), F. Terroni (Tarrasa Amalgamated Trades), M. Vilanoca (Barcelona Jewelers), A. Martín (Barcelona Railways), L. Plaza (Vigo Stone Masons), M. Marcet (Sabadell Metallurgical Union).

#### Fifth Draft Committee

##### Topics

Second, every comrade will have to belong to some society. If this must be their trade in the town they reside in, this must be affiliated to the confederation in Spain apart from the nation in which they reside. Congress must create organizing commissions in all localities and expeditions to organize rural workers, miners, etc.

Third, a commission in charge of organizing schools that work in agreement with the League of Rationalist Education that will be able to provide professors and orient them about conditions and methods.

I would make other observations if I were not confident that they are unnecessary for you and if I did not fear that due to wrong interpretations you would suppose I tried to undervalue your knowledge in these matters, which I know will be superior to mine because I never went as a delegate to any congress and because I support the idea of not going so as to guard my independence.

Leave your animosities aside and carry on with serenity and fixed eyes.

With your hearts sensitive to the common good, do something practical that will make the Spanish proletariat worthy of maintaining the international sympathy that the Catalan proletariat earned on the glorious week that 26 July 1909 marked. For wanting to go further than what proletarian intelligence permitted, I believe the unsuccessful federations' lessons are guides for making, if not perfect activity, which I am far from believing, at least practical and solid work.

Bear in mind that yesterday's useful science becomes useless today; that modern industry requires modern methods of struggle; that if politics is harmful to the



I would vote for a single workers' organization if this were feasible to the detriment of no one.

I will make a confession to you: of those who preach to you that organization is bad for doing anything grand, I have not seen them as worthy of being rebels. But I have seen them submit themselves to iniquitous exploitations that others with less demands, but organized, had not.

And with pen in hand already, permit me my opinion over Congress' work.

The topics are a lot for three days and almost all of secondary importance. If everyone's opinions could be restrained, we would limit the topics to two or three, which is enough for a first congress, leaving the others to be studied by affiliated unions. At a determined time, they would give their motions to a commission appointed for such a purpose, and this would try to put them into practice.

1st. Founding of Congress. The organizations that it is composed of. Relations and methods.

2nd. Propaganda: the organ necessary for and recommended to every union, in which all actions will be inserted, reserving six or eight pages for that purpose, defrayed by the unions at a rate determined by its members.

3rd. The creation of rationalist schools.

These topics have supplements.

First among others, this: one cannot belong to more than one union of the same trade in a locality, and if there is a federation in one's trade and it belongs to the confederation that union must federate.

2nd. The method of obtaining the eight-hour workday and the minimum wage.

7th. In order that the general strike's impact furnishes the effective defense of the proletariat, can it be peaceful or must it be essentially revolutionary? In any case, in what form does Congress believe the general strike should be used for its definite success?

9th. When a federated society in the midst of struggle is abused by the police or public forces, what attitude must other federated sections adopt?

#### Draft Committee Members

J. Bueso (Sevilla Printing Craft), D. Serra (Sabadell Amalgamated Trades), J. Jaumar (Badalona Glass Workers), J. Benet ("Tender Seed" Barcelona Glass Workers), M. Mañé (Barcelona Metal Workers' Union), R. Cató (Alcoy Mechanical Weavers), R. Costa (Barcelona Printing Craft).

The session adjourns. It is agreed that the Draft Committees reconvene at 4:00 in the afternoon to deliver their motions.

#### Second Session

The session begins at 9:30 at night. Comrade Ávila (La Coruña Sawers and Drawer Makers) presides. Comrades Bueso, Graña, Ferroni, and Plaza are secretaries.

The fellow chairman greets all delegates attending Congress. He says that the organized working class expects profuse improvements in its economic and social emancipation as a result of Congress' deliberations. To all delegates he recommends serenity and vigor in their decisions.

Immediately after, the Credentials Commission's motion is read, which is as follows:

The Credentials Commission's Draft Committee of Solidaridad Obrera's second congress is kind enough to present the following motion in relation to the Typographical Workers' and Mechanical Workers' Unions.

Solidaridad Obrera's first regional congress had the following agreement, 'that from the time of this agreement, the regional confederation cannot grant status to any entity when one has already been formed for the same trade.'

Bearing in mind that this circumstance coincides with the two unions that are the object of the present motion, and, lastly, that there are no grounds for amending said agreement, admission of said entities is not granted in the present congress.

Barcelona

30 October 1910

Vicente Plaza (Bookbinders and Related Trades)

Rafael Bernabeu (Alcoy Textile Craft)

Pedro Martí (Jewelry and Silversmithing Workers' Union)

Juan Bautista Esteve (Bujalance Workers' Center)

Timoteo Ferrer (Amalgamated Trades and Tapestry Makers)

Tomás Sala ("Progress" Hairdressers)

Julián Esteban (Barcelona Masons)

After light debate that comrades Plaza, Mañé, Bueso and others took part in, the motion carries.

Immediately after, the Union Atheneum's communication is read. The congregants listen to it with great attention. It is agreed to publish it in Solidaridad Obrera. Here is the communication:

The person who combats working-class organization is either a monster or an enemy of workers.

Minorities can impose themselves. An organized part of the population can drag the rest according to the occasion or the affair it is passionate about. But those minorities are not one individual acting in isolation.

The worker who is isolated from the strength that can be created through a union is a weak straw in this exploitative arrangement that quickly obeys the capitalist's mere utterance.

Why was Catalonia left alone in the July 1909 struggle? Because the other provinces did not have working-class organization and those that did have it were not connected.

Is it because people reject that glorious movement? If it is approved of but not followed this is only due to the lack of organization and proletarian guidance.

It is true that there is already a national proletarian organization in Spain.

But if we believed that that organization responded to circumstances, if we knew that it would respond as a result of what we added to it, I believe we would make one harmful deed the cause of another.

But it is my opinion that the confederation this congress will make is the only way of approaching a true union. Seeing that the combative proletarian majority does not follow the UGT, the UGT will progress. In struggle we will find one another, and we will give one another the helping hands that will sow terror among capitalists.

necessary for bringing down the capitalist class' vast sums.

You are looking for a union that creates strength and law. You are looking for instructions that will make the union perfect and solid and that will carry workers to the obtainment of their emancipation.

You have seen in July 1909 what makes a union worthy. Organized Catalonia rose up against the infamous monster of war, and if it did not win it is because the enemy relied upon forces in the rest of Spain that were sent to crush the grandiose movement.

Was that movement successful without Catalan working-class organization? Certainly not, I believe.

In order to illustrate what someone is by being isolated outside of a union: the individual without organization is cowardly. They cannot count on anything more than themselves. They will not attempt anything grand in struggle, and if they try, they will be wrung out before uniting the elements necessary for preserving themselves.

The same does not happen to the individual who is organized. They know what they have on their side to defend them. They are acquainted with their intellectual and material state, their intentions and sensibilities, noting beforehand mathematically the forces they count upon.

Is it possible to arrive at a general strike without working-class organization? Therefore, how is it possible for a sensible person to fight against organization?

It is agreed that modern organization is defective. But we combat its defects. We repair them. Their perfection, not their destruction, awaits us.

Dear Second Congress of the Regional Workers' Federation

Longing to contribute in proportion to its strength to the business of the regional workers' federation's second congress, the Union Atheneum contributes with these lines its enthusiastic support and expects that the congress' results will not disappoint the proletariat's wishes.

Our support should not be interpreted as an act of intruding imposition nor as being intended to assign duties, which must be the unique and exclusive result of the free deliberations of this proletarian assembly.

Nevertheless, our entity composed of proletarians such as you and victims, as you are, of the social injustices embodied in the different political-economic regimes that prevail, has made its own observations over the development and functioning of the global union movement. And these observations have influenced our intention of addressing Congress with brief words, certain that they will be listened to with the benevolence and toleration that is granted to every unselfish and impartial intention.

Despite all of the advances that the progressive march of these times has acquired for the revolutionary union movement, it is presently developing in an atmosphere of double hostility that hinders its march.

This double hostility is capitalist and worker in form. We struggle with the underhanded or open hostility of all capitalist class interests where workers are not emancipated from wage slavery, and we struggle with a great mass of resigned and passive workers who of-

ten become enemies in the conflicts that arise between Labor and Capital.

The hostility of the capitalist classes is outwardly revealed in different ways. From authority that limits all of our actions through legally imposed pretexts at times—which sanctions other actions through the same cunning, democratic methods suggested to people to enslave them again, which depends on all the skilled, proselytizing rhetoric of politicians who are determined to distort the revolutionary ends and means of an emancipatory ideal, which, if taken to the masses, would declare their party programs void—to the misery the managerial class purposely causes to discourage our enthusiasm and demoralize our will, we come up against a series of obstacles that usually weaken or even divert union action onto negative roads.

The unconscious hostility of the working masses who are indifferent to our propaganda is a product in part of their ignorance and of the influence of capitalist newspapers.

Our yearnings for liberation still have not reached the bottom of their hearts nor the depths of their intelligence, which are drowsy from the illusory promises of politicians.

It is necessary to recognize this: that whenever we try an activity and it is not supported with the unanimity that we desire, it gives our adversaries cause to say that workers reject the exalting voice of 'utopia'.

The very thing we want to do is express in the working masses' uppermost thoughts is that right and reason are on our side. It is necessary that we fully understand the truth of this observation, so that in our

must conform with the individual, not the individual with society; and that the day draws nearer when right is recognized by the sole presence of the individual and not by belonging in the Registry of Property.

Inspired by the purest understandings—with your gaze fixed on the ideal of unity and of connected humans—resolve the issues that lie before you in Congress' agenda; create an extensive and powerful organization that gathers all individual initiatives and brings the strength and intelligence of the multitude together and that makes you worthy of the fraternal esteem and approbation of your comrades.

Anselmo Lorenzo

The following communication from comrade V. García is also read:

Dear Delegates

Comrades,

You have all come to Congress because you feel the need of a union of proletarian forces that is resolute in struggling to improve our fate.

You have not come to create a union of scabs who go wherever their shepherd directs them.

It is a union of energy and free will. It is a union of life and guidance that will give light and energy to uncertain and timid spirits and that will reinforce strong spirits.

The work which you have come to do is not the castration of minds and wills, but the liberation of all.

You are not looking for dues because you know that the working class' money will never form the heap

the rational, latent exercise of their own free will. Individual capacities exercising rational, effective freewill united in free agreements for carrying their purposes, desires, and actions to the furthest limits possible.

That is revolutionary unionism. That you must be. That your congress ought to be, so that it provides an eruption of light and strength to elevate the proletariat to the condition of savior and humanity's regenerator in exchange for so many centuries of tyranny.

In the same way that the atom or the invisible part of a body contains its life, autonomy, and regularity, and in the way that this all results in the normalcy of a living thing, so also must society reflect the satisfaction of every infant, every man, every woman, every old person as a splendid microcosm of the kindness and beauty of this world that we inhabit.

You dare to declare your pledges to the privileged of the earth, although all of them, as far as they are, in spite of borders and oceans, without distinction of color, creed, or nationality, as far as they are impose upon every one of us their swindling in resources, transportation, customs, trade because they are masters of parcels of the earth. By right of accession they are masters of natural fruits, of industrial fruits, and of civil fruits.

Tell them, so that all at once all workers who are still vegetating in the absence of solidarity become aware that you want to be humans of the broadest development; that nature and society can develop this type of human; that unionism, the economic force, must replace the political force and the authority of States; that humanity has entered a new path; that society

struggles we do not give distinct and natural enthusiasm a range that does not exist in the collective, which would deceive us in regards to our real strength.

We are moving difficulty in this environment of double hostility because we ourselves, whom we call a conscious and militant minority, suffer, without knowing it, from the influence of this environment whose oppression almost always obscures our vision of the Ideal that we say to pursue, making us divert from the tactics that would lead us to our Ideal's realization.

We want to emancipate ourselves from wage slavery. We want to emancipate ourselves from the capitalist yoke.

Carried away by the stingy, egoist spirit that is in congruity with the circumstances that lead us into humiliating compromises, we ourselves often rivet those chains.

We strengthen this yoke by listening to the advice of those who come out in capitalism's defense preaching that Capital is indispensable for society to function and that without its defender—the State—social life would be impossible.

We want to revolutionize the world. We want to create a new society.

And the preachings of bad clergymen, who are interested in making the present endure, take us through the road of a hybrid political-economic reformism that for the mere fact of being reformist is the negation of all creation.

We call ourselves autonomous in our activities. And we are. But only to some extent because several times our agreements and actions are products of a hidden,

capitalist tendency that secretly seeps into our ranks, frustrating the direct action effort that we advocate.

In short, we still have one ear that is attentive to the customs of the past, another ear that is attentive to today's harmful capitalist preachings, and a gaze that is fixed very little in the future. This does not do any good, but results in endless relapses within a vicious cycle.

That with which the capitalist class imprisons us with is made of iron.

We will not break it by permitting ourselves to be led by political rhetoric that seeks to put the workers' movement on the tracks of either the old legalism or a new one by which we would sanction our future slavery. .

We will not break it if we consent to being workshop fodder at the same time as profitable fodder for the nourishment of professional politicians who, masquerading as workers, play along with capitalists.

We will not break it if we do not have the firm intention of emancipating ourselves on our own and only by our own methods from capitalism, which bleeds us dry, and the State, which facilitates this exploitation in a thousand ways.

We will not break it if we do not break in advance two hypnotic suggestions that are equally harmful:

-that which believes that there can be a real and lasting progress for us within capitalist society's democratic framework that resorts to the means of this beggarmdom that is called cooperativism one day and legal action the next day; and

You favor present society less and favor future society much more.

You are workers stripped of the relatively noble status of artisans, converted into unskilled laborers, into the remains of antiquated industry that transforms you into accessories of the machine and into the "unemployed"—workers without work, without pay, without bread, without a home, without affection, without land to tread on, who are superfluous, who get in the way, who die in a corner, who die aboard a transatlantic ship, or in the wasteland of a remote colony.

You are, therefore, what is called the lowest social layer, that which nourishes the remaining social layers, each of which receives a relative and proportional share of privilege.

For this same reason you are exceptionally capable of the grand human task: society's reorganization based upon everyone's participation in the universal patrimony, based upon everyone's contribution to production and the rational distribution of products.

Because it is true in judging a person that where lie their treasures lies also their heart, you—whose true property is in the future—who do not exploit anybody, who do not cheat anyone, who do not let someone victimize another, who do not have the smallest advantage in the general antagonism of interests that characterizes society and who undertake organizing for redeeming ends, you can definitively lay the new society's foundations.

Liberty: the individual, in the plenitude of their conscience and feelings, frees their heart and mind for

The following greeting from comrade Anselmo Lorenzo is also read:

Dear Congress of Solidaridad Obrera

Comrades,

Elected in the confidence of your affiliated comrades each of you are the expression of the intention of those whom you represent and also the echo of the proletariat's aspirations in general.

You are going to draw up a pact destined to influence the ever progressive march of humanity. The book of history presents a blank page before you. Prepare to fill it with honor, for yourselves and for the benefit of everyone, present and future.

You have learned sociology in the sad classrooms of the exploitation of wage workers, in short, of exploitation, of servitude.

Your resolve and dedication are the result of a sorrow from the experiences you have lived through. Your science is not an adaptation of another's scattered thoughts from a printing house.

It is in great part the energetic rebelliousness against that abominable right of accession granted for centuries by the Roman legislator to proprietors, to the usurpers of natural and social wealth.

You know, not by the exercise of study, but by provocation of the capitalist whip that harasses you, forcing you to collide with the hardness of authority, with the speculator's greed, and with all plaguing miseries.

You are no longer the fourth estate that was unwilling to change in 1789 and that tried to corrupt social democracy and political radicalism with capitalism.

-that which believes that these gentlemen want to and can help to completely emancipate us when they are thinking about their capitalist positions and vanities first before the interests of the naive people who raise them to a higher position with their votes and applause.

Nothing, absolutely nothing can we expect from capitalists. Their men cheat us when they advise us to venerate these and those things of the present social state.

The capitalist classes are not going to foolishly commit suicide, parting with their privileges and granting the working classes their complete emancipation. The most the capitalist classes can do is tie us down anew with shady deals and transactions that will favor them, pretending to be selfless protections, yet constituting enormous sacrifices from us.

The emancipation of the working classes must be conquered by the working classes themselves. So self-evident is this, if not clairvoyant, that we must distrust capitalist preaching that those of our class often easily believe.

The enmity between proletarian and capitalist interests is so implacable that it will not disappear without the disappearance of both classes and with the formation of a society composed only of free and equal producers in rights and responsibilities.

Now this being so, the Union Atheneum having penetrated this truth, it has wanted to lay before Congress attention to an urgent, relevant necessity: societal organization.

The concrete, clear, and precise ideal is already in numerous edited books and pamphlets, and they only

await a greater diffusion among the working masses. We do not have to dwell on this point.

If we are not clear and precise, we will tie down our intentions with clumsiness.

If we falter it is because we, almost always absorbed in struggles without a conceptualized end goal, neglect to spread it among the working masses.

If we stumble in our struggles, it is because we do not revitalize our union action by drinking from the fountain of the ideal to remove our doubts.

If our union action is weak, this is, in short, on the account of intellectual laziness.

Yes we must develop organization, our union organization, which is falling apart because of our ignorance, with a priority on dealing with all of its problems.

Battles are not won without soldiers, and as we indicated in the beginning, we are few in numbers. It is necessary to seriously organize ourselves, with the highest numbers possible, and we do not doubt that Congress will devote all its priorities to this need, bringing together all methods it believes to be appropriate.

The capitalists are strong because aside from being intelligent they have soldiers in the ranks of their political parties who ought to be in the great party of Labor. The multiplicity of these political parties create deviations, differences, and passions among us that assure capitalist triumph in almost all struggles that we undertake.

As long as our people, as long as our unionists prefer this or that label which capitalist preaching at-

tributes to them, revolutionary unionism will not build its strength because it will waver in the confusion of illogicalities and contradictions.

Consequently, a serious and stubborn propaganda of ideas and organization is necessary in our working-class camp, and it is this necessity that we submit to Congress' consideration.

We believe this propaganda of ideas and this organizational work is so urgent that we do not hesitate in foretelling definite calamities if Congress does not succeed in providing the methods to intensify propaganda and organization. If these methods are not provided political action would soon absorb our union action.

Politicians who are conceited about their successes are not lacking. They collect gratitude from capitalists in the same instant that they say they are defending the proletariat. We want to expect that Congress' work will thwart that capitalist design, work that will deploy in all of our successive activities the orientation and activity that can destroy it.

These light observations expressed, the Union Atheneum is not obliged to anything else other than to greet fellow Congress members and wish them sound judgment in their deliberations.

The Council

Secretary General, José Fontfreda

Vice Secretary, Pedro Cuscó

After the reading of this magnificent work, comrade Herreros makes a motion, and Congress thus agrees that the letter be published in Solidaridad Obrera.



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CNT  
The Founding Congress of the Spanish National Confederation of  
Labor  
1910

of Congreso de constitución de la Confederación Nacional del  
Trabajo (CNT) (Barcelona, Spain: Cuadernos Anagrama, 1976)

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### Fifth Session

This session begins at 9:30 at night under the chairmanship of comrade Belis (Badalona). Filling the secretary positions are comrades Farrés (Barcelona Cartwrights), Marcet (Sabadell Metal Workers), Rovira, and Vidal.

The president implores the delegates to carry out their work as quickly as possible, so that Congress may decide on all topics presented. Immediately after, a fellow secretary reads the eighth topic's motion.

**8th. The emancipation of the working classes must be conquered by the working classes themselves. What is the single, truthful interpretation that should be given to this phrase?**

8th. The emancipation of the working classes must be conquered by the working classes themselves. What is the single, truthful interpretation that should be given to this phrase?

As a duty, as a matter of vital importance, as a philosophy, as a conception clear and fixed for the future, the grand International definitively proclaimed and reaffirmed that "the emancipation of the working classes must be conquered by the working classes themselves" and by no one else.

Being a self-evident truth, verification of this will not be necessary because truths do not require proof when their supporting strength springs from their own principle.

That International of pleasant memory and glorious life was both a fecund seed and a source of irrigation. It plotted a new world and provided ideas, light for entire generations.

It has in its essence the most meritorious virtue and praiseworthy pride on account of its illustrious men's

noble sincerity, who even though they were not manual workers had the frankness to tell workers of the entire world that their emancipation would not come to them without their own, personal efforts.

No more delusions! No more tutelage!

Violently repressed until now, let the truth erupt in everyone's minds!

Let it be known once and for all that workers should not expect anything from anyone but themselves!

The sincerity of the declarations and proceedings of the International's grand figures resulted in a true paradox. This is why it is shocking that there were people who adopted the principle that workers must rely only on themselves, and who knew beforehand that their emancipation should not wait upon someone else's will, but instead on their own personal, collective efforts.

Though there are many who are capable of feeling the working class' cause as their own and who do as much for workers as for themselves, it is not possible that those not belonging to the working class can have a deep interest for the emancipation of wage workers. This is not all.

It is possible that there are those who long to eliminate duress and misery from the world. But it is a lie that there are those who intend to emancipate workers when they present themselves as their protectors and procurators.

The International put workers on guard against this tutelage when they told them that their emancipation had to be their own effort because, in fact, in order to

emancipate themselves it is necessary, indispensable, to be emancipated from every protector or procurator.

They put workers on guard when they told them that tutelage and emancipation are incompatible because as long as one is not emancipated from the protector, they are subjected to those who command and dominate them, those who can deceive and exploit them.

Emancipation is the immediate result of moral emancipation, and those who continue to be another's moral slave will not reach the former. They who do not think for themselves, who do not work voluntarily in accordance with their power of reason and their own direct efforts are slaves.

The men of the International were right by warning workers that their emancipation had to be their own effort. Reality proves this.

Despite the spread of this axiom and what is known in the whole world, there are still thousands and thousands of workers who entrust their emancipation to others, workers or not, using indirect means instead of the direct means that are explicitly indicated in the phrase that serves as the heading of this motion.

The working classes are not emancipating themselves when they put others in charge of their emancipation.

Emancipation is not possible for those who are subjected to others' good or bad intentions, to the correct or ridiculous acts of others, to the lazy or active will of others, to the property of others, private or not.

The emancipation of the working classes must be conquered by the working classes themselves.

And we unite with Farga Pellicer "that this statement is founded in the fact that there is not any social institution or social class that is concerned with the working classes," all of which eternalize our slavery through monopoly and exploitation.

Of course, as you probably already know, nobody can be interested in working-class emancipation except workers. This is because the emancipation of the working classes is of an economic character and forcefully attains and inevitably demolishes all privilege—all the advantages that non-workers enjoy in the present social system.

When saying this it is impossible to forget that the majority of workers called "intellectuals" suffer poverty like manual workers. Politicians are recruited among them, parasites of every kind that climb to privileged positions. Because of this privilege, in general they do not tend to the system's destruction. On the contrary, they consolidate it and even try to take advantage of manual workers in those exalted positions that provide a merry and pleasant life for them.

Rare is the manual worker whom wage work emancipates in the current system.

There are workers who move from being exploited to exploiters, from manual to intellectual workers, and, consequently, to being the privileged, the politicians, the servants, the supporters of the present social-political system. Because of this it can be said in general that only manual workers are truly interested in the abolition of all privileges, all exploitation, and every form of oppression.

Francisco Abeyá (Manlleu)

V. García (Burdeos)

Important Clarification

Certainly owing to a wrong interpretation, an easy thing owing to the premises' bad acoustical conditions, a newspaper said that in the national workers' congress a document signed by prisoners of the July events asked for the appointment of a new commission.

We must say that what was read in Congress was a letter from an imprisoned comrade declaring discontent. Desirous that there be action soon on amnesty of social and political prisoners, the congressists agreed to make an active campaign in all of Spain for this purpose.

13. "The Fuse" Bakers (Badalona)
  14. "Velocity" Tram Employees (Gijón)
  15. Workers' Union (Saeca)
  16. Workers' Union of Crafts and Trades (Feija)
  17. "Progressive Union" Carriage Drivers (Málaga)
  18. Workers' Unions Center. Central Committee. (Murcia)
  19. "Perseverance" Mechanical Spinners (Alcoy)
  20. "Friendship" Pourers, Mold Makers, and Related Trades (La Felguera)
  21. Wood Lathe Operators and Polishers (Valencia)
  22. "Emancipation" Carpenters (La Coruña)
  23. "Labor" Quarrymen (La Coruña)
  24. "Loyalty" Painters (La Coruña)
  25. "Reform" Iron and Metals Workers (La Coruña)
  26. Painters Organization (Sevilla)
  27. Central Association of Cork Workers (Sevilla)
  28. Hatters (Sevilla)
  29. Decorators (Sevilla)
  30. Shoe Makers (La Coruña)
  31. Painters and Decorators (Vitoria)
  32. "Metallurgy" Mining Union (Palma)
  33. "Solidary" Ebonists and Related Trades (Valencia)
  34. "The Eight" Carriage Makers (La Coruña)
  35. Masons and Assistants (La Coruña)
  36. Mechanics and Related Trades (Vigo)
  37. "Egalitarianism" Bakers (Almería)
  38. Amalgamated Trades' General Union (Sevilla)
  39. "Exceptional" Mechanical Weavers (Alcoy)
  40. Quarrymen (Santiago)
  41. "Maritime Progress" Stevedores (La Coruña)
  42. "Fraternalism" Barbers (La Coruña)
  43. "The Future of Labor" Masons and Unskilled Laborers (Málaga)
- Individual Supporters

Some intellectual workers substitute the idealism of the distinguished individual with collective emancipation. These workers can naturally fall into the ranks of manual workers, contributing to the working class' moral emancipation with their intellectual help. But they must always have the understanding that the emancipation of the working classes must be conquered by the working classes themselves. We do not need them to appear among us as our emancipators nor must we entrust our emancipation to them, which we must conquer ourselves.

The economic emancipation of the working class is something that no one took into account until the International bravely proclaimed it.

Workers have been able to diminish the power of feudal lords to strengthen royalty. They have been able to reduce royal power to the middle classes' benefit. They have been able to attain the republic by abolishing the monarchical authority.

Workers have been the body and strength resolving these conflicts. But in all of these changes the economic situation of workers has still continued to be the same: exploited yesterday, exploited today, exploited always.

This does not deny the moral and intellectual progress that these political changes have occasioned for workers. Their efforts to benefit other classes have bettered their condition, placing them in a human context, in a situation to be able to long for their economic emancipation, which was something that remained vague, something that has been confused at all times with

fixed political freedoms, which even confuses plenty today.

And although there were revolts of an economic character in all epochs with the purpose of implanting a communist life system, those designs generally had authoritarian tendencies within the rebels themselves—their revolutionary organization having commanders and leaders.

Working-class emancipation is not possible as long as workers have an emancipator, a leader, because even in the case of managing to defeat the system's defenders, another system of privilege would be established in which the emancipators, the leaders, would end up becoming the new privileged.

If it is not possible to abolish privilege with bodies in which privilege exists, it is because emancipation is not possible unless it is conquered by the working classes themselves.

The emancipation of the working classes must be conquered by the working classes themselves. Let us wage workers bear this in mind at every moment.

T. Herreros

J. Gil

F. Ferroni

M. Vilanova

A. Martín

J. Plaza

M. Marcet

Debate opens.

82. Hatter Union (Fula): Justo Moreno and Manuel Gallinat.
  83. Carriage Makers and Blacksmiths Union: Serafín Piñol.
  84. Trimming and Straps Sector Union: Francisco Torro and Luciano Rico.
  85. Ebonist Sector Union: José Cabanes and Antonio Brillas.
  86. Glass Workers (Badalona): Vicente Rabella, Francisco Tunica and Jaumá.
  87. Machinists and Glaziers' Union (Badalona): José Garriga.
  88. Glass Workers' Union (Badalona): Francisco Prat.
  89. "Union" Union of Masonry Unskilled Laborers (Badalona): Juan Minguet.
  90. Masonry Unskilled Laborers (Sitges): Salvador Tapdot.
  91. Hairdressing and Barber Workers' Association (San Martín): José M. Carreras.
  92. Workers' Sections Council (Badalona): Antonio Regordosa.
  93. Local Federation (Valls): Juan Martí.
  94. Carpenters (Badalona): Jaime Costa.
  95. "Tender Seed" Glass Workers' Union (Pueblo Nuevo): Francisco Suciachs.
  96. Workers' Union of Rollers, Preparers, and other Piece Finishers: Miguel Alber and Pedro Casals.
- Supporting Unions
1. Coachmen (Badalona)
  2. "Regenerator" (Badalona)
  3. "Conscious Creation" Union Association (Badalona)
  4. Carpenters and Ebonists (Vigo)
  5. Painters (Badalona)
  6. Bread Manufacturing Workers (Valencia)
  7. Workers' Center (Algeciras)
  8. Masons (Lérida)
  9. Bakers (Zaragoza)
  10. Fan Rods Craft (Valencia)
  11. Agricultural Union (Pedralva)
  12. Workers' Union (Castro del Río)

58. Locksmith Trades (Barcelona and its vicinities): Francisco Ul-  
lot and Ramón Lostau.
59. New Hairdressing and Barber Trades (Barcelona): B. Castillo.
60. Carpentry Trades (Tarrasa and its vicinities): Jerónimo Farré  
and Colomina.
61. Carpenter Workers (San Martín de Provencals): Rosalino Li-  
cro, Emilio Corominas, Juan Fusalva, and Joaquín Manarro.
62. "Liberty" Drawer Makers and Sawyers (La Coruña): Rafael  
Ávila.
63. Solidaridad Obrera (Badalona): Agustín Casillas.
64. Printing Craft (Barcelona): Tomás Herreros and Ramón  
Costa.
65. Painters and Bleachers (Sabadell): Jaime Sangres.
66. "The Single Union" Tanner Workers (Barcelona and its vicini-  
ties): Miguel Vidal.
67. "Fraternity" Masonry Unskilled Laborers (Villafranca del  
Panadés): Fernando Menacho.
68. Masonry Unskilled Laborers (Barcelona): Joaquín Sala.
69. Wood Carvers and Sculptors (Barcelona): Serafín Izquierdo.
70. Hairdressing and Barber Trades (Tarrasa): Luis Olibert.
71. Carpentry Trades (Sabadell): José Xercavins Guarro.
72. Photogravurists and Related Trades (Barcelona): Pablo Pala-  
cio.
73. Book Craft (Sabadell): Norberto Salvador.
74. Metal Workers' Union (Barcelona): Miguel Mañé.
75. Workers' Federation (Zaragoza), Wood Workers: Joaquín Zu-  
ferri.
76. Shoemaking Workers, Cartwright Workers and Bakers  
(Zaragoza): Jorge Maren.
77. Building Constructors (Zaragoza): Francisco Vidal.
78. Metal Workers' Union (Tarrasa): Ramón Ripoll.
79. Cartwrights (Barcelona): Enrique Farrés.
80. Fishermen (Sitges): Cristóbal Rosé.
81. Metal Workers (Sabadell): Magín Marcet.

Comrade Canto (Alcoy Weavers) has the floor. He says that the way he sees it, nowadays intellectual workers are more exploited than agricultural or workshop workers.

Comrade Herreros defends said motion as a Draft Committee member, furnishing reasons with said aim in mind. He says that many of those who are today called intellectual workers engage in work that is negative and totally opposed to manual workers. As an example he refers to the harmful intervention of intellectual worker elements during the Bilbao strike.

Comrade Graña requests that the assembly agree to increase the number of people allowed to take the floor since the number of people wanting to take the floor is greater than the turns allowed by the rules.

Durán believes that the Draft Committee's motion should be re-  
jected without debate for the federation's good name because he thinks that the honorary title of worker cannot be given only to manual workers. Because so many of them are exploited as intellec-  
tual workers are neither divisions nor categories should not exist between wage workers. Furthermore, he says we should take into account that the General Workers' Union has a union of rationalist professors who carry out fruitful labor for the working class. If the labor of intellectual workers is really negative as the Draft Commit-  
tee says, the construction of barracks and churches, which manual workers create, is not an exception, according to its opinion. This is why he thinks Congress should reject the motion.

Ferrer says, "I will not define the word worker because the mo-  
tion has properly done so, and I think as the Draft Committee does that we should perceive workers as those whose labor is produc-  
tive."

Lladó (Sabadell Federation) says that if one does not earn a wage, that is enough for an individual to not be considered a worker. Even if they do positive work: they do not earn a wage from any capital-  
ist; they are not a worker.

Comrade Negre takes the floor in support of the Draft Committee. He says that intellectual workers can be considered workers, but that they must always be on the margins of unions and not within the same ones. Also, because manual and intellectual workers have unequal interests, they cannot organize together. Without rejecting them we can make the most of their intellectual qualities, extracting what can be advantageous for us, but always rejecting their interference in our affairs.

Various comrades make observations during debate.

The floor is granted to comrade Canto (Alcoy Weavers). He says functionaries of capitalist institutions cannot be considered workers. But those who work for the working class' intellectual improvement from their desk, library, or their study room can be considered workers.

Comrade Herreros confirms support for the motion. He says that although there are intellectual workers concerned for workers, as soon as they rise to a higher position they stop lending them assistance. Correcting comrade Durán, comrade Herreros says that manual workers can be considered unconscious instruments of capitalists, but not those who live on a wage that does not produce anything productive for proletarian humanity.

Some comrades move an amendment. The Draft Committee accepts it as the motion's conclusion.

Voting takes place. The motion carries unanimously with an explanation by comrade Ávila.

After this the following motion carries in substitution of the Draft Committee's motion:

Congress declares that the emancipation of the working classes must be conquered by the working classes themselves. Therefore, it recognizes that the unions that make up the national federation can only be constituted by workers who earn their daily wages in the companies or industries that capitalists or the State

41. "Art, Liberty, Progress" Amalgamated Trades (San Feliu de Codina): Juan Rovira.

42. Lamp Makers, Braziers, and Tinsmiths (Barcelona): José Jové and Manuel Gisbert.

43. Masons (Tarrasa): Antonio Castells and Jorba.

44. Workers' Unions Local Federation (Tarrasa): José Boada.

45. Masons' Center (Palma): Joan Ordinas.

46. Textile Crafts (Barcelona and its vicinities): José Pons and Juan Ubach.

47. "The Awakened Miner," Typesetters, Lathe Operators, and Forgers, Boiler Makers and Assistants, Iron Workers and Other Metals (La Felguera); Stone Masons, Masons and Unskilled Laborers, Carpenters and Ebonists, Painters, Bakers, Amalgamated Trades Trades, Bottle Machine Mechanics, Glass Workers, Boiler Makers and Assistants, Mold Makers, Foundry Pourers and Assistants, Typesetters, Lathe Operators and Smelters, Carriage Makers, Dock Workers, Conductors and Tram Drivers (Gijón): Pedro Sierra Álvarez.

48. "Germinal" Package Box Makers (Barcelona and its vicinities): Ricardo Julve and Pascual Crespo.

49. Carpenters (Barcelona): Antonio Mestres and Juan Cuscó.

50. "Labor" Masons and Unskilled Laborers (Sabadell): Salvador Fabá and Salvador Ussell.

51. Merchant Section (Barcelona): Heriberto Caba y Vidal and Eduardo Gelí Massanet.

52. Yarn Preparation and Spinning (Sabadell): Domingo Munsech.

53. Lathed Wood Bed Workers (Barcelona): Juan Rull.

54. Sabadell Workers' Federation: Luis Vicent.

55. Various (Sabadell): Domingo Serra.

56. Tanners (Igualada): Agustín Prat.

57. Knitwear Workers (Barcelona): S. Grañá, E., and Gabriel Busquets.



17. Jewelry and Silver Workers (Barcelona): Pedro Martí, Félix Duval, and F. Canalda.
18. Masonry Trades (Barcelona): Julián Esteban and Fidel Catalá.
19. "The Trowel" Masonry Union (Salamanca): Buenaventura Caritico.
20. Bookbinding Workers and Related Trades of Both Sexes (Barcelona): Vicente Plaza and Pedro Pérez.
21. "Progress" Barbering and Hairdressing Workers (Barcelona): Tomás Sala.
22. Febrile Craft Union (Alcoy): Rafael Bernabeu.
23. Union of Tapestry Trades (Barcelona): Manuel Escorza and Timoteo Herrero.
24. Railway Loaders and Unloaders (Barcelona): Ángel Martín and José Alemany.
25. Pasta Trades and Apprentices (Barcelona): José Vernet.
26. Local Federation of Paint Workers (Barcelona): Pedro Torrent and Mateo Romiá.
27. Various (Villanueva and Geltrú): J. Ferrer.
28. Footwear Makers' Section (Málaga): S. Rico and V. Ávila.
29. Hairdressing and Barber Trades (Sabadell): Salvador Merced.
30. Preparers, Pressers, and Dyers (Sabadell and its vicinities): Ricardo Escudé.
31. Mechanical Woolweavers (Sabadell): José Bernabeu.
32. Cartwrights (Sabadell and its radius): Ramón Vallés.
33. "Exceptional" Mechanical Weavers: Rogelio Cantó.
34. Febrile Craft (Tarrasa): Ramón Prat and Pedro Mayol.
35. Farmers (Sitges): Juan Durán Ferret.
36. Farmers (Villafranca of Panadés): Isidro Claramunt and Pedro Junyen.
37. Solidaridad Obrera Local Federation (Villafranca of Panadés): José Rovira.
38. Workers' Center (Algeciras): Antonio Salud.
39. Wool Sorters or Classifiers (Sabadell): Emilio Cuni.
40. Piano Builders (Barcelona): Andrés Clos.

exploit. Nevertheless, as the explanation given previously, those workers whose work can directly harm union organization should be considered exempt from this classification.

P. Sierra Álvarez

J. Navarro

E. Corominas

R. Ciuró

The 12th topic and the Draft Committee's motion are immediately moved onto and read.

**12th Topic. The method of attaining price reductions in housing and suppressing odious deposits.**

The motion is as follows:

This federation agreed in its previous congress to adopt direct action as the more effective means of struggle, and it agreed to create resistance organizations against leases.

It agreed that it could not carry this out because at the moment of putting it into practice human weakness and reasons beyond its control caused Solidaridad Obrera to stop its implementation.

Considering that the privilege of private property is based on force, considering that only a feat of the organized working classes can defeat capitalist economic force, Congress declares the urgent necessity of using working-class direct action against capitalist economic force in the form of boycott against landlords who refuse to abolish deposits in their leasing contracts.

And to this effect, Congress recommends an energetic campaign in union newspapers for the purpose of engaging the general public in this question and creating a vigorous public opinion, so that landlords are obliged to reduce leases, allowing the entire organized working class to systematically deny payment of the above-mentioned leases by means of the general tenants' strike in the extreme case and as a final resort.

Luis Plaza

Juan Gil

T. Herreros

Francisco Ferrán

Ángel Martín

Salvador Marcet

Martí Vilanova

The motion carries with the following addition from comrade Salud,

To form lease resistance organizations in all provinces that believe them to be appropriate. These organizations should have an article in their statutes that oblige all members to belong to their amalgamated trades union.

The session is suspended for a few minutes to allow the Fifth Draft Committee to occupy their post. After this is done the following is read,

**2nd Topic. The method of obtaining the eight-hour workday and the minimum wage.**

Motion:

materials needed for that branch of work. To coerce individuals they would declare a lockout to stop work.

Comrade Negre gave a summary of the congress. Addressing himself to comrades from different regions, he tells them to take to their localities the ardent desire for emancipation and to tell all unconscious people as the biblical phrase says, "Lazarus, rise and come forth," so that all, well united, march toward the complete redemption of all the earth's workers.

And Congress is closed.

## Backmatter

### Unions Represented

1. Basketmaking Craft (Barcelona): Mariano Gironé.
2. Union of Cylinder Stamp Engravers (Barcelona): Andrés Magrinyá, Jacinto Puig, and Juan Ymbert.
3. Cartwright Workers (Tarrasa): Florencio Javierre.
4. Automobile Carmakers and Automobile Body Workers (Barcelona): Bernardo Liern.
5. "The Fuse" Bakers (Barcelona): Ramón Cañellas.
6. Bakery Workers (Tarrasa): Juan Monrruá.
7. Local Federation (Valls): Juan Martí.
8. Bakery Workers (Valls): Domingo Matheu.
9. Amalgamated Professions and Trades (La Línea): José Negre.
10. Printing Craft and Related Sectors (Sevilla): Joaquín Bueso.
11. "Defender of Labor" Espadrille-makers (Cervera del Río Alhama): Juan Gil.
12. Workers' Union (Pinos Puente): Juan Grau.
13. Workers' Association of Lojeña: José Negre.
14. "Fraternalism" Coalyard Clerks: Jaime Córdoba.
15. Carpenters (Sans): Francisco Subirats and Antonio Escalona.
16. "Light of the Future" Workers Center (Bujalance): Juan Esteve.

Álvarez (Gijón) explains the Asturias workers' movement, whose manifestation is brilliant. In Gijón, a titanic struggle is being waged on account of a lockout declared by capitalists. The end of it is not in sight. They are also destroying workers' associations. Today, nevertheless, the working class having returned to organizing itself, it will achieve the destruction of the employer class' coalition.

Because he understands that we are still in an embryonic state and somewhat disoriented in our march, he believes that in the future we will manage to provide a model to the world's workers. We must undertake a serious and fruitful campaign by means of the federation's central committee in order to obtain a strong working-class cohesiveness and to teach the exploited how the capitalist waste what we give. We cultivate their well-being with our sweat, and they use the fruit of our labor in orgies and disgraceful bacchanals. He fiercely attacks the criminal Briand for his actions in the French railway workers' strike. He wishes for the triumph of the new federation to grow, and he conveys an affectionate salute to the congressists.

Farrés (Barcelona Cartwrights) believes that everyone should try to see that our work becomes absolutely fruitful. He recounts the struggle that the Catalan unions have been carrying out for a short while now. He underlines the Sabadell capitalists' actions, as well as the Barcelona cartwrights'. United perhaps with all other capitalists, they are carrying out shameful acts against our class, and to counteract its effect we have to answer their attitude with the workers' same gallant attitude.

He directs a plea to all delegates of the entire Catalan region. He explains his meeting with the capitalist class, which suggested to him that we have to carefully look at the resolution adopted by them. One of the capitalists has declared that if the Sabadell cartwrights' strike has not concluded this week, they would provide men to take the carts from the stables and transport the ma-

It is difficult for this Draft Committee to specify the means to attain a reduction to eight hours when so, so many workers labor even ten and twelve hours.

This congress' national character implies that the motions will have the same expansive character. More clearly, what makes our work harder is that agreements approved here will affect and favor all workers residing in Spain and our current circumstances must favor us in the future in our future struggles.

For example, how do the following employ the same method? Trades that today work nine hours and workers from the countryside—those miserable, modern slaves who, before the sun appears, sorrowfully travel with their hearts weighing heavily on their shoulder, with which they transform mother earth to make her produce those delicious and needed fruits that they themselves do not have to consume afterwards.

Different characteristics, the people's distinct customs require workers to work and struggle in different ways and in different conditions.

Therefore, this Draft Committee believes that the most feasible method to obtain the eight-hour workday is to try to undertake an active and energetic campaign in favor of said workday until workers are convinced of its benefits.

With respect to the minimum day's wage, this Draft Committee thinks that Congress should not make an agreement over a particular one because the social structure has a machinery so complex that wage increases would resolve nothing. Product prices would increase every day. The minimum day's wage agreed

upon here would result in our inability to cover our needs soon after.

Furthermore, this Draft Committee believes that achieving the workday's reduction, which would imply an increase in working hands, is the best means for workers themselves to not work for a price less than what is necessary for their well-being.

It is recommended that all workers' unions advocate the cause of the eight-hour work day in whatever activities they assemble for in order to convince the exploited the usefulness of the eight-hour workday by bearing in mind that the reduction of the workday must be the beginning of our emancipation.

Once workers in different regions believe they have the capacity to introduce such a reform, they will declare through the confederation the conquest of the eight-hour workday, which all workers must contribute to.

With respect to the minimum wage, as we have said before, this Draft Committee believes this congress should not legislate over it because of the belief that nothing would resolve it, given the different conditions in which different regions produce and consume.

J. Bueso

D. Serra

J. Jaumar

J. Bennet

R. Canto

R. Costa

This motion carries unanimously. The following is read,

agreement, the Barcelona federation's committee will fulfill the agreement made in last night's session that refers to this concrete case.

This motion carries unanimously amidst the greatest enthusiasm.

The closing period has come, and the floor is given to comrade Farré (Tarrasa). He reflects that given the grandeur of the action, Barcelona's people have not responded as he would have liked. Nevertheless, he says the guiding light of unionism will come forth from this congress and illuminate all of Spain.

Comrade Ordinas (Palma de Mallorca) speaks on behalf of his region. He believes that the most adequate methods for winning workers' demands are energetic ones because they cannot be won in another way. He thinks that commissions should be sent to bring true revolutionary unionist doctrines to the minds of Mallorcans.

Mora (Zaragoza Federation) says that Zaragoza workers will know how to energetically fulfill the agreements made at this congress.

Comrade Gil (La Rioja) reads a document proclaiming faith in revolutionary unionism. He promises Congress that his region will engage in active union propaganda, and he recommends that all delegates do the same.

Comrade Plaza (Galicia) acknowledges the supreme importance of the work accomplished in this congress. He encourages workers, so that their courage does not ever decline during the struggles they continuously wage. And he encourages them to always distrust false redeemers.

Comrade Bueso (Sevilla Printing Craft) takes the floor. Referring to the words of different politicians and capitalists, he says that they claim to put out the flames of our grievances with deceitful phrases. And he advises that these premises will be too small to accommodate all workers at the next congress.

It is carried that the Masons delegation's motion "What responsibility is the worker entitled to at his job?" be included in the next congress' first session.

Comrade Lladó (Sabadell) has the floor. Since Congress agreed to abolish piece work, he reminds Congress that the Sabadell strike began because workers did not want to work where piece work was the only condition allowed. He presents the conflict's history. Carrying out this Congress' agreement, in a meeting assembled the day before, the people of Sabadell agreed to the revolutionary general strike because of these work conditions.

Salvador Marcet thinks that a definite agreement should fall onto this congress in light of the tactics followed by the Sabadell capitalists. He argues for the adoption of the revolutionary general strike in all of Spain to solve the present conflict in favor of the workers.

Various motions are presented to lend solidarity to said strikers.

Signers of different motions gather to come to an agreement and draw up a single motion.

#### **Solidarity with Sabadell strikers**

Meanwhile, comrade Zuferrí explains the conflict in Zaragoza. He states that in a meeting Zaragoza workers also agreed to the revolutionary general strike. He requests that the agreement made for Sabadell be extended to Zaragoza strikers.

The new motion is read, which is as follows:

We move that Congress agrees that as a measure of solidarity with the Sabadell strikers that all present delegates encourage their respective organizations of the unavoidable duty they have to fulfill the assembly agreements made by delegates of Solidaridad Obrera in Barcelona by materially assisting the strikers.

If the strike has not been resolved next Friday, the strikers will fulfill the agreement of abandoning in mass the settlement of Sabadell. And if capitalist forces abuse these comrades on the occasion of this final

**7th Topic. In order that the general strike's impact furnishes the effective defense of the proletariat, can it be peaceful or must it be essentially revolutionary? In any case, what form does Congress believe the general strike should be used for its definite success?**

Motion:

This is an arduous, formidable, and pressing problem. Upon carrying out a study as scrupulous as possible within a relatively short space of time for deciding, the Draft Committee that signs this document must declare openly, brutally, even if the expression is harsh: the general strike must be essentially revolutionary. Why? For the following reasons.

When workers decide at a moment's notice to cross their arms in refusal to work the general strike brings about a disorder so great within the course of present society—divided between exploited and exploiters—a disorder that must unavoidably generate an explosion, a clash between the antagonistic forces that today struggle for survival.

Therefore, just as the earth would clash with any star if it ceases to spin on its axis, we, upon ceasing to work, clash with all those who do not want us leave the iron cage that we are put in.

The pacifist general strike cannot possibly endure. We think about what would happen in a proletarian household in a few days, perhaps the day following the strike, if the limited food provisions they count on ran out.

That worker would fling himself to find those provisions outside the home. They would combine with others who were in the same situation. And because noth-

ing is being produced at the time and because market vendors would be idle as well, there would not be a place to acquire them legally, in the favorable case of them having funds provided. They would have to be directed to those big hoarding sites, to those big warehouses crammed with goods that sometimes rot.

Meanwhile those deprived fall weakly from forbearance. But because those warehouses are private property, armed public forces are obligated within the present state-of-things to defend them. That would constitute one of the many collisions that accompany a general strike.

The general strike must be revolutionary because the order keepers, in order to guard the system, do not know or practice other means than persecuting and incarcerating the most active of us—we whose principles lead us down the path of struggle.

The rest of us workers must protest the practice of these methods. And this protest must be violent. If we do not struggle, our tyrants would sacrifice new victims.

We could furnish another thousand arguments in favor of the revolutionary character of a general strike, but because we believe that they will be laid before Congress' consideration during debate of the present motion, we leave debate to Congress.

The revolutionary general strike being necessary, when must it be carried out to be completely successful? Here lies the problem.

Until now the above weapon has been used various times. But we declare that it is a weapon so great, with results that are so contradictory if not employed with-

committee will present them, and it is there that the bylaws will be definitively adopted.

Comrade Herreros (Printing Craft) asks for the agreement referred to in topic eleven.

Carreras (San Martín Barbers) answers that it was agreed to be a confederation.

Farré (Tarrasa) believes that we must be practical, and he defends Solidaridad Obrera being a federation, which prevents the unions personalities from being eviscerated. The unions should only belong to federations.

Comrade Lostau makes a clarification. He understands that this congress' purpose is to change the federation's tactics, and he believes that it is indispensably necessary that its organization be on a federative basis. Since the beginning of the history of federations considerations have been extended over this matter. He finishes by saying that, dispensing with details, he believes that the national organization should be called a confederation and not a federation.

Comrade Álvarez answers comrade Lostau in his clarification. He believes that upon being named a confederation, unions lose their own personalities. But if they are federations they conserve all of their integrity, their personalism. To aid his assertion he explains various examples.

The Draft Committee accepts comrade Lostau's amendment. The bylaws carry.

It is agreed that at the next congress the central committee will address the dues that unions should pay. In the meantime, unions are to continue paying what they are presently paying.

Ávila asks if the federations maintaining the newspaper have to also pay three céntimos for each of its federates. After various comrades take the floor, it is agreed that they not pay more than two céntimos.

The chairman asks where the central committee must reside. It is unanimously carried that the central committee will be in Barcelona until the next congress.

lute conviction that, upon weighing the violence of all governments, there will not be peace in the world until we workers, assisted by the great intelligence of clairvoyant foresight, have sufficient force to destroy economic inequality and all its defenders.

Costa

Rull

Ávila

Lladó

Marcé

Farré

Castillo

Rico

Ciurana

#### **Draft of the confederation's bylaws**

The assembly proceeds to read the draft of the confederation's bylaws that will be published in *Solidaridad Obrera's* next issue.

The Draft Committee's secretary makes some observations about the bylaws, clarifying some matters.

Various comrades debate.

Comrade Farré (Tarrasa) presents two articles that he proposes to be included in the bylaws.

Comrade Lostau (Barcelona Locksmiths) challenges the federation's bylaws. He is of the opinion that this must be called a confederation and expands on considerations in support of his opinion.

Comrade Álvarez (Gijón Federation) says that the bylaws are provisional because they are a draft motion. The central committee will distribute them to affiliated unions, so that these can make the modifications they believe convenient. In the next congress the

out proper knowledge, that it can possibly cause our own moral degradation. And so that this does not happen, the Draft Committee believes:

A general strike should not be declared to achieve a little increase in a day's wage or a reduction in the work day, but to attain a total transformation in the mode of production and product distribution.

A strong connection between all workers is necessary, not of one region but of the different regions that make up the Spanish nation, so that the strike is general in the truest sense of the word, perhaps in a unique sense: when all wage earners of the same country cease producing in unison. Indeed, when we workers collaborate well with one another this will facilitate the universal general strike, which will be the day when the light of justice begins to shine.

Nevertheless, this does not exist at the moment.

Focusing on Spain, experience has taught us that a good general strike in a single locality does not cause great harm because it shows us our spirit of struggle and our desires for emancipation, which is, as a capitalist said, "a bang that we are making at the capitalists' door"..

On the other hand, we have to confess that when the general strike is localized in an area and the rest of the nation's workers are completely passive, armed public forces in service of the capitalists will gather in that area, making it relatively easy for governments to crush rebellion.

For its complete success, we therefore believe that the general strike should be put into practice when workers who are federated in the national confederation

have the capacity to successfully conclude reforms of the bad conditions we work in today.

Nevertheless, general strikes can be declared and waged in cases where capitalist or governmental selfishness forces workers to declare a general strike in a locality or region.

We believe that the local committee must be in charge of resolving the strike in those cases and considering if it should be extended to the nation.

And only in specific cases should Congress agree to the general strike as a means to resolve a strike because the proletariat only loses blood and wins nothing in cases of fighting adventures.

J. Bueso

D. Serra

J. Jaumar

J. Benet

M. Mañé

R. Canto

R. Costa

Comrade Castillo (Barcelona Barbers) advocates that it be agreed that the general strike be used whenever it is considered appropriate without specifying said circumstances.

Comrade Bueso says that the motion has already said this.

Some points are clarified. And the motion carries unanimously.

The reading of the ninth topic's motion immediately proceeded. It reads,

**9th Topic. When a federated society in the midst of struggle is abused by the police or public forces, what attitude must other federated sections adopt?**

ing to the national federation should be appointed to complete this. This carries unanimously.

The Draft Committee's motion carries unanimously.

The session adjourns at 1:30 in the afternoon.

Herreros (Barcelona Printing Craft) moves that the evening session be lengthened, so that it is also the closing session.

The comrades to become officers for the next session are appointed. Those appointed are comrades Negre, as president, and Durán, Bueso, Vidal, and Carreras as secretaries.

### **Seventh Session**

The session opens at 4:30 in the afternoon. Comrade Negre (Solidaridad Obrera) presides. Acting as secretaries are comrades Vidal (Zaragoza), Bueso (Sevilla Printing Craft), and Carreras (San Martín Barbers).

The minutes of the previous session are read. They are approved after some observations by various comrades.

The secretary reads two affiliations from the Mosaic Workers' Unions and Barcelona Local Government Cartwrights.

#### **Condemnation of Argentine government and capitalists**

A motion is read whose intention is to protest the outrages committed by Argentine capitalists and the Government of the Republic of Argentina. The motion carries, which reads:

Upon Solidaridad Obrera being constituted as the National Confederation of Labor it agrees to express in the world workers' press the indignation with which it has viewed the iniquitous measures, legal and extralegal, that the Government of the Republic of Argentina has used against workers and their organizations. In response it recommends affiliated unions to engage in an intense propaganda of protest each time similar acts are repeated, reinforcing at the same time their abso-



-That it is the duty of the Spanish National Confederation of Labor's organizations to commit themselves to engage in an energetic campaign to unionize women and reduce work hours.

-This Draft Committee resolves that women should not be permitted to work under any circumstances a month before her delivery and until a month after giving birth.

Rafael Bernabeu

José Pons

José María Carreras

Pablo Pérez.

Comrade Pons (Barcelona Textile Craft) makes relevant observations in support of the motion. He defends the praise of women at work and in the family, advocates the end of the existing tyranny, and demands men's support in this question. He says that the moral and material education of our children should be in our interests.

A delegate (Locksmiths) says that women's maternal and child-rearing work are not valued at all.

#### **Prisoner support commission**

Comrade Herreros reads a letter from prisoners of the July events. They lament the abandonment they feel and ask that Solidaridad Obrera appoint a prisoner support commission composed exclusively of workers. The current appointees are not trustworthy in place of workers and there is an informer, Bonet.

At the same time, he recalls the agreement of the deputies who took the floor in the Armas del Parque square meeting. The commitment was to cause obstructions when there are intentions to deny amnesty. But in view of the fact that this has not been done, the federation should order execution of this once more by appointing commissions in all other provinces. Two local committees belong-

Motion:

This Draft Committee believes that the heading of the topic that it has been entrusted with should be modified in a sense to at least include a common name for the police and all other armed bodies of the State, province, or municipality. An essential difference between some and others does not exist.

Certain diputaciones and municipalities, whose economic life permits it, have created private bodies to protect by force the interests and authoritarian-capitalist principles they represent. The municipality and the diputación rest upon social privileges on account of the learning inherited in their capitalist environment and the laws that give them life. Furthermore, being official bodies subordinated to the State, they find themselves to be under its constant, inquisitive gaze.

The State does not ever tolerate the implementation of processes that are free from the fundamental dogmas of capitalist society, namely,

-Property, the fertile source of the prosperity of the few and the source of misery and death for millions of humans, and

-Authority, the powerful foundational principle that is essential for the perpetuation of such a cruel reality.

For these reasons the municipality and the diputación have armed forces to impose their power in common affairs. For matters of greater importance they turn to their jealous watchman, the State, to demand the armed bodies it possesses. This is a phenomenon of the entire national territory.

Consequently, we can admit that the mission of all armed elements that the world of officials makes use of is basically the same. If something varies, it varies in its degree of potency, in its radius of action. They are included in a single, real - - -

Before continuing on we direct our attention to the expression “public forces” that appears in this topic to demonstrate the erroneous way it is employed.

According to the Etymological Dictionary of the Castilian Language by Roque Barcia and that of the Spanish Academy, in the present case as an adjective the word public means “that which belongs to all people.”

Now, of what is conventionally called “public” by those who practice it so much in modern democracies—does it really belong to those who make up any given country?— According to what we have already indicated, it is evident that the most important of its functions consists of imposing compliance of laws that sanction social inequality and protect human exploitation.

There can be, and there is in fact, even in present proprietary society, things that are truly public, for example, public street lighting, public fountains, public gardens, etc., because absolutely everyone can enjoy that light, that water, and those aromas, whether they are penniless or a millionaire.

When this society’s capitalist intellectual apologists see that we workers refuse to accept the legitimacy of armed bodies that preserve capitalist society they exert themselves to convince us that these armed bodies not only protect what they call “the country’s economic prosperity,” but that they are also the personal

The Draft Committee thinks that given the physical composition of women, Congress should consider the inhumane manner in which her work is carried out as is already the case in loading and unloading and other jobs whose required exertion is superior to her composition.

We consider that what needs to be precisely constituted for the moral recovery of women’s lost liberty—who are today subordinated to the guardianship of husbands—is work that is necessary to elevate their condition to the level men are at. This is the only means of securing their independence.

Furthermore, we have to consider that we owe the reduction of many of our work hours to the painful work of women in factories.

Meanwhile, many of us allow our female comrades to get up from bed before five in the morning while we go on resting. And when women finish spilling their blood for twelve hours to satisfy the exploiter’s depravity they return home, and in place of rest she encounters a new capitalist—our fellow male worker—who with the greatest peace awaits for her to do house chores.

Therefore, the Draft Committee presents these motions to Congress:

-Abolition of all work that is superior to women’s physical strength.

Because we understand that women need work, which is painful and badly paid, in order to achieve their independence, we propose:

-That women’s wages correspond to their work with identical proportion to men’s work.

Another declares support for French railway workers and condemns the French government's conduct during the latest railway workers' strike.

#### **Satisfaction with Solidaridad Obrera's work**

Another satisfactorily views the labor carried out by Solidaridad Obrera, especially since the congress.

#### **Approbation of Barcelona and Sabadell strike commissions**

Likewise, another approves the strike commissions' negotiations in Barcelona and Sabadell.

The session is suspended, so that Draft Committees can make motions over new subjects presented.

When the session resumes the Draft Committees read.

#### **Organizing agricultural workers**

This Draft Committee recognizes that as a means for organizing agricultural workers the relevant practice agreed to as the way to associate and organize scattered workers anew should be introduced as soon as possible.

At the same time, as the most effective means for the cooperative union of farmers, we recommend to congressists to boycott in related trades against all owners who have laborers who are not unionized.

Barcelona, 1 November 1910

Juan Esteve (Bujalance Farmers)

Bartolomé Águila (Manlleu Farmers)

Isidro Claramunt (Villafranca Farmers)

#### **Women's work**

The Draft Committee over women's work reads the following motion:

watchmen of all the country's children, including the lowliest.

Their assertions strongly contradict reality. The topic that has been presented to Congress that we are treating will properly address the truth. We will have the chance to clearly see the falseness of their assertions.

For the time being we will restrict ourselves to recalling, plainly, the incident covered in the entire global press where the Argentine Republic's so-called "public forces" "helped" and "protected" the rulers and the republic's children when they not so long ago burned and killed workers' private dwellings and their union centers.

That is, they carried out once more but with greater shamelessness their role in protecting the capitalist class' interests and principles against the proletariat's.

Save the errors of this Draft Committee, which it is prepared to clear up if such a thing is shown to it, it is evidently demonstrated that the phrase "public forces" is falsely applied and that the expression "capitalist armed forces" should be used to refer to all official armed bodies.

Theoretically, rulers support a democratic government the more it announces that to side with workers to a limited extent in struggles between workers and capitalists on account of the great "sympathy" they feel for workers. But passing said extent, democratic government maintains "neutrality", so that the question is settled between the two elements at war.

Otherwise, if government were to intervene resolutely in favor of one of them that would reveal a partiality when government should not become liable to such

criticism. According to what Briand, the President of the French Council of Ministers, has said recently, interpreting every liberal government's platonism, "they should govern for the entire nation and not for just a class."

Capital is a force immensely superior to Power. Power is obliged to serve Capital in one or another manner. As a demonstration of this strength as well as the real truth behind the wishful oratory above, let us illustrate how this manifests.

The rulers slither and brag about how faithfully they interpret the law and fulfill it—which we admit is true in many cases—in a copious series of considerations over public services of ineludible attention, over the liberty of labor, over public order, etc., etc.

According to what suits it, democratic government hypocritically or brutally intervenes in the class struggle by obstructing and imposing upon not both combatants of the moment, as some naive person would think, but the most exhausted of them: the working class.

And this occurs in many occasions in which, as has already been indicated, authorities say to obey the law and the laws are really obeyed. But is it possible that capitalists have made these laws for themselves?

We modern workers certainly know which class' moral, political, and economical principles have nourished the intelligence of those who draw up the laws. We do not ignore nor are we surprised at the consequences of their work, although we firmly repudiate them.

ation, preference will be given to the union whose behavior standards are most closely related to the tactics that Solidaridad Obrera is following.

An incoming telegram is read from Sabadell requesting declaration of the revolutionary general strike in solidarity with Sabadell strikers who are upholding the agreement made previously.

The Metal Workers' Union (Málaga) sent a telegram affiliating with Congress.

#### **Boycott of El Diluvio newspaper.**

Comrade Salud moves to boycott the newspaper El Diluvio because of its work against the working classes. He reads an article from the same. The boycott carries with one vote against it.

#### **Protest of capitalist armed forces at Congress**

Immediately after, a motion is read to protest the display of forces deployed by the authorities during the present congress' gathering. It carries unanimously.

#### **Support for striking Sabadell workers**

Another motion carries declaring Congress' support for the struggle upheld by Sabadell fellow workers and for the strength and resolve they are using to defend their rights against their exploiters.

Other motions are read and carry unanimously.

#### **Satisfaction with Dr. Queraltó and the International Congress of Tuberculosis**

Among them, one declares a satisfactory attitude to the new approach given by doctor Queraltó and the International Congress of Tuberculosis, which favors curing tuberculosis by using social action over therapy.

#### **Esperanto**

Another is the adoption of Esperanto and recommending that unions study it.

#### **Support for striking French railway workers**

Ávila as president and comrades Álvarez, Zuferrí, Graña, and Herreros as secretaries.

The session adjourns at 1:00 in the morning.

## Sixth Session

The session begins at 10:30 in the morning. Comrade Ávila presides. Comrades Herreros, Ferrer, and Rovira act as secretaries.

The fellow secretary reads the previous session's minutes. They are approved.

At the request of a fellow delegate, the Draft Committee for the federation's provisional bylaws is appointed. Comrades Álvarez (Gijón), Mora (Zaragoza), Plaza (Vigo), Gil (Cervera del Río Alhama), Negre (Council of Solidaridad Obrera), Farré (Tarrasa), and Bueso are appointed.

The Draft Committee over women's work is appointed, consisting of comrades Pons (Barcelona Textile Craft), Bernabeu (Alcoy Febrile Craft), Carreras (San Martín Hairdressers), and Pablo Pérez (Barcelona Bookbinders).

Comrades Manlleu and Villafranca move to study how to organize farmers. It is approved for three farmer congressists to compose a Draft Committee.

Various comrades move to establish a principle in regards to the existence of two unions of the same trade in the same locality within the federation.

The agreement made on this same matter by Solidaridad Obrera's previous congress is read.

Castillo says that the previous congress' agreement is not being followed because two entities of the same trade in a locality cannot exist inside the federation.

The Hatters' delegate declares that debate is not appropriate and that it is Solidaridad Obrera's council's responsibility to evaluate this matter. This is because the previous congress' agreement states that whenever two unions of the same trade exist within the feder-

Therefore, calculate for yourself the thousand injustices that occur when governments violate the law or simply go above it, as frequently occurs when workers are being dealt with.

Wanting to justify the intervention of armed public forces in the last Bilbao miners' strike, days ago José Canalejas said that he agreed to it because in light of the passions provoked armed forces intervened as a moderating element to replace strife.

This word derives from moderation, which in proper Castilian means "temperance in political and moral actions".

Well then, who was trying to instill temperance with the battalions and machine gunners that the government sent to Bilbao? Was it the employers? Were they trying to change their extremely intransigent attitude and grant the workers their small demands?

No, because they did everything they could to solicit the army's intervention.

Did they want armed public forces for the sole purpose of making workers—the weakest of the two combatants—fall under the complete sway of the "self-restraint" that machines of war would induce? Did they want armed forces in order to kill the indispensable vigor that introduces the rudimentary moral victory that is later needed to materially defeat capitalism by mathematical calculation? Yes.

Of the arguments we could provide to demonstrate this, the full, cold, and analytical examination of the facts that lend to a conclusive understanding are present.

Liberal governments practice their so-called neutrality by employing all their armed numbers on the side of the strongest of the social combatants—capitalists.

They make declarations against workers and deliver frequent threats with everything that powerfully undermines strikers' moral strength in order to prolong conflicts. This last constitutes one of the most concealed and efficacious methods for defeating strikers because authorities know very well that the economic misery that the proletariat is subjected to makes it impossible to successfully perpetuate a strike.

Furthermore, the rulers and capitalists do not fear that these struggles could go on perpetually—no. What profoundly worries them are revolutionary union principles that inspire strikes and the energetic, widespread turn they can take.

And they try to convince us that the rulers' neutrality is not pure trickery! But benevolence that some dispense to workers!

We have a clear sample of this on the occasion of the Paris railway strike these last few days. Making tender declarations to the proletariat, the nation's radical socialist government has used a clever idea to defeat workers. We do not know if it has occurred to any other rulers.

The government found itself at the height of a strike where it was impossible to get any poor devil to be a strike breaker because the nature of the job required indispensable technical skills. The government called all strikers enlisted in reserve military service to active military duty. Once mobilized the government forced

In short, this assembly affirms that if this federation sees fit: when in the future the rulers abuse any of our federates by means of their armed forces they will be met—not with tears—but with this federation's resolute action. And furthermore, that it be considered pointless to define future policies to clear the way for the greatest, energetic character of protest, according to the magnitude of the abuse.

R. Costa

J. Bueso

D. Serra

J. Jaumar

J. Benet

M. Mañe

R. Canto

This topic's motion as those preceding carries unanimously. The following motion related to the same also carries,

We move that the assembly not only approve the conclusion read, but that a large printing of the motion be made and distributed in all of Spain as the national federation's first act of propaganda.

Ávila

Mora

Vidal

Zuferri

After some issues of minor importance, the appointment of officers for the coming session takes place, which falls upon comrades

forehand if there has been a motivated provocateur and other important details? Why would we submit to a congress' deliberations—deliberations that are fixed, concrete, definite, and informed by circumstantial attitudes?

In support of our opinion we will give two short practical examples that portray real life.

Upon trying to frisk a striking worker, the worker tells the officer that they must put on their gloves. The officer answers them with a slap in the face. It is evident that an abuse has been committed.

Likewise, as has occurred in different countries an abuse is committed when masses of workers attend mass street demonstrations in opposition to government affairs that are considered destructive and deadly for the people and suddenly a large group of agents appear who shoot at the throng without prior warning, felling men, women, and even children—children, those sublime innocents that legislators have not dared to take to the scaffold, vilely killed by capitalist bullets.

The two certainly constitute abuses, but their difference is so great that the agreements taken with respect to them should be very different.

Therefore, this Draft Committee believes that in the face of an abuse committed against any society in struggle, the federation should abandon the somewhat traditional attitude in workers' unions of passivity and vain mourning for victims. We should exchange that attitude with resolute action whose specific details and whose potential growth will be unavoidably determined by the circumstances that attend the occasion.

them to be their own strike breakers. This is a novel situation.

And in regards to this method we have the opportunity to put onto the historical record the fact that the socialist leader of yesterday, the propagator of the general strike, French Prime Minister Aristide Briand has tried to defeat strikers by using the military code of justice's barbarous and iniquitous punishments.

If the railway strike was being resolved privately, how is it possible that the government did not maintain neutrality in the conflict? Is the strike a terrifying fact for the capitalist world's security?

Was it sensible to expect the government to maintain true neutrality in a struggle of railway workers against their exploiters? Gatekeepers are among them who earn, it seems incredible, five francs a month.

In the strike's first phase the representatives of Northern France Railways' Administrative Council—the enterprise that first experienced the strike—were Eduardo Rothschild, Baron Gustavo Rothschild, Baron Alfredo Rothschild, Baron Enrique Rothschild, Baron Jaime Armando Rothschild, Lord Rothschild, and Baron Lambert, father-in-law of one of the barons cited. This family owns the Bank of France, the railways of the east, Paris, Lyon, the Mediterranean, Madrid, Zaragoza, Alicante, the south of Austria, the mines of La Grand Combe and Peñarroya, life insurance, fire insurance, machinery insurance and much more.

Because of the opportunism of modern capitalists who are, in short, good at putting personal ambitions to good use, would it not be appropriate to only suppose

that revolutionary transportation workers would not rely on monstrous capitalists and their terms? Capitalists who have absolute power to devour them?

But in spite of the government's threats, union workers answered the call to mobilization with this fine slogan that they printed throughout all of the capital, "We will not obey the mobilization order! Long live the strike!" And they followed it.

Our specific approach has been necessary in order to understand neutrality in conflicts between workers and capitalists.

Railway workers have now been mobilized as soldiers just as electricians, printers, bakers, tram workers, etc., etc. have been mobilized as soldiers. And in time, the same way that wage workers are fighting and acquiring class consciousness, perhaps we will also see tailors as soldiers or soldiers of those who sell small coffee milk candies at cinemas or theaters.

Capitalist armed forces always intervene in these struggles in a character that is harmful for workers, even when said forces are not present at the area of the abuse. And to well demonstrate this we have written what precedes.

We should prepare ourselves, therefore, to act defensively in all cases. Attacks against us cannot ever cease while our triumph has not yet come. Meanwhile, we must stock up on intelligence, determination, and organization for attacks directed at the heart of capitalism.

Until today organized workers have been accustomed to responding with a certain passivity at abuses that armed capitalist forces have committed against unions

in struggle. This is because some, lacking understanding, considered the abuses to be accidental, isolated incidents without any intimate relation to the struggle between capitalist and proletariat.

Upon observing the working masses' indifference, the conscious ones considered any serious, energetic action to be almost impossible. But in this congress, which is perhaps the beginning of a grand new proletarian force, it will be good that we take the initial step to declare a new attitude for the future.

In response to an abuse committed against a federated society in struggle, this Draft Committee could recommend many excellent weapons, such as appealing to people with rallies, leaflets, placards, and special issues from our press organ to initiate a boycott, sabotage (which causes so much worry today), a strike in the trade affected by the abuse, and the revolutionary general strike.

We could recommend all of this. But at the same time we assert that workers' organizations should not err as legislators, who draw up more and more laws that do not go into effect because upon colliding with real life they do not correspond to any needs, nor to the moment's pressing palpitations.

The topic we have been treating is so peculiar, that in order to resolve it, a factor so important must be taken into account: the distress caused by the abuse.

How is it possible to make commitments beforehand in things concerned with sentiments of a supreme form? Is it perhaps possible to predict the degree of indignation that an abuse would cause, not knowing the cruel nature of the boasted abuse? Can we predict be-