



WFTU GENERAL COUNCIL MEETING

(New Delhi: 24-27 October 1988)

56.

Speech by
A. Zartikas of
PEO Cyprus

Comrade President
Comrades,

This is not the first time that the General Council of the WFTU is called to discuss questions relative to the TULs. This is explained by the fact that the strengthening of the TULs, their achievements in the field of organisation and unity, their progress, have always been



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in the WFTU conference. We want to have strong and influential TUs. Strong and influential in the formulation of trade union policies in their field of activities and in their specific branches of economy.

The TUs, without ceasing to be independent and autonomous, they belong to the family of the WFTU organisations. Strong and influential TUs means strong and influential WFTU. If the TUs



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succeeded in their efforts for unity and united action within their domain of activities, that success will make the work of the WFTU for unity and united action easier. If the TUs develop and improve their work in the field of solidarity or in the field of promoting the cause of peace and disarmament, that will also go to the credit of the WFTU.

Any success of the TUs



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in bringing together Trade Unions of different affiliations, largely depends on the success of the national professional and branch Unions to develop unity in action, on their success to convince Trade unions of different political orientations to participate in common action for the solution of acute common problems.

Unemployment, ecological problems, health and safety, the problem of peace and disarmament



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are among the problems that can bring together workers and trade unions of different affiliations and ideologies.

Speaking about safety and health problems, in lectures we encounter strong resistance on behalf of the employers, who are opposing the introduction of legislative measures, even such measures as approved and suggested by the ILO. This resistance of the employers brought ~~together~~ the unions



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closer together. This created an opportunity for the TUs to appear in support of the workers' demands, thus increasing the prestige and the influence of the TUs among our workers.

In the document under discussion reference is made to the recent ICFTU Congress, which stated that "there is a world-wide onslaught by governments and the employers in many countries on trade unions and on the gains they have made over many years... In



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Cyprus, the main target of this onslaught is the system of the Automatic Cost of Living Readjustment of wages and salaries. This attacks against one of the most important gains of our trade union movement, won some over 40 years ago led to an unprecedented unity of action by all the trade unions of the island from agricultural workers to industrial workers, from civil servants to police officers. A general strike was threatened and the



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employers had to withdraw.

We have repulsed the attack, but we foresee that it will be renewed early next year. This would be our opportunity for the TUs to express their solidarity and support.

We shall let the WFTU and the TUs know when the attack manifests itself again. Such an expression of solidarity at the right time, addressed to all the TU Federations in Cyprus



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will strengthen the influence of the TULs among the workers and the Trade Union movement of our Country.

In Cyprus, our branch unions affiliated to the respective TULs, as well as PEO itself, are very active in the field of getting together with unions of different affiliations and engage in common action with them. Whenever there is an initiative by the TULs, we always try to make that initiative known to all the other



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trade union organisations in Cyprus, to raise their interest and draw them into the initiative. I do not say that we are successful very often, but we had a few successes.

Speaking about the strengthening of the influence of the TULs in Cyprus, we should not forget the existence of the political problem of our Country. the struggle of the people of Cyprus, Greeks and Turks, to eliminate the consequences of



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the Camp d'Etat of the Greek Junta officers and of the Turkish military invasions. The Cypriot people are fighting against foreign military occupation, for the demilitarisation of their island, for getting rid of the colonists brought in by Turkey with the aim of changing the demographic character of the population, for restoring ~~the~~ the human rights of nearly 200 000 refugees, Greeks and Turks and for restoring the territorial integrity of their country.



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The Cypriot people fight for the reunification of their country under a democratic federal government taking into consideration the interests of both communities living in the island.

To achieve this principal political aim the leaders of the two communities are conducting an intercommunal dialogue under the auspices of the UNO. The PEO supports this effort of the leaders of the



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two communities. We thank the Secretariat of the WFTU for the support of this new development in Cyprus as expressed in the proposed draft resolution on Cyprus. We also thank the Secretariat for the support given to our demand for the convening of an international conference under the auspices of the UNO for the discussion and settlement of the international aspects of the Cyprus problem.



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The TKIs, who have in the past repeatedly expressed their solidarity must continue doing so. This will increase their influence and prestige in Cyprus.

To conclude the influence and prestige of the TKIs is closely linked with their participation in the struggle for peace and disarmament which it is developing today based on the initiatives of the Soviet Union and on the



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concluded between the two
leading powers of the world.
Their influence will also increase,
as a result of their
active solidarity and support
for the struggles of the oppressed
people: for the Palestinians,
the Lebanese, the people of
Central America, of Angola
~~and~~ Nicaragua and South
Africa.

Thank you for your