

EKA



ATHENS LABOR CENTER

The Right To Work, A Challenge For The Trade Unions At The Dawn Of The 21ST Century

INTERNATIONAL TRADE UNIONS CONFERENCE

ATHENS, FEBRUARY, 24-25 2000
ZAPPEION PALACE



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FOREWORD

The Athens Labour Centre undertook the initiative to organise an International Conference on the "Right to work in the 21st Century" in order to offer an opportunity to exchange views with our counterparts from other European Capitals, on the important issues and challenges to which the trade union movement has to cope with.

From the plethora of the topics that exists, we have selected three, which are particularly serious, like: unemployment, the changes in the framework of industrial relations and economic immigrants.

This publication includes the proceedings of this Conference, and we hope that it will constitute a useful tool of information for every interested person or institution.

GRIGORIS FELONIS

PRESIDENT OF EKA

WORKERS' WELFARE
FOUNDATION



LABOUR FORCE EMPLOYMENT
ORGANISATION



STATE TELECOMMUNICATIONS
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PROGRAM OF THE CONFERENCE

Thursday 24/02/2000

Opening Session

Chair: GR. FELONIS, PH. TAVRIS, P. SOFOS, K. GOUTZAMANIS, E. MOUTAFIS, S. SALOUFAKOU

- ◆ Arrival of the participants
- ◆ Welcome Speech by S. SALOUFAKOU, Secretary of International and Public Relations of EKA
- ◆ Opening Speech by the President of EKA, GR. FELONIS
- ◆ Greeting Speeches by the:
 - ◆ AP. KAKLAMANIS, President of the Hellenic Parliament
 - ◆ A. DIAMANTOPOULOU, Member of the European Commission
 - ◆ M. PAPAIOANOU, Minister of Labour
 - ◆ E. BESBEA, Prefect of Athens
 - ◆ D. AVRAMPPOULOS, Mayor of Athens
 - ◆ CHR. POLYZOGOPoulos, President of GSEE
 - ◆ I. KOUTSOUKOS, President of ADEDY
- ◆ Representatives of the political parties:
 - ◆ Panhellenic Socialist Movement (PASOK), ST. MANIKAS - MHP
 - ◆ New Democracy (ND), EV. MEIMARAKIS - MHP
 - ◆ Communist Party (KKE), E. TYRTIRAKIS
 - ◆ Coalition of the Left (SYN), M. PAPAGIANAKIS- MEP
 - ◆ Democratic and Social Movement (DIKKI), P. KALOGERATOS

■ 2nd Session

Chair: K. BERDEBE, E. JORDANOPOULOS, G. SKIADIOTIS, CH. SMIRNOTIS, A. KARIGIANNIS,
M. FRAGIADAKI

- ◆ Speeches of the participants
- ◆ Coffee Break
- ◆ Speeches of the participants
- ◆ Speeches of the participants
- ◆ Discussion
- ◆ Reception at the City Hall by the Mayor of Athens, D. Avramopoulos

Friday 25/02/2000

■ 3rd Session

Chair: TH. PATRIKIOS, A. DIMOULAS, P. MANOLAKOS, CH. PAPADEAS, I. TSVGDULIS, CH. THEOCHARI

- ◆ Speeches of the participants
- ◆ Coffee Break
- ◆ Speeches of the participants
- ◆ Closure of the Conference

THE END OF THE CONFERENCE

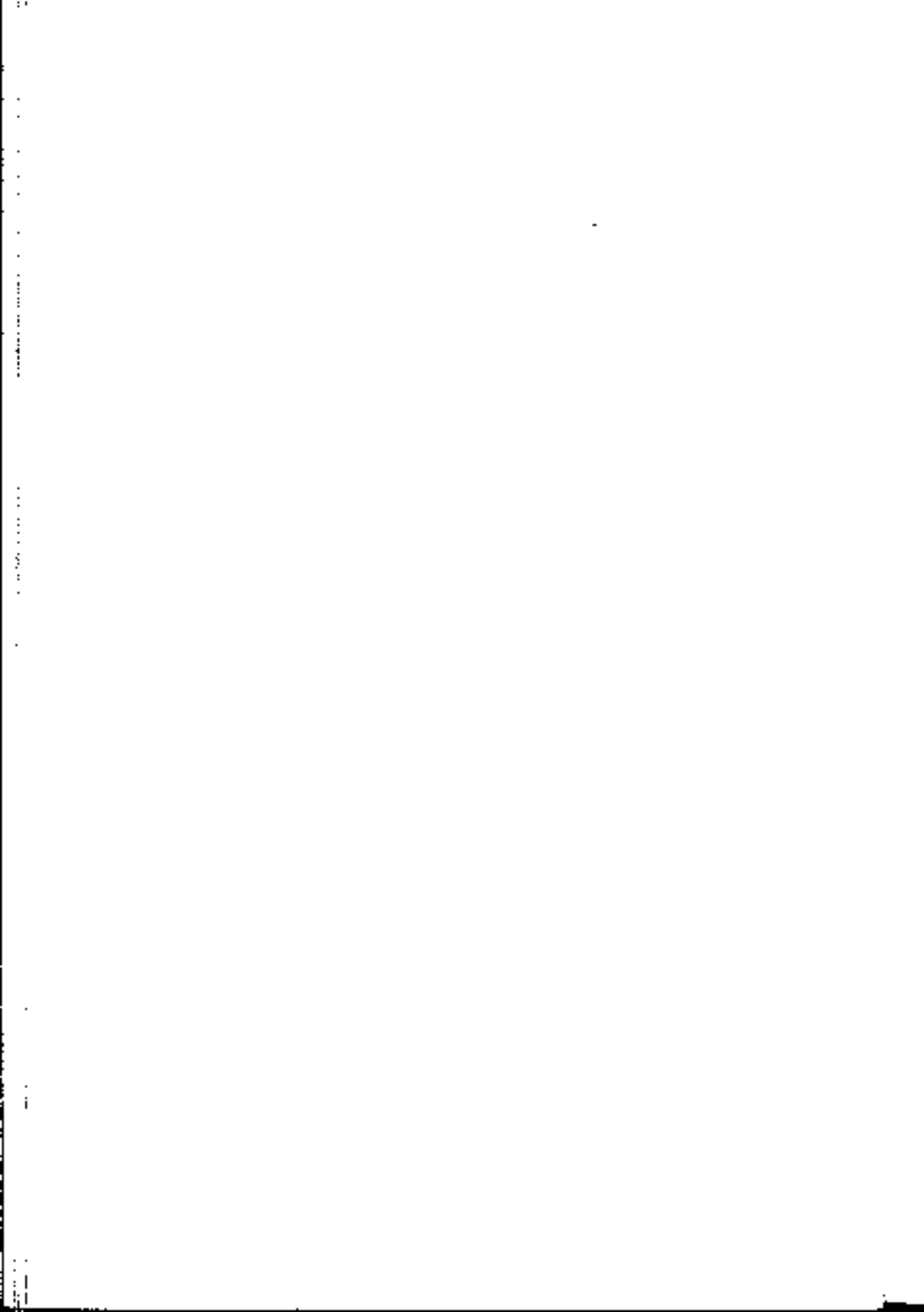


1st Day 24-2-2000

1st Session

Chair: GR. FELONIS, PH. TAVRIS, P. SOFOS, K. GOUTZAMANTIS, E. MOUTAFIS, S. SALOUFAKOU
(Chairperson)

- | | |
|-------------|---|
| 09:00-09:05 | Arrival of the participants |
| | ◆ S. SALOUFAKOU, Secretary of International and Public Relations of EKA |
| 09:05-09:35 | ◆ Opening Speech, GR. FELONIS, President of EKA |
| | Greeting Speeches by the: |
| 09:35-09:40 | ◆ AP. KAKLAMANTIS, President of the Hellenic Parliament |
| 09:40-09:45 | ◆ A. DIAMANTOPOULOU, Member of the European Commission |
| 09:45-09:50 | ◆ M. PAPAIDANOU, Minister of Labour |
| 09:50-09:55 | ◆ E. BESBEA, Prefect of Athens |
| 09:55-10:00 | ◆ D. AVRAMPDPOULOS, Mayor of Athens |
| 10:00-10:05 | ◆ CHR. POLYZOGOPPOULOS, President of GSEE |
| 10:05-10:10 | ◆ I. KOITSOUKOS, President of ADEDY |
| 10:10-10:15 | ◆ Panhellenic Socialist Movement (PASOK), ST. MANIKAS - MHP |
| 10:15-10:20 | ◆ New Democracy (ND), EV. METMARAKIS - MHP |
| 10:20-10:25 | ◆ Communist Party (KKE), E. TYRTIRAKIS |
| 10:25-10:30 | ◆ Coalition of the Left (SYN), M. PAPAGIAMAKIS - MEP |
| 10:30-10:35 | ◆ Democratic and Social Movement (DIKKI), P. KALOGERATOS |



1st SESSION

CHAIRPERSON: STAVI SALOUFAKOU, Secretary of International and Public Relations

To begin with, you have come from very far away to do us the honour of attending the conference organized by the Labour Centre of Athens, you, our colleagues of the 31 delegations from European capitals.

Mr President of the Parliament, honorable Members of the Hellenic Parliament, Mme. Prefect, honorable President of GSEE and ADEDY, dear representatives of the political parties, we would like to begin by thanking you for your presence here today.

Before starting we would like to thank the sponsors of our conference, who gave us the financial support to make it a reality, namely: Mrs. Spiliopoulou from the Workers' Welfare Foundation who undertook the major part of the conference expenses, Mr. Evstratoglou from DAED (Labour Force Employment Organisation), Mr. Rapanos from OTE (State Telecommunications Company), Mr. Papavassiliou from EYDAP (Water Supply Company), and Mr. Apostolopoulos from the Bank of Attica.

We hope that this conference we have organized with the title "The right to work, for the trade unions at the dawn of the 21st Century", will be able to bring all of us, who are active in the trade union movement in Europe, closer so that we can face the problems of globalization together.

In today's session, as you have seen in the program, the President of the Republic, Mr. Costis Stefanopoulos, was to have been present, but two days ago he informed us that he is unable to join us. The Mayor of Athens, Mr. Avramopoulos, because he is at this moment being interviewed by CNN, will receive the foreign delegations this evening at City Hall, but he will unfortunately be unable to follow our opening, proceedings, and neither will Mrs. Diamantopoulou, the Greek European Commission member, since she had to be abroad today, will join us tomorrow.

The political parties are represented as follows:

From PASOK is Mr Manikas MHP, from the New Democracy is Mr Melmarakis MHP, from the Communist Party is Mr Tirtyrakis, from the party of SYN is Mr Papayannakis MEP and from the party of Democratic and Social Movement is Mr Kalogeratos. I would like to invite my colleague Gr. Felonis to take the floor.



Chair of the 1st Session:

From the left: K. Goutzamanis, Vice-President of EKA, Ph. Tavrís, Deputy President of EKA, Gr. Felonis, President of EKA, P. Sofos, General Secretary of EKA, E. Moutafis, Deputy Gen. Secretary of EKA, St. Saloufakou, Secr. of International and Public Relations of EKA.

□ GRIGORIS FELONIS, President of EKA



The President of EKA, Gr. Felonis

Ladies and Gentlemen,

On behalf of all the members of the Administration of the Athens Labour Centre, I wish to express my appreciation for your response to our invitation as well as to thank you for attending our conference.

The very fact that so many colleagues from the Labour Unions of most European capital cities have been willing to come to Athens, is a clear reflection of the deep concern and of the sensitivity of the Labour Movement, towards the issues on our agenda, over the next two days, an interest and concern, I strongly believe are shared by our distinguished guests.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

The main features of the 19th century were imagination, high ideals as well as the first organized challenges of social establishments.

Then, there was the 20th century, an era to be remembered for grand visions, high hopes, big deceptions as well as major conflicts. Millions of citizens struggled passionately and even sacrificed their lives to the cause of more **Democracy, Freedom and Social Justice**. As far as the European Continent is concerned, such efforts among other resulted in the creation of the Welfare State in the form we came to experience over the '50s and '60s.

Crossing the threshold of the new century, however, one cannot help but feel distressed over the fact that, contrary to what the case was at the beginning of the previous century, the high ideologies which triggered high expectations among wide sectors of the working classes, now seem to be on the decline; the same is true for such social institutions as the family, the Labour Movement, the Students' Movement as well as for the various Feminist Movements.

Most particularly, in large cities the acute problems stemming from unemployment and the shrinking purchasing power, experienced by the greater working classes, has led to such phenomena as individualism and solitude, which in turn foments marginalisation and social exclusion. As a result

all the above seriously threatens further deterioration to a truly marginal society.

The European Model of the Welfare State has incessantly been shrinking, as a result of restrictive policies implemented within the context of the Maastricht Treaty, policies incorporated in decisions imposed by the major financial centres in downright disregard to the opposing will of the people of the European Union.

This is an era of corporate over-concentration and mergers, a time when the possibilities made available through technology and information are not placed at the service of human beings: rather, all such possibilities are solely exploited to the purpose of enhancing profit in complete disregard of major social problems. This has led to the ongoing process of substitution of manpower by machines, a process that causes more and more people to join the ranks of the unemployed. Further still, this very fact becomes an argument in the hands of employers who typically invoke it to force unskilled workers as well as all those employed in professionally inflated sectors of the labour market to consent to wages far lower than those officially stipulated in their employment contracts, hence the ever-increasing population of the so-called "Nouveaux-Pauvres".

Within the otherwise advanced European Union, such situation is currently reflected through the five million (5,000,000) homeless, twenty million (20,000,000) unemployed, forty million (40,000,000) part-time workers, not to forget the sixty million (60,000,000) people living below the poverty line.

In a trend that is mainly visible in major European cities, unemployed people and immigrants, expatriates and gypsies, handicapped persons, drug addicts and AIDS sufferers, have come to populate a society of destitute, marginalised people, "citizens" with no rights, no opportunities and no hope for social re-integration. So much inequality understandably triggers such phenomena as xenophobia and racism. It is indeed all too easy to put across the message that foreigners are entirely to blame for so many jobs lost to alien hands, as well as for increasing crime rates, not to mention the feeling of insecurity deliberately fomented by certain mass media organizations which, blinded by the zeal for higher popularity rates neither care or show any regard for the fact that through their stance they actually shape views and affect opinions.

If we are to cope with such circumstances, all National Governments in conjunction with the Trade Unions, assisted by the cultural intelligentsia have to make their presence felt. We are to diagnose the causes that create such phenomena and indeed spare no effort in trying to develop, adopt and duly implement solutions to the problems.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

Unemployment has been and remains the most serious social problem of our time. A problem that is most and above all intensified as a result of the new structuring model of the production process within the context of globalization of the economies. Victims of such phenomenon are young people between the ages of 18 and 25, women of all ages as well as all those who are approaching retirement age; on the whole, most of these people are also long-term unemployed (i.e. jobless for more than 12 months consecutively). Moreover, most of them lack any professional experience, have never worked, possess of no specific knowledge and - unskilled as they are - come to be excluded from the labour market.

Another factor that contributes to the intensification of this particular phenomenon is the implementation of long-term restrictive policies by practically all developed countries, resulting in reduced demand, as a consequence of shrinking purchasing power among workers. Less demand means lower production which in turn leads to a reduction in employment.

If we are to endorse Keynes' theory - all the more since it has been corroborated through practice - unemployment may be reduced if active demand stimulation policies are adopted, which in turn would positively stimulate production. An increase in production results in increased employment, in what is essentially a "multiplier" effect.

Nevertheless, the most critical factor which intensifies the problem of unemployment is the increase in manpower in rates much higher than those of the increase in the number of jobs available. Increase in manpower has amongst others been the result of higher life expectancy and a general improvement of living conditions. One should bear in mind that until the early '50s, average life expectancy in developed countries was in the region of 55 years. Moreover, the entry into the labour market of more female workers rendered the problem even more acute, an influx cause partly as a result of emancipation and partly as a consequence of higher financial needs of modern families. Last but not least, economic migration - mostly from non-developed countries further aggravates the situation.

For a truly comprehensive approach of this latter phenomenon however, it is only fair that one looks into the factors that cause such people to migrate. A superficial look into the issue would only lead us to erroneously classify such people as "problematic", whereas what we ought to do is try to understand the very magnitude of the problems that those men and women have faced both in their homeland and in their adoptive countries. Such lack of understanding inevitably fosters concepts all too easily adopted by Far-Right and Neo-Nazi political parties, that keep sprouting up nowadays in various European countries, thereby engendering direct risks for a new Holocaust. Speaking of the Holocaust, that was by no means an accident in History: rather, it came to be because some people actively participated in it, whereas some others chose to close their eyes to the ordeal. Whatever racist manifestations there may be around us, we should lose no time in reacting and preventing any division within our societies; otherwise, a new genocide could occur. We have to react, right here and right now!

All Social Movements, along with national Governments and Democratic Political Parties will have to make a point of informing Society about the reasons that caused such people to leave their ancestral homes in search of a new homeland or simply a living wage. We have to explain that the history of humankind abounds in migrations - after all, this is how our own peoples came to be; this is how our homelands were created, as a result of peaceful relocation or even invasion campaigns.

Nowadays, migrations manifest themselves in different ways, due as they are to such factors as civil war, genocidal persecutions of specific ethnic minorities, or even the collapse of the economy of certain states that result in the annihilation of all production and financial activities. These are usually colonized territories turned independent states that were rich in resources although much of their wealth was looted and shipped abroad to supply the industry of developed colonial powers. This is why the colonial powers prospered more and more each day whilst the countries from where the raw material came were condemned to remain underdeveloped without much hope for economic recovery, all the more since most of the latter are hopelessly debt-ridden.

First we need to take a closer look into the problems that immigrants usually face in their adoptive countries. More than often, immigrants enter their promised land illegally, are employed illegally, have no social security or insurance and are forced to consent to low remuneration and adverse working conditions. Immigrant employed illegally are the most prone to suffering labour accidents; even those benefiting from legal employment status are usually employed in posts all-too-often scorned by national citizens and always at impossibly low wages. Nevertheless, we have to admit to a fundamental fact, and that is that



employment of such people generates income, a large proportion of which is spent in the very country where it is produced - which means that such workers are also consumers contributing to the increase of production, thereby sharing in the effort towards the development of their adoptive countries.

Besides, many European Countries owe their post-War development to cheap imported labour. If an end is to be put to this illegal situation and the inhuman conditions plaguing the life of so many workers, the European Labour Unions have to vindicate the immediate legalization of such people in whichever country they happen to be and irrespective of the ways they may have entered and settled. We simply have to understand that illegal, socially unsecured employment is not only the cruelest form of exploitation: more than that, this is the worst form of a typical work.

The Greek Trade Unions lost no time in taking an active part in this effort, demanding and eventually obtaining that status legitimization processes were launched. Still, the effort will have to be pursued and eventually completed with an institutionalization of a specific immigration policy, such as to determine the terms and conditions to govern the entry, legalization and social security of alien workers, thereby averting the creation of a two-speed society.

To deal with the deeper causes that foment immigration, however, we have to act immediately and universally. The counterbalance of economic globalization will have to be a globalization of policies promoting principles and values, themselves fostering a true consolidation of democracy throughout planet Earth. We have to demand that debt claims towards poor countries be written-off. Debt-ridden countries should be freed from their financial burdens and further discouraged from resorting to the contracting of new loans, unless we want to see them repeat the mistakes of the past. We have to push for a democratization of the World Bank as well as an upgrading of the role of the United Nations along with a democratization of its operations.

We have to fight for the creation of a Universal Social Rights Organization such as to operate on the model of the World Trade Organization. Such an Organization will have to be able to manage a particular fund to be established by way of collection of a percentage of the overall products produced and services rendered throughout the world, with complementary financing by EU member states as well as by other financially developed countries. Such fund will then have to be put to use for the support of specific social policies in those countries most in need thereof, the ultimate aim being to build up a truly ecumenical policy of social solidarity.

Management of the economy cannot be done in isolation from the management of society, which is why the rules upon which an economy is meant to operate will primarily have to be governed by the principles of social justice and environmental awareness, hence the need for a maintenance of balance between human activities and natural resources management. Our environment and the need to protect it are crucial and urgent issues, with a serious impact on society. Some of this impact we have felt all too intensely, both in the past and also more recently with the cyanide spill in river Danube. It is thus no exaggeration to say that some other such events are certain to affect future attitudes and options for us all.

The Labour Unions movement, together with scientific, cultural and political agencies as well as local authorities and associations should all be sensitized towards demanding that rules be observed so that production is developed in ways that are ecologically correct. After all, it has been asserted time and time again -and how appropriately!- that the environment is not something we inherited from our ancestors: rather, it is something we borrowed from our children. Bearing this axiom in mind, we have every interest in preserving our natural milieu.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

The most important problem facing society today is **unemployment**.

One of the roles of this conference is to provide a forum for discussion on this major issue.

It must be stressed that to manage the employment issue, working time and technology must be used to positively assist mankind rather than work to man's detriment.

We have to agree in theory that technology must be used not to eliminate workers but to reduce working hours, to reduce production time. The time saved could be used more profitably by the worker to increase his leisure time and to improve his quality of life.

Above all, if the number of working hours is reduced and appropriately institutionalized, it can generate jobs, thereby addressing - however partially - the problem of unemployment. This is why such policies should be the centerpiece of vindication not only of Labour Unions but also of society as a whole, with an ultimate goal to establish a thirty-five hour labour working week without a reduction of remuneration. The first step in such a direction was taken in France, where the thirty-five hour working week was institutionalized. By adopting the same procedure, other countries could send the message that if societies wish to stand a chance for the future, they should firstly learn to survive in the present: a condition for such survival is that employment is ensured for all. The French dared and already positive results are being shown.

If the Greek political parties are sincere in showing their concern on the unemployment issue, then a step that could be taken is the proposal of legislation to implement the 35 hour working week.

The initial implementation of this plan could start gradually with the companies listed on the Stock Exchange and be expanded to other areas. It is well known that companies listed on the Stock Exchange make enormous profits but pay less in taxes.

They are capital and technology intensive having lower labour costs. It is time for them to share their profits with society by creating new jobs.

The road to guaranteed full employment is long, difficulties in the process could be overcome more easily if we set out on the basis of consensus and indeed agree on the principle that economy has been created to serve humans and not the other way around! Bearing this in mind, both our actions and choices will have to be human-oriented.

Europe is badly in need of a boost in investments such as to foster the creation of new jobs, investments to the benefit of all European Countries without exceptions. For such policies to materialize, however, it will be necessary for national Governments to overcome the obstacles put by central banks and major financial centers through their persistence in pursuing restrictive policies, undermining labour relationships, abolishing rights so painstakingly vindicated and obtained, pushing for the prevalence of the much scorned part-time employment and other forms of flexible or atypical forms of employment, their ultimate goal being to downplay the role of social security.

Competitiveness may not be pursued by shrinking salaries or over-flexibilizing labour relationships; rather, it can be envisaged by taking full advantage of knowledge and skills, the initiatives and creative potential of workers, in combination with a rationalized restructuring of the enterprise and its technical modernization.

It must be understood that for the human potential to be fulfilled, remuneration will have to be improved. The role that human potential plays must be acknowledged both in the areas of production and the economy.

On a more general basis, training is necessary in order, to human potential be in a position to be up to the challenge of a changing world and the new conditions that technological developments entail. Still, with 20,000,000 unemployed and 70,000,000 people living below the poverty line in the European Union alone, what is more urgent is to ensure the essential conditions for the subsistence of all citizens. Such conditions essentially consist of ensuring a guaranteed minimum income along with due implementation of measures fostering the social rehabilitation of such person through the labor market. If an unemployed person is expected to be at all times appropriately trained and available for employment, the state is obliged to ensure that all the necessary conditions are in place for employment to be possible.

Dear colleagues,

The centerpiece of our vindication as we cross the threshold into the new millennium should be the demand for a redistribution of universal wealth to the benefit of workers, through policies that reflect the needs and expectations of the society. It is indeed a chalking to see that a mere 20% of the Earth's population consumes 75% of the wealth produced, whilst the remaining 80% consumes 25%.

Still, the more we discuss such issues, the more we are likely to become concerned about the question of unemployment and the easier it will be to convince those who determine our fates to make decisions such as addressing the problem of unemployment. Unless they do so, the unemployed, the immigrants as well as those with a steady job, all of us will be engaging in uniform and appropriately coordinated struggles to impose our cause and have our righteous demands met.

We promote dialogue as a constructive means of approach. We are prepared to engage in debate if this is the way to convince people of the righteousness of our views. If, however, we are met with a refusal to accept what is self-proven, then our stance as a Living Labour Class movement is to adopt a combative attitude and fight for our rights.

We are struggling towards a consolidation of universal peace because we know what misery war can engender. Our Balkan colleagues have all too recently felt the ordeal that warfare entailed in Yugoslavia. They saw infants and old people perish, hospitals and hospices bombed; they saw the feats of mankind being destroyed; they see yesterday's friends becoming today's foes and ever since they have been experiencing the sinister face of poverty and misery on a daily basis.

We know only too well that the only ones ever to benefit from warfare are those who have political and financial power, the merchants and weapon manufacturers. Those who lose are the peoples who see the product of their efforts wasted to supplies in weaponry and ammunitions rather than spent on development and welfare. Now, if we all decide to share in the effort, we stand a chance of reforming our world. We are many, and indeed we have the capacity of convincing or even hinder the few.

PEACE - FREEDOM - SOCIAL JUSTICE ; this is the battle cry that unites us, the slogan to inspire our struggle.

We have had the initiative of hosting this event at the foothills of the Acropolis, the idea being to send a clear message to our colleagues, our respective national Governments and the major financial centers that we are determined and prepared to wage the fight, all of us united, for a better future with less poverty, less misery, more smiles and by all means more social safety and security.



The Minister of Labour M. Papaioannou, the President of the Hellenic Parliament Ap. Kaklamanis, the Prefect of Athens E. Besbes, Deputy Mayor N. Giatrakas

APOSTOLOS KAKLAMANIS, President of the Hellenic Parliament

Mr. Minister, Mme. Prefect, Messrs. Presidents of federations, esteemed colleagues and friends, Mr. President of the Labour Centre of Athens, our dear friends, representatives of foreign unions who honor our country with your presence, I would like on behalf of the Hellenic Parliament to congratulate the Labour Centre of Athens and all the unions from all the cities who are taking part in this conference. It is an exceptional initiative, not only because of such a truly scalding issue as unemployment, jobs, the related problem of foreign immigrants, but because it is a substantial step towards the necessary cooperation among unions, of the working class and workers of all countries, since I see here on the list of participating unions representatives from countries in which these matters, in most of these countries, are especially intense.

I see the representatives from our neighbour Albania; the workers there indeed have extremely serious problems which were aggravated by the recent developments in our region. The same happens for the workers from Yugoslavia and other neighbouring countries.

Beyond the specific matters they have the problems resulting from the war, the threat of which as it appears is active and present. It is not only the devastation sowed by those who decided from a great distance and from the same distance now follow the consequences; as a matter of fact they very quickly forgot the promises they gave for tens of millions of dollars for the reconstruction of the regions of Bosnia, Kosovo, and others.

I am glad because through these demonstrations and these efforts, there is confirmation, and I hope it will develop and very soon blaze up, of a movement of solidarity, international solidarity of all workers, not simply support for the workers of one country, but for the workers of other countries and their problems, the creation of a potential, mass, autonomous, forceful union movement which will be able to rouse the workers of Europe as well as of the peoples outside the European region, in the face of the great threat that exists to rights, to the fate of workers, the negative side of globalization, to the degree that it is limited to the globalization of markets, to the globalization of the economy.

This type of movement I believe to be absolutely necessary, and the base and starting point of this movement must be this workers movement. It is a movement of the people especially of small countries, because the target of the big international interests, interests which as we are informed by the data coming to light, some of these interests, some of these international forces, have economic power and political influence greater and more powerful than many countries both inside and outside Europe which are today considered powerful.

And the target of these interests is of course the workers, their future, their interests, because as the workers domain, the workers prospects are constricted, the multinationals profits increase, these great economic powers which today dominate Europe and the rest of the world.

Another stronghold of the people, especially the small nations, is a target: the national state. These two forces are under fire, the strongholds which are unions for workers, national states for the people, are under fire in the name of principles which cannot but be accepted by all of humanity.

The protection of minorities and human rights. Who, who is not blind, who does not care in a totally selfish way for his own interests only -and this does not belong to the common people, to the workers, nor to the people- does not stand by every effort for the safeguarding of minority rights, the protection of human rights?

But here the target of this banner, such as hands which on their own level, the state level, of their own authority, have shown up to now that in no way have they respected these principles and these rights, is subversion of this stronghold of the people which is called the national state.

In the same way the principle of development, the great goal of economic development and human progress, is used exactly to subvert power, solidarity, vision of the workers. In the name of development the workers must lower the banners of their struggles, the claims for their rights.

So it is these two basic questions in my opinion which necessitate our projection of this solidarity and these bonds of the people, of the workers.

And I remember at this moment, I believe it is very representative of how times have changed. As terms, conditions and framework of struggles and cooperation of workers and people have changed with these rapid changes, that in the beginning of the 1980's when I was Minister of Labour I was introducing



to Parliament the law regarding the organization of the Labour Movement in our country and the safeguarding of trade union freedom of the workers, in the chapter regarding unemployment there were many reservations, but in the union movement itself no particular interest in the mention of sympathy strikes.

For Greece to declare a sympathy strike in support of workers of another country neither interested the unions particularly, nor was it of particular interest to our society.

For this reason it was provided for in the law that such a strike could take place only following decision by the third-degree organ, and if I am not mistaken in the past decade this didn't happen even once.

I am under the impression that there was a work stoppage of a few hours duration in support of the workers of Chile, which didn't have a large turnout.

What do these things mean, dear friends? That times truly have changed and that the labour movement within its national boundaries will not accomplish anything unless it creates a movement in every country, in all of Europe, in the whole world; if it creates a front which is very powerful and without cracks, until then, I do not know if even then from a position of power, but in any case from some appreciable position, to discuss with the other side and to demand its rights, so as to promote the general interests.

It is these impressions which come from a person who does not believe in conflict, that it is this only and inevitably, and that it won't happen except by conflict within national and international society, for something better to follow.

I know, however, that when on one side there is absolute power, as we see in international relations in the decision regarding war and peace, in the role of international organizations, such as the Security Council of the United Nations, in the prestige and power of international laws, when we see that in all these questions what rules is power, and when we see that economic power, subjects of international entities, has been maximized to an extent that was unthinkable up to a few years ago, there is nothing left but the only answer, the strengthening of solidarity, the transition from the level of public relations which characterized the relations of unions a few years ago, to the level of real solidarity, real bonds, real cooperation, common decisions and common action.

I consider absolutely indispensable, an indispensable prerequisite, if we wish to speak theoretically. Concerning either employment, unemployment, dealing with racism, making use of the new forms and relations of work which technological evolution, the great revolution in the economic area of technologies offer, so that not only the workers, the unionized workers, but all people, all peoples, can look forward to a happier future and for Europe and man not to retreat to times, which at this moment this retreat may seem unthinkable, but directing myself to trade unionists from our neighboring countries at least, we know that this retreat as we lived it during the events of war in the Balkans is not so unthinkable.

It may be at the gates, and simply some remain apathetic because they are far from the present front of these negative developments and they don't imagine them, as our neighbors did not imagine them ten years ago.

With my wishes that you enjoy a complete and substantial, beyond the exchange of opinions, success in your conference, I thank you for your kindness in inviting me, and also all of you who so politely listened to me. Thank you very much.



MILTIADES PAPAIOANNOU, Minister of Labour

Ladies and gentlemen, first of all I wish to welcome on behalf of the Greek government the foreign delegations which compose our today's conference, a conference which of course is being held following the initiative of the Labour Centre of Athens, but I would say has the character of a European or international conference, regarding the future of work. Congratulations from us as well, because I consider it is praiseworthy and useful for all of us.

It is recognized, ladies and gentlemen, that the current social problem, not only of Europe but I would say of the entire world, is **unemployment and social exclusion**. The greatest challenge we face in the visible future, on the horizon I would say of a new generation, is how to secure social protection for all citizens and to combine it with the provision for employment and government insurance. In what way?

I believe that we need a new vision and that vision demands the formation of cohesive policies which will build the new social state. We must rise to the challenges. Challenges which arise from globalization and the new changes in the area of technology.

Our country also, as well as each country separately, I believe, must tailor a culture with social and economic prosperity, and this is our goal.

The production model is changing. The new technology, the smart machine, do not replace only hands anymore. Many times they replace the brain also, and from these things the working procedure is transformed.

New kinds of jobs are gaining ground, such as teleworking. The boundaries between a dependent relationship and self-employment are becoming blurred, with whatever this means for the goal of full employment as well as for the safeguarding of social-insurance systems.

That is how things are. The goal that we are all serving, that of **full employment**, has been opened to doubt, and in any case mass employment has been opened to complete doubt.

All of these facts are accompanied by large population movements, primarily from the extremely poor south to the wealthy north. I believe that in the next decade the streams of immigration will be the factors which to a great extent will decide developments.

Let me remind you here that in our country alone we have over 600,000 economic immigrants. Thus, all countries, Europe especially, all social agencies, are confronted with a big dilemma: what are they going to do with the new generations of unemployed as well as those which progress itself excludes from the production procedure.

Today in Europe as you know a European strategy for employment has been or is being tailored. It is the big turn that took place following the decisions of the summit committees in Amsterdam and Luxembourg three years ago. Seven summit committees placed on their agenda as central matters the question of the battle against unemployment and the strengthening of employment. Particularly during this period the Portuguese presidency has made it a central issue, and in March, the 23rd and 24th of March, the extraordinary Summit Committee is meeting which is called upon to make important decisions regarding these issues which lead in Europe to both actual and social convergence.

In our country for several years now, a few years, there is a completed plan for new and effective employment policies, which, however, it is understood have a European dimension and harmonization. The country has now a national action plan for employment which is based on high rates of development, lifelong learning, support of entrepreneurship, especially in small and medium-sized

businesses which provide most jobs, energetic employment policies, and policies of equal opportunity for young people and women.

I shall not give an accounting today. I shall only say that in the period 1996-2000, up to today that is, we had an increase in jobs in Greece, 145,000 more on the positive side, which at the end of the year 2000 will surpass 200,000. Our goal is approximately 65,000 jobs during the year 2000.

And of course the increase of jobs by itself is not sufficient to provide an answer to the big problem of unemployment, but it is the best formula, and today all estimations by the responsible agencies are that unemployment is entering the countdown phase.

Allow me here to underline three points which I believe to be decisive for the future of work, which does not mean that I ignore the rest.

First. The first, ladies and gentlemen, is **investment in knowledge**. The problem which we find and will find before us is connected to the nature of the work, and if this nature is compatible to the new technological model.

A policy for combatting unemployment which looks to reproduction of the old worker not only does not solve the problem but leads to long-term unemployment and social exclusion.

The unemployed person or the young person in order to enter the production procedure must have the skills, the knowledge demanded by the new circumstances. And here I would like to emphasize that according to new estimations arrived at by way of analyses and measurements the new worker, primarily of the wealthy north, will need to change occupations four or up to five times before completing his working life.

As a result we lend a lot of weight to lifelong learning for workers, both old and new. So education, knowledge and preparation from now on will be the primary criterion for the future course of employment for workers.

We want, then, for the worker to be employable, ready for entry and re-entry into the labour market, and we create all the opportunities for workers to enter primarily the new occupations.

For this reason in the Community Support Framework, a large package, the first priority, two billion drachmas, will go to education, beginning and continued, beyond, of course, other activities which have as their goal the development of employment.

A second element is **the decrease in working hours**. This is a necessity which should and must be connected with the increase of employment in order to secure jobs for more workers.

The demand for the 35-hour week without wage cuts is a strong demand by the European unions, but I would say also a strong proposal by the European socialists. We are in agreement and we are fashioning the conditions for its application in our country. I refer to conditions because it is apparent and self-understood that a generalized application can lead to opposite results.

Moreover, all countries are proceeding in this way (and here I refer to the governments of the countries that believe in the 35-hour week). We do not want it to be detrimental to competitiveness and by extension to employment. On the contrary, we want it to contribute to the increase of employment.

We do not want it to destabilize labour relations, but to be connected to the flexibility and security of workers. And naturally we are also starting from the beginning, that especially in our country we don't speak of a 35-hour week with decrease in wages. For this reason we prefer its application within the institution of collective bargaining and agreements at the business level.



I would like to stress here that in our country collective bargaining and collective agreements have the force of law, and many times above the law and they are binding on governments and the courts. Already in quite a few businesses there are agreements, pilot application in others, therefore the 35-hour week as a starting point in our country is a fact.

We encourage its application by providing motivation to businesses which will at the same time create new jobs. Already a few days ago I signed a decision saying that those businesses which will apply the 35-hour week and will hire workers, that is to say that the application of the 35-hour week will not be accompanied by firings, because we are interested in increasing new jobs, will be granted a subsidy for the newly hired, and for a length of time, that is to say in duration, but also as regards the level of the subsidy.

A third point which I referred to previously is the support of healthy entrepreneurship. Especially the support of small and middle-sized businesses. There is a package of measures; I shall not expand on this point.

I proceed to the fourth point, which I believe to be especially important for the mapping out and application of employment policies. This is the role of the social partners, or if you prefer the social opponents.

The government believes that this role has great potential and for this reason upgrades the role of the social partners, and until now has excellent or approaching excellent cooperation with them.

There is the pact of trust of 2000, there is a series of regularizations in the areas of labour and insurance which were accomplished in close cooperation with the social partners. They had and will have even greater role in the fashioning of a national action plan for employment, but not only in fashioning but in realizing it and controlling it. Because the national action plan is not a general wish list; it is an action plan with goals, goals which are measurable and appreciable regarding its 21 actions.

Further I want to say that the social partners in our country have taken the lead regarding the large question of unemployment, and that is the truth. Because many times in Europe, we both sit at a lot of tables, and we hear wishes.

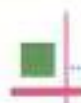
To begin with they have formed and created the employment and professional training account of LAEK within the framework of DAED, which finances primarily training within an enterprise, but also works out significant employment programs.

I consider it my obligation to applaud from this podium the agreement of the social partners to put into effect two new employment programs which will be directed toward the older unemployed, over 55 years.

One is the program for guarding schools, which is accomplished of course in cooperation with the government who will provide incentives for the employment of over 600 unemployed, especially older ones, for guarding schools.

And the second one, the more important, is the securing of the payment of insurance contributions for 12,000 long-term unemployed who lack up to five years for retirement, because it is very difficult for these people to be rehired by companies. This is a tangible contribution on the part of the social partners regarding the matter of unemployment.

I also want to say that we are cooperating with them in order to make use of their contributions to the new sources of employment, which we call social employment, and where here the social partners



can play a primary role. Because I believe, ladies and gentlemen, that the fight against unemployment cannot be a governmental issue only; it must be an issue for all the country's production forces, the social agencies, the Prefecture, and Local Authorities, all the expressions of organized society.

I would like further to add here, prior to closing, that the new forms of work have their own consequences, negative ones until now, on the social-security systems. It is very difficult to control labor when it is not carried out at a specific point in the production unit as we knew it up until now: in the factory, in the office, but it takes place from a distance, and this is a form of work, beginning with teleworking which we will find before us. That's why I said that the boundaries are blurred between dependent employment and self-employment.

This has troubled us a lot and I want you to be aware that with the new law governing employment relations which we voted for in Parliament three years ago, these informal types of employment were legislated as formal, and already at this moment we are attempting to have all these now formal types of employment, even if in theory they are characterized as informal, to be brought into the country's social-security system.

Because for us, yes to flexibility, yes to adaptation to the new situation as I said before, but security comes first, and not only social security for workers, in the long run.

Finishing, I would like to express my optimism regarding the future of work. It is apparent that during this transitional period all of humankind has this problem, because as I said, new technology is changing things.

But this is a transitional period for humankind. It can't be so much in the long run. We will all be judged by how well we adapt to the new situation concerning time, speeds, and I established the framework previously, the keystones of policy to which we believe we should give weight in order to shape the future.

We believe that in the new information age technological change will be controlled, will be properly regulated by the social forces and will be put to use as a force for freeing up the world of work and creation, as a force which will lead to a new quality of life and I would say to a permanent and strong prosperity.

Because this is the goal it is necessary for us to all work together, and I believe that if we all work together we will meet our goal as quickly as possible.

Thank you.



ELENI BESBEA, Prefect of Athens

After thanking the Labour Centre of Athens for their especially flattering invitation to attend here today, I must express my certainty regarding the completeness and seriousness of the subject matter of today's conference, and I believe that no one will disagree that if we summarize the subject matter one solitary phrase will result: **Unemployment, preparation, training, employment.**

It is a matter of major importance. Moreover, the presence here of the President of Parliament, of the Minister of Labour, of the representatives of the political parties, of local authorities, means that in fact today's subject is of vital importance and we must all declare that this, however, refers to each policy practiced by the central authorities.

The well known difficulty and weakness of self-government and especially the Prefectural Authorities, because I have the honor to represent the Athens Prefecture, is by now a given, but not accepted on the part of the Prefectures.

For this reason we are demanding, we will continue to be demanding, for the strengthening of the institution, not only for the much-discussed responsibility, but for a tangible possibility to plan, to schedule, and to apply measures aimed at reducing permanent unemployment, an obligation we have vis-a-vis the citizens for the safeguarding of their rights and interests.

Development is considered the magic word and it has been consecrated as a cure for the reduction of unemployment, for wiping it out. God help us if we place all our hopes for wiping out unemployment in development. Under the best of circumstances it is a utopia. Development by itself cannot work miracles. Moreover, in the European Union as well the margins for increasing development have narrowed due to the orders of Maastricht, the reduction of debt, the interdependence of European economies and other factors.

Even if the rate of development were stable we would need over 30 years to absorb today's unemployment levels.

Therefore what is needed is a national planning which will not allow for overturning, backsliding, but only improvements. A planning which will be based on specific keystones and specific parameters.

Allow me briefly to mention some examples of these keystones and parameters. Local employment, local development. Mobilization of all agencies in each area, complete strategy in employment in such area. Support and maintaining of existing jobs with exploration for the creation of new jobs. Reduction of costs of work. Professional training with the prospect of continued education and training. Which means development based on specific axes and specific parameters.

Another keystone is the deep investigation in the public sector and generally in all services, for the real employment reserves of tomorrow. Special assistance to new areas of employment such as electronic, biotechnology, recycling of products, and others.

Assistance to new specializations such as reserves of under-sea deposits, the entrance of new technologies into hospitals, and others.

Specialized initiatives will have to be taken to create free employment zones for young people, especially in areas with high unemployment. And of course all of these accompanied by serious incentives to businesses.

And of course the assistance to small-to-medium sized businesses is necessary and imperative, finally satisfying their permanent and just demands, since they make up the basic cell of the Greek economy.

A matter which I believe will occupy the conference today is the deep investigation into the actual causes of the large tide of economic immigrants into our country. And with special emphasis, of course, on the illegal entry of the immigrants.

And succinctly, several questions which might occupy the conference today. It is how absorbable this immigration is by Greek society. Can there be a smooth coexistence? Could their long-term presence have the possibility of creating a minority problem in our country? Is crime related to immigration? Is it the cause of its development?

Ladies and gentlemen, the critical word which connects development with the handling of the question of unemployment is intelligent development. Rapid economic, technological, and educational development.

On the part of the Athens Prefecture we have the ability and the disposition to take part, with every suitable means, if and when our proposals are requested to be put to use, and this will be requested by us.

However, there are many such thoughts, proposals and solutions in the tank named Prefecture Authorities. Not theoretically but as a tangible reality. A reality the exploitation of which, with whatever good meaning is found in the term, we will claim and demand to be put to use by whichever government. Because the problem is located, and must be located, farther away, above and beyond political parties, farther away, above and beyond conflicts and oppositions, aiming at solutions and policies which if they do not eradicate the problem of employment will at least limit it.

And I wish to tell the Minister of Labour that the Prefecture of Athens has 3,740 institutionalized positions of labour and covers only 1940. The provocation for reducing unemployment is to fill these positions.

Thank you.

NIKOLAOS GIATRAKOS, Deputy Mayor of Athens

Mr Minister, Messrs. Members of Parliament, presidency of the Labour Centre of Athens, just a little while ago I found myself in the pleasant position of being here following Mr. Avramopoulos inability to attend, to deliver a standard greeting to the conference of the Labour Centre of Athens. It is a challenge for us, however, and we should accept it, to limit ourselves to a standard greeting.

Unemployment, employment, foreign immigrants, my dear friends participants in this conference, we have a heavy legacy from the last century. The last decades of the 1900's have seen the accumulation of huge problems on the national level, on the international level.

We, the representatives of Local Authorities, are the immediate receivers of all those problems, both as recipients of requests for employment and as agencies for solving the problem.

The Prefect of Athens who just spoke referred to certain things to which we agree completely, without there having been any prior preparation between us.

As far as the roles of the first and second degree Local Authorities are concerned, reference is very regularly heard to the fact that local societies are those who can have the key to the solution of the problem, and we ask ourselves how we can make this contribution to this huge problem when we are strangled by a series of disincentives to a positive if you will development of initiatives in the direction of social welfare or economic development.

And I am not speaking only of the Municipality of Athens; I am speaking of all the Local Authorities of the whole Greece towards whom we look through the Kapodistria Plan and other plans which exist within the framework of the European Union to undertake development initiatives.

We are struggling within a suffocating institutional framework, within a tax structure made up of disincentives as far as municipal enterprises are concerned which could provide a solution to many such problems, regarding conditions of credit financing, conditions of bank financing of our investments, and finally the organic problems faced by every such procedure.

These are problems which certainly indirectly appear to be connected to the problem we are concerned with and which will be the subject of the conference. That is to say if we wish really to find the key to the solution of the problem, we must face these problems within the framework of every effort which can lead to a positive way of dealing with the problems, we are always willing to cooperate.

What I wish to say finishing, because I mustn't take up more of the conference's time, is that as the Municipality of Athens we feel especially honored and pleased that you have invited chosen representatives of the union movement from European countries, and I welcome them on behalf of the City Council and on behalf of Mr. Avramopoulos, our Mayor, I wish them success in their proceedings and a pleasant stay in the capital which will host the Olympic Games in a few years.

In 2004 and until then Athens will be a huge construction site, and I do not mean only public works, athletic infrastructure and others, but a series if you will of activities which will absorb a large number of new jobs and positions for skilled workers.

In other words this is a ray of light, the fact that in a few years we must present the best that we can, as Athens, as an organizing committee, as the Olympic Committee, as Greece in the final analysis, and within this framework I believe that we can be optimistic that to a great degree the problems of work and employment will be dealt with, since we have already entered a phase of realization of major works. And again I salute the Chair and wish great success in his endeavors, in the business of the conference, and we as Athens are at your disposal for cooperation for the good of the workers, for the good of the union movement, and for the good of the citizens of Athens.

I thank you very much.

CHRISTOS POLYZOGOPOULOS, President of GSEE
(Greek General Confederation of Labour)



The President of GSEE, Chr. Polyzogopoulos

Ladies and gentlemen,

With great pleasure I take part in a procedure of top importance, a conference of this composition, which lends a content which I would say brings hope for the future, since we are called jointly to examine, approach, and arrive at positions and to promote these positions for the benefit of the people, for the benefit of our countries workers.

Ten years ago, in 1990, in this place, the Zappeion, we held the first conference of the network of the European capitals trade unions, which of course has been extended since then. Our topic was the problems in the big cities. And during that discussion we touched on many of the issues that occupy us. The issue of development, the issue of the environment, the issue of infrastructures, the issue of traffic circulation, and a list of social problems faced by workers, but not exclusively by workers.

That procedure had taken place in the middle of a big political upheaval. Political systems were collapsing, the new world order made its appearance. The trade union movement was reeling from these huge changes because it was not in a position to interpret at least easily, but I would say with difficulty, the developments in that region, in that time, and certainly what followed these developments.

The past decade presented huge changes, and not only those we hear about regarding technology and its use. It is in relation to the political and economic status which were shaped, and new facts are being shaped continually which have decisively influenced our life, decisively influenced economies, decisively influenced societies.

We tried then and saw some things and decided together to intervene regarding these to the extent that circumstances allowed. Because the political instability for example in the area of the wider region, and the economic and social instability resulting, did not always allow for a creative cooperation and effective intervention.



I shall not refer to the developments we had in our country and the changes which occurred after interventions by the union movement to demand it all. We have areas where the situation has been improved, we have areas where the situation has been worsened. The situation has improved regarding the economy and the economic indices of that period. In the area of income at the beginning of the 1990's the policy of unilateral austerity was intense and there were large losses of workers' income. Thereafter, and with interventions by the union movement it became possible to have a slight improvement in income, without the final balance at the end of the decade being positive. It continues to be negative both in the income and in the social areas, because during the decade past unemployment increased to a great degree, and there are many reasons for this; time does not allow me to expand on the subject. One of them is created by a part of the subject matter which we have to discuss in this conference today and tomorrow: the hundreds of thousands of foreign workers who came to Greece during the last decade, primarily from neighboring countries, and especially from our friend the country of Albania, and our friends the Albanian workers.

On this issue the unions made their own interventions on time, both for the legalization of the economic immigrants to our country, as well as for their working and social integration. The law covering the legalization of foreign workers in our country began with the intercession of the Greek unions. The Labour Centre of Athens played a special role in this matter, with initiatives they took for dealing with the problems of those workers, as well as for their legalization.

Today we find ourselves at a point where in a little while this circle will be completed, as provided for by the relevant law regarding legalization. Today we must speak on the following basis: We cannot accept that there can exist all this manpower with illegal entry and illegal employment in Greece. Employment must be legal, to be included in the framework provided for by labour legislation and collective agreements, and the immigrants to come following agreements between countries.

Thus the whole matter will function within a framework which will be in favor of our foreign friends who come to Greece and in favour of Greek workers. Together, side by side both in the unions and in production and in society, we shall fight together to improve our position.

The other question, the big question occupying our conference, is the question of unemployment. Many times I hear various slogans through which the problem is of course made known, but it is difficult to find specific proposals for dealing with the problem.

The European unions, let me start there, in spite of the fact that here the makeup is more unions which are outside European union federations, it is of interest, however, to examine what has been done by and what will be done by the Federation of European Unions, and what their policy is regarding this major issue.

It is known that the treaty of Maastricht did not include the proposal which was made then - At the time Greece happened to hold the portfolio of social policy in Europe, with Mrs. Papandreu, and the proposal had been made to include the social chart in the Maastricht treaty. Unfortunately this was not done at that time following the reaction of Mrs. Thatcher from Great Britain. And it was included as a protocol attached to the treaty.

Thereafter and for a number of years European unions made their interventions until we arrived at an agreement, the treaty of Amsterdam, wherein we find improvement in policies following the agreement at the summit meeting then; improvement in policies, but also the policies for a unified strategy in Europe, as unified as it can be, for dealing with unemployment and the promotion of jobs. From here

arose the national plans of action for employment and we, at the level of the Federation of European Unions, but also at the national level through our participation in this special committee which elaborated the national plan of action and employment, we contributed our share, without of course all the positions of the unions being accepted in the national action plan, either because the points the European Union was promoting were outside of those we were speaking about, these joint goals, or because the Greek government didn't accept certain issues such as working hours and other matters we had suggested and suggest and continue to suggest.

We believe that the issue of employment and unemployment must be looked at from two angles:

- The active policies which are connected also to development, and
- The so-called passive policies.

Starting from the latter, I am unable to conceive of the fact that the unemployment benefits will continue for a long time to be at a level of 51% of the wage of the unskilled worker. There must be a generous increase, and in the first phase what is foreseen by the labour legislation as it was voted by the PASOK government must be applied. This is an opportunity, Mr. Minister, coming up on elections, for you to clarify the matter of increase of unemployment benefits.

The second issue of, if one can call it that, passive policies, is the priority access of the unemployed to organizations of social policy. We have taken the steps, we have proposed quite a few regularizations. I want to believe that during the next period of time we will be in a position to agree on at least some of those that we have proposed.

The matter of active policies, which I always connect with development, a development which must have another content, a content which will support employment.

In our country, dear friends from the delegations from other friendly countries, we have a positive development index. However, this positive situation is not connected with the desired, the demanded widening of employment.

There is great profitability. We are very high in profitability but the investments which are made are not analagous and relevant to the profitability which exists. The investments which are made are made primarily in the area of technological modernization and limit employment rather than expanding it. Development, even the development law itself as it was voted on in Parliament a year or a year and a half ago, which provides subsidies in various zones of the country, each job costs 60,000,000 drachmas, an enormous sum; positions which are precarious because due to the mobility of activities from country to country and the great mobility of capital, we see businesses which are subsidized, create their own infrastructure, profit a great deal from this infrastructure, and soon disappear because they find the possibility to go somewhere else and do the same thing they did in Greece.

A big issue, still another big issue is the putting to use of funds coming from European Union programs, the Community Funds. An effort has been made to upgrade manpower through training and preparation, infrastructure has been formed, and they bring results, but they don't give the results required in order to solve the problem. There is a deficiency in the creation of steady jobs, and this should worry us very much and the matter should be handled with another type of action, not with these subsidies which many times don't go towards the goal but go into the pockets of those receiving the subsidies, a central issue, Mr. Minister, which again should occupy our attention.

To the issues of labor relations, and I will finish here. They criticized us before and they were right. Even the sharpest criticism is based on something; it's correct. Let's take a look at the field, though. Let us

take the numbers in Greece. Approximately 11% or more are unemployed; 20% are workers within informal and flexible types of jobs and temporary jobs, and we know all of this. There is a great deal of insecurity due to the long lines outside of businesses for others to enter the production operation, and those inside the walls are unable to amass that power so that they can struggle with determination against the many problems that confront us.

The first issue, then, is the matter of security for the workers, and I am not speaking only of social security or wages. I am speaking about a series of regularizations which will shape the safe social and economic and productive field for the workers, through new adjustments of labor-relations issues.

What have data and studies shown? If you put aside America and the model that developed there, or Holland where for other reasons the high degree of part-time or flexible forms of employment gave some economic results, in all other countries this widening flexibility did not strengthen employment, did not deal with economic problems, did not deal with social problems, but rather created social problems.

Therefore, the question that arises today isn't if we will have a widened flexibility, but how in businesses the great percentage, the core of workers, will be in steady jobs. This is the central issue if we wish to build a society which will truly have the goal of social cohesion and an economy with prospects, because the economy will never have prospects with the worker in a position of insecurity. New challenges and new visions, I would say, at the beginning of the 21st century. Technologies may create that which they create, but we must put them to use for the benefit of the citizens, for the benefit of workers, primarily of workers, who through the use of technology contribute maximally to the expanded production we encounter.

Globalization is a fact. Those who anathematize it may be right in relation to some results it creates. But we must use the globalized economy itself to the benefit of the workers. Because it won't turn back, and if this globalization does turn back it will be after many years and by then other things will have taken place which will have led our societies and the citizens of those societies to blind ruptures, to blind confrontations, and then no one will be rejoicing.

Finally, then, I want to believe that more generally the unions will approach the issues in a fundamental way and based on these approaches they will develop their actions, on the basis of this action they will search for results, on the basis of these results they will upgrade their own economic, social and multicultural position, since our societies are no longer societies of Greek culture, but in Greece for example we have 1,000,000 foreigners who must maintain their own civilization, their own culture, for these cultures to meet, for us to develop culture, to leave behind the static and take the dynamic path. So I would like to congratulate the Labour Centre of Athens for this - for this because they have taken others - for this initiative. I would like to welcome all the friends who have come to our country, which as a hospitable country will welcome them and host them for the time they remain here.

And I would also like myself to say something I am sure about: that the conclusions of this conference will point out new positions for the unions, new positions for the agencies, new positions for the citizens of the countries so that through peaceful, creative and effective cooperation we can confront the issues that occupy our minds, especially matters concerning southeastern Europe, where during the next period, the next years, we will have many issues to deal with as problems within a changeable environment which unfortunately exists.

Good bye.

GIANNIS KOUTSOUKOS, President of ADEDY
(Confederation of Greek Civil Servants)



The President of ADEDY, G. Koutsoukos

Dear invitees, colleagues from the presidency of the Labour Centre, and colleagues. I want to greet today's conference and I in my turn welcome the foreign visitors to our hospitable country.

My greeting will be a formality, because the international environment, the situation in the world, in Europe, and in our region, I believe has been sufficiently analyzed by my colleague the president of the Labour Centre of Athens, my colleague Felonis. As well as the priorities, initiatives, and efforts of the Greek Trade Union movement both in our country and in Europe were described by my colleague president of GSEE, together with whom we had supported these positions in the confederation of European Trade Unions where we belong and within which we operate.

Dear friends and comrades-in-arms, it is true that in these difficult conditions, in the face of globalization and the new technologies, we have a weapon in our hands, the union, and using this we must fight for the great visions of the working class, for the just society, for employment, for confronting social problems.

I hope today's conference will contribute not so much to analyzing information, something the trade union movement has done adequately, but primarily to creating the provisions, the prerequisites for our common action.

The situation today within the worldwide trade union movement and within the European trade union movement imposes the need for initiatives which will lead to more dynamic and unifying intervention.

Faced with the power of the multinationals and the power of the market, we must demand prescriptive rules, we must claim the role of global organizations. Faced with the power of the multinationals we must join our forces.

I will submit here the proposal I developed on behalf of the Mediterranean group of union organizations in the public sector. In the latter,



the world conference of the International Union of Public Sector Employees, that finally we must discuss seriously about an international body in the worldwide union movement.

The facts have changed. Borders have fallen. In many European countries unions with their ideological segregation of the 30's and the post-war segregation have now an open line of communication, cooperation, and shaping of a common platform. I think we must give priority to joining our forces organization-wise.

In the light of such considerations today's minutes, as a communication network for many, many unions may lead to the development of discussion and further initiatives which are indispensable so that all the unions of southeastern Europe and our region more widely, without exclusions, can join their forces for the common battles of the future.

So I wish you success in your proceedings and a pleasant stay to the foreign representatives.
Thank you very much.



Representatives of the political parties, from the left: DIKKI, P. Kalogeratos, SYRIZA, Papagiannakis, KKE E. Tyrtirakis, ND Evag. Nefmarakis, PASOK St. Manikas

STEFANOS MANIKAS, MHP, Representative of PASOK (Panhellenic Socialist Movement)

Mr. President, ladies and gentlemen,

We salute today's conference of European unions, and hope that the conclusions, the ideas and proposals which will be heard will make up not only a new network of communication and solidarity for the workers of Europe, but will also be the political basis for understanding, consensus with wider political forces so that the answers bring results and not only remain within the sphere of theoretical pursuits.

Certainly we live in a new era, in an era which is marked by rapid changes in technology, changes which have intruded on the areas of production, of society, and have overturned the productive as well as the social model of organization.

And certainly it is worth noting, not as a defense but primarily as a cold appraisal, that the political parties and unions and more generally the social agencies have stood especially helpless in the face of the appearance and domination of the globalized economy.



What is obvious is that faced with these developments we cannot answer with political restrictions, nor with exhortations, nor certainly with the rejection of technology. What is needed today, maybe more than ever, is coordinated, planned, radical answers on the part of governments, on the part of unions, on the part of all forces of labour and intellect, all those forces who accept the market, but accept the market with rules, limits and conditions, and assign to it a role in the service of the special and pneumatic being of man.

Globalization is a reality and the Europe of Maastricht is a fact. It is not the Europe we sought, it is not the Europe we desire. Obviously the creation of the unified currency is a very important development for Europe, perhaps the greatest development in its history following the founding of the European Economic Community, and certainly it will change the political, economic, and international face of Europe.

The question is, however, whether the currency development will move and be directed toward the shaping of a new, contemporary European social model, because this is what is needed today, this is what is demanded today by the citizens of Europe, that is to what extent the unification of the currency will be directed toward the goal of establishing a unified social realm, to what extent the questions of unemployment, of social exclusion, will be afforded immediate, radical answers.

If, then, this is the goal, the forming of a unified social realm, the shaping of a social Europe, a new, a modern, a different policy for Europe is indispensable. First she herself must overcome the quantitative meaning of development and to replace it with a meaning where development is connected, identified with social justice and social solidarity.

It is not enough for someone to rhetorically deny the two-thirds society. The 35-hour week cannot be a political demand in perpetuity. Its application is urgent, of course without reduction in income, and with the goal of increasing employment, but at the same time we must look at the reapportionment of working time, through policies the reapportionment of wealth, through the participation of workers both the increase of production which doesn't concern and has not to do with machines, as well as certainly the participation of workers in the huge profits of businesses, both in the private and the public sector.

In this march it is certain that the workers, the progressive forces, the forces of social justice and solidarity, must develop alliances; they must expand their battle fronts. For this reason an alliance with ecology movements is necessary, with those movements that propose another type of development, one which does not simply protect and respect the environment, but can also improve it.

They must develop alliances with the women's movements, that is to say with the movements that beyond the central issue of women's emancipation are movements that support and improve social cohesion.

Friends, alliances must be developed with the peace movements, and not from a pacifist point of view, that through peace all problems are dealt with and solved, but mainly because through such movements we can arrive at reduction not only of tension but of arms, so that all that surplus is directed towards those societies which today are below the limits of poverty and wretchedness.

It is enough to contemplate that a 12% reduction in global arming would be enough to secure a decent and dignified level of existence for the poor three-quarters of our planet.

Ladies and gentlemen, friends, if today the claim for social justice and solidarity gains ground, if it becomes more of a priority issue, it cannot be a priority, it cannot be a goal without rules and conditions.



It is my opinion that a precondition arises through the redistribution of wealth. A second prerequisite has to do with the guarantee of a dignified level of social existence. That is to say, the development of a social solidarity network which is not limited simply and solely to matters of health and care, but extends to the area of education, to the area of work, to the area of housing.

This idea of solidarity, however, must not stand simply and solely on the idea of the worker, but must expand and stand firm on the idea of the citizen, because this gives us the opportunity to include in our goals, in our demands, in our political programs also the immigrant and the marginalized, and this isn't a philanthropic policy and it certainly isn't a defense against a creeping racism, but mainly it is a decisive way out, an aggressive strategy in the face of strong threats from neofascist movements, whose recent political treachery and legitimizations we now know in Europe.

The third term, the third prerequisite is the securing of a basic nucleus of personal, political, and social rights for all, as a basic principle, which the just state wishes to establish, no longer with pure nations and societies, but with multicultural societies. Let us reflect on the fact that according to the forecasts of experts and analysts around 2010 to 2015 Greece will be inhabited by 15,000,000 people, of whom 3,000,000 will be foreigners.

Ladies and gentlemen, because all the political chatter of the last years, especially from those who supported the theory of the end of history, speaks of the paring down, the assimilation, and the disappearance of law-governed and social politics, I would say that a contemporary answer, for a new, modern social state which will respond and provide answers to the citizens' problems, has as its source the idea of solidarity, and the idea of solidarity can take on substance when social movements are formed, workers' movements, which go beyond national boundaries. And when we go beyond national boundaries then we will feel true solidarity, we will be able to deal with the inequality of the north versus the south, and above all we will be able to shape a battle front against the powerful forces of the economy, the enormously powerful financial centers which today have reached the point of threatening not simply social rights and accomplishments; they directly threaten the heart of political democracy. Their claim is for economy over politics. If this happens the result will be the result of the jungle and unrestrained profit.

For this reason supranational networks of worker solidarity and action are needed. For this reason the grand alliance of social movements, labor and intellectual movements are needed, of the progressive political movements, so that we don't live the end of history, but live the dawn of a century of new social justice and humanity.

I thank you and wish you success in your discussions.



EVANGELOS MEIMARAKIS, MHP, Representative of New Democracy

Ladies and gentlemen, good morning.

I want to thank the chair and to congratulate EKA for today's initiative. I could say that it truly is an initiative which contributes to finding those solutions, which can give us the programs which we should and can implement in order to combat unemployment and create an employment policy.

Coming to the podium, I was thinking that when I took part in such conferences as a simple member, I considered the greetings to be the duller part, and I would say, will the greetings finish so we can take the floor and our guests can listen to us.

I must tell you, however, that today I do not feel the same way because I believe that the greetings had substance. The greetings were not dull. The greetings had expressions of position that truly could pique the interest of all those attending the conference, that they may take a position and discuss or enrich or contribute or adapt their own greetings.

Because I must tell you, Mr. President, that everyone from this podium laid down proposals, and I will do the same, in spite of the fact that we were invited to address a greeting. The proposals are substantial and they too must be discussed.

Today's meeting, ladies and gentlemen, takes place during a pre-election period in Greece and certainly this podium should not be a pre-election podium, but it should and must be a forum where the political parties can submit their proposals. Moreover, we are been called here as representatives of the parties and I must not shed this capacity, in spite of the fact that the issue of unemployment, the issue of jobs, the issue of economic development, I am trying and I want to see, as all of us I assume, as an issue of national agreement, an issue of social agreement, an issue without sterile conflicts, an issue which is truly stressful to all of us, for dealing with it.

Because finally we can all speak of indices, we can all talk about numbers, but unemployment has to do with people, and as a social phenomenon it has to do with many other ramifications which are related to the fabric of every society.

So, in Greece, according to the official data which we have and which have been accepted by everybody, the young unemployed from age 20 to age 34 increased by 40,000 during 1998. In total the number of unemployed last year, again using data accepted by all of us, increased by 70,000.

Thus the total number has reached 479,000 individuals for the first time in Greek society, to a record 11.4 % unemployed, which is the highest in the last decade.

And it is certainly tragic that now the majority of unemployed are especially young. One out of two below 25 is unemployed. However, the reality is much worse, allow me to say, and it is worse because hidden unemployment and underemployment are much greater and they aren't measured by the index we have.

The fact that as yet we haven't seen dramatic events of social exclusion, violence, crime, which are the unavoidable consequences of such extensive unemployment as were mentioned correctly previously, and especially by the president of GSEE, is primarily due to the clean fabric of Greek society, which though, if it breaks, we will certainly see these acts to a much greater degree, which unfortunately will be manifest in Greece itself, in Greek society in which we live.

However, when unemployment reaches these proportions the social tissue will be in danger and I believe that the consequences will be very serious, will be especially long-lasting, and will require long-term policies in order for them to change. They will not change from one day to the next, but only with much more long-range policies, and I am afraid that irreversible consequences may be created.

The other European countries, let us not be misled, have not yet managed to deal with this fundamental



problem which threatens individuals and the entire society. I, from the day I was born and I fear until the day I die, we will discuss the issue and we will always put it on new bases, on the new data as these arise, as these occur, and we must adapt them.

Why? Truly, have we asked ourselves? Because its causes, the causes of unemployment, the causes of all these issues, are complex. They are frequently contradictory. They are frequently competitive. The economy, and I will do the honor of stopping at the words of the president of GSEE and of Mr. Minister, without this meaning that I did not follow the other's speeches, and especially that of the president of the Labour Centre which was a very detailed analysis, with wishes and also with propositions, because we all are aware of the issue, we have pinpointed it; the issue is the proposals we submit for speculation and discussion.

So the economy, as it has been said, has been completely globalized, and on the one hand competition on the global level, and we must recognize this, is practiced on completely unequal terms. The vast differences in wages frequently lead to emigration, not only of workers but of businesses from countries with high costs to others where the labor costs are many times lower. We must not forget this and we must look at the question also from this side and from this point of view.

That is to say that social dumping has greater consequences on employment than those caused by mass or rapid introduction of new technologies into traditional areas of production which were characterized up to now by intensity of labour.

The shifting and moving of all these businesses from countries which are now high-cost to countries with lower costs is an essential problem which must demand the attention of today's conference and which we must examine. Because all of these make up the framework within which unemployment has appeared in our country, as a structural problem of the economy and our society. A problem whose roots lie in the deep changes, in production methods, in the intense realignments of supply and demand of labor in many branches of production, and in the intensity of competitiveness within the globalization of the economy.

In parallel a series of factors which affect the everyday life of citizens and can't always be measured with statistical indices have immediate influence. Everything can't be measured by indices.

Factors such as the rising phenomena of social marginalization, the negative course of demographics, the danger of collapse of the social insurance system, the ineffectiveness of the educational system; all of these are factors which contribute to the increase of unemployment and we must look at each one separately and discuss it.

I will stop a moment because I heard again in these introductions the matter of Maastricht, as this treaty was amended and discussed by the treaty of Amsterdam, Mr. Papayannakis as a member of the European Parliament lived through these events, he experienced them from very close up and he will tell us about it better.

However, I would like to tell you that the goals which were set were neither anti-labour in my opinion, nor did they contribute to the increase in unemployment. On the contrary, they contribute to the dynamic of employment. What were the goals? The reduction of the deficit, the reduction of the debt, the reduction of inflation, the lowering of interest rates. Really, can someone tell us that we need to have large deficits or big debts or high inflation in order not to have unemployment?

Certainly. The issue that arises is how we will arrive at these goals and through what policies can we reach these goals, policies which Maastricht didn't set. Maastricht set the goals. The policies needed to reach these goals were policies which would be chosen by the people, through their governments, in order to reach the goals.

And permit me to say that the problem was not specifically the goals, but the policies that would carry us to those goals, and that's where we should see whether we succeeded or failed, because in my opinion we did not succeed.



The big issue of unemployment, then, we have before us; we did not leave it behind us and we will not leave it. We will always find it before us and that is how we need to deal with it. There are no magical solutions and whoever tells you that there are, and indeed in a pre-election period, only wants to carry some ears, and for this exactly we are not here, neither I nor the other colleagues I assume, in order to present magic solutions.

Our choices, ladies and gentlemen, and this must be known, of necessity will have political cost, of necessity will have social cost, of necessity will have economic cost, costs which also cannot today be specified, but there is a social account which must be paid by society as a whole, according to what each has and owns, in this society in its entirety.

So we need to become aware of the fact that we must develop mechanisms for dialogue, such as today's. Dialogues of structure, of opinions, among not only the social partners but among ourselves, which will allow us to fashion the basic framework which will support the policy of development.

We find ourselves in a period, and the conference is taking place during a period when the relations between citizens and the political parties aren't very good, neither those between citizens and government; especially the relations between young people and the political parties are being tested, and our trustworthiness is being tested. However, we can open a permanent dialogue enabling us to form together a framework within which we can operate in order to find policies which will provide answers to these problems.

I believe we must find those policies by consensus and within this to compose this social understanding, but with political understanding among the parties on the one hand, but of the parties with society itself and its representatives and those who express it.

Please allow me to submit several proposals and opinions. To begin with let me tell you about the issue of the 35-hour week which I also heard and which I would like to say, esteemed President, that in France it is already being expressed, -possibly meekly but expressed-, that it has already especially harmed competitiveness, which can lead to businesses closing, which unfortunately creates unemployment and not jobs.

We have to re-examine the question, not by itself but together with whatever parameters are necessary in order to communicate and to meet exactly at such a crossroads in order to discuss it. And at the same time I will tell you that such dialogue can really be substantial and sincere, and I will tell you that in special fields of production where it actually can be applied without creating competitiveness problems, we are in agreement, and we are in agreement with such a discussion where we will look at it not alone and isolated, but with all the framework we discussed before.

I would like then to submit some bases upon which we at least as the government tomorrow will act, because I must tell you, ladies and gentlemen of the conference, that vindication of every policy occurs when social inequalities are reduced, and regional inequalities. Unemployed do not exist today in Athens or in the basin. Unemployed exist in all of Greece, they exist in all of Europe, they exist in the whole world, and the social solidarity to which my colleague referred before will come, will be found, will take on substance, when all of us are able to communicate and when we understand that we must deal with it for everyone's sake.

And today's policy unfortunately has created large regional inequalities, and as such in my opinion has not been vindicated. Seven of the ten regions in Greece today are the poorest in Europe, with the poorest region in Europe being Ipiros.

This means that a policy which can't bring equality and close these gaps must be excluded and we need to find other policies which will help us.

For this reason we want to tell you that the first basis for such a policy must be a change in the development law and the establishment of special local development programs for the exploitation of the comparative advantages of the specific regions which present distinctive features.

It is unthinkable to continue to deal with Thrace or Ipiros or Crete using the same developmental criteria. They have no relation, they cannot have the same developmental criteria, they don't even have unemployment indices. Nor is it reasonable that areas which face long-term problems of de-industrialization such as Patras, such as the Peloponnese, that is Achaia or Evia, to be placed in the same mechanisms as the area of the new airport at Spata for example, which exists today.

The new development law, therefore, must provide for the enactment of increased high incentives in these areas, and at the same time there must be mechanisms for control in order to see whether those who are the beneficiaries of these provisions invest the specific sums in the specific prefecture.

The second keystone is the elaboration of special local programs for the development of the mountainous areas of Greece. We must deal with the problem of the isolation of Greece's mountainous masses and we must have special local programs for these specific areas.

As the third basis I would foresee, without these being written in stone — and they can be the subject of discussion and changes and modifications, As the third basis I would see the realization of pilot employment programs for the areas which have been characterized as pockets of unemployment. We must see them through a different eye, from a different point of view. In these regions special incentives and measures for support of investment activities must be in place in order to create jobs.

The fourth basic point is the establishment of a stable and fair tax system. We cannot have a system which won't widen the tax base and which must limit tax evasion. I would like to say a long-term system, in fact. And at the same time, through this system, which is also a system for redistribution of wealth, the small-to-mid-sized businesses must also be supported, which was referred to by the Minister, but he didn't mention or didn't see all the other parameters which today concern the small-to-mid-sized business.

The next basis is development in the field of services with the freeing of the telecommunications, energy, and coastal-shipping markets. I believe that the area of services has something to offer, and of course the keystone of upgrading of the educational system. The young people need equipment, need knowledge which will allow them to compete on an equal basis in the future.

I must tell you in closing that the freedom of the market we believe in doesn't mean license. On the contrary, it means the existence of clear rules, laws, and enforcement of the laws, and at the same time it means a just state which can have its regularizing role, to impose sanctions on whoever fails to obey, and a welfare state which can make the proper reapportionment of wealth.

And certainly I must tell you at the same time that our main issue which can be discussed in one meeting is the matter of absorption of the funds which were mentioned previously, and one reason, Mr. President of GSEE, why I have taken a stand in favor of the elected Regional Prefect is because I believe that no one would stand in his place if he had such levels of absorption, of 15 or 30%.

The people themselves would have condemned him for his own incapability to absorb whatever funds exist today. Ladies and gentlemen, I must tell you that we really are in an election period and we are all very busy and I do not usually do it because I consider it impolite to leave during the break in such a meeting, or in the middle of such a conference. But as you have seen in the cases of the colleagues who preceded me, we must be present at our daily obligations. Allow me to tell you that the conclusions of the conference will be a special document for us, which will be of particular interest.

I would like to listen to all the speakers, but I will be informed from the minutes, as New Democracy will be, and we will discuss it, and I am glad because we will be involved in a continuous and permanent dialogue. Congratulations on your conference.

EVANGELOS TERTIRAKIS, Representative of KKE (Communist Party of Greece)

Ladies and gentlemen, colleagues, representatives of foreign unions, on behalf of the Greek Communist Party I thank the administration of the Labour Centre of Athens for the invitation to take part and salute your proceedings of today.

The problem of unemployment is one of the biggest problems faced by the working class in our country, but also by the workers of other countries of the European Union, and of other countries. The evaluation regarding the causes that give birth to and exacerbate the problem are constantly different, according to the position of each party or each individual, that is to say what class interests he is serving.

There is an effort by the government, the European Union, the parties of European orientation and the capitalists to cover up the real causes of the problem, which is the capitalist system and government policies, and to present as its causes technological development, the supposedly high wages, and the fact that the unemployed do not have the relevant training. Here, in the question of who is responsible for unemployment, lies the first basic disagreement of the communists with the other forces.

The second main disagreement is to be found in what policy, what road a country must follow in order to deal with the problem.

And regarding this issue many inaccuracies are uttered. They cover up the fact that unemployment is innate to capitalism and it will vanish when capitalism vanishes. Technological development, scientific progress, is not to blame, as is alleged by the apologists for capitalism, but those who own the means of production. Those who use technological developments and the progress of science for their own benefit.

So the answer for our country must lie in the abolition of capitalistic ownership of the means of production, the overturning of that system, the building of the imperialist antimonopoly front.

It isn't inevitable, my colleagues, while workers with their labor produce huge amounts of wealth, for the exploiters to reap the lion's share, and the majority of the unemployed to lack even the basics in order to live. And not only they. Hundreds of millions of people all over the world lack the basic necessities for life. Thousands of people die every day from hunger and from sickness.

This is also the reason that millions of people, economic immigrants, come to Western Europe and other countries. The labour movement must take them into their fold and demand equal rights for equal work. We must answer decisively all those who attempt to cultivate feelings of xenophobia and racism among our people.

The great offensive of the capitalists and the government against workers and their achievements is being conducted with their efforts to overturn working relationships and the passing of flexible forms of employment. An offensive which is being conducted not only to relieve unemployment and the danger this holds for the capitalist system, but also towards the increased exploitation of the working class.

But a further aim is to inflict a blow on workers, to render the working class impotent to struggle, to resist, as well as to challenge and overturn the system.

The theory of the employable worker which was presented by the the Prime Minister, Mr. Simitis, and was spoken of today by the Minister of Labour, shows exactly what kind of workers the government wants, the middle class. They want workers without steady employment, with partial economic, social, and insurance rights. They seek to present unemployment as decreased, technically, by trickery, and at the same time increasing poverty among thousands of young workers. That is by sharing one job and one wage among two or three workers.

That will mean, beyond the overturning of working relationships, a generalization of poverty to a much greater degree than the situation today, that is for 25% of the people to live below the poverty line. Naturally this situation will have huge consequences for the workers regarding their social, their insurance rights, their personal and family life.

They present various training programs, further education, or a policy of work subsidies, as the means that will solve the problem. This is an attempt to mislead the workers. Some say that there is a lack of contemporary knowledge among the unemployed and that's why they can't find work.

If the problem lay there, my colleagues, this would be apparent. We would have visible lack of manpower in businesses and fields, something which is not the case. When the capitalists and the government speak about training and further education, they hide what they actually seek to accomplish: to have workers who will know how to do one or two jobs, that is they will have more than one specialization, so that the capitalists will have the opportunity to use them accordingly each time according to what the job requires. That is to say, they put into practice what is stated by the European Union through the white book: that it's the end of one specialization.

Perhaps those who want these measures to pass and those who help them to pass are mistaken? No; it is a conscious choice. These are measures which they aspire to be taken in all European Union countries. They are measures aimed at all the countries, at all the same anti-labour targets.

They consciously attempt to mislead the workers. Their aim is to pass the anti-labor measures at the least cost to the government and the capitalists. Even the workers' just and fully-developed demand for the decrease of working hours they want to negotiate and use as a tool so as to pass the overturning of the working relationship.

Of course they cover up the fact that a 35-hour week accompanied by overturning of the working relationship, that is to say the abolition of steady working hours, wages, etc., cannot exist.

The implementation that was made in the field of bank employees is characteristic, wherein instead of 35 hours of work, the employees today work 50.

In the face of the attack faced by the working class in Europe, the labor movement must answer with its organized counter-attack which will have as a goal not only impeding passage of the measures, but the demand for solutions for the claims they present.

This role should be undertaken by the European unions. They do not do it. They do not do it because they don't want it. The labour movement must find ways of getting beyond accommodating leadership and organize its struggle.

From time to time various governments announce measures supposedly aimed at dealing with unemployment. Instead of decreasing unemployment is constantly increasing. Increased unemployment goes hand in hand with the unchecked activities of big capital, the absorption of Greece into the European Union, capitalist restructurings, the selling off of public assets, the shrinking of our country's productive base, and the entrance into ONU will further aggravate the problems of workers.

The capitalists and their government in any case desire a percentage of unemployment because they exploit unemployment; employers force their employees to work harder, forcing wages down, dispensing with their gained rights; while supposedly being interested in combating unemployment, they vote for and apply laws which raise the age limit for retirement for thousands of workers, doing away in addition with the possibility for some unemployed to find work.



Indeed with the so-called great insurance legislation which they are preparing, for after elections naturally, they want to further increase the retirement age and further decrease salaries and wages. They didn't want to take measures for relief of the unemployed, since all these years with the laws they have drafted only one in four or five workers is subsidized, and that for one year only. Instead of the government subsidizing the unemployed, it gives their money to the capitalists for jobs which they are not going to create.

It should be clear to everyone that if the labor movement doesn't put a stop to this policy and it continues, the number of unemployed will increase even further and the situation of the unemployed and their families will worsen.

There can be no radical confrontation of this problem with the current balance of power. However, the working class can struggle to improve the situation. The solution to the problem, however, is not to be found in the subsidizing of the employers, nor in spreading unemployment among more workers. The solution to the problem lies in organization and development of struggles on all levels, which will demand solutions to the benefit of workers and the unemployed. Solutions which are proposed by and fought for by the Greek Communist Party and the class union movement.

The policies announced by the government and the European Union have been tried in practice during all these years. Their results are painful to workers and the unemployed. So the solution to the problems, partial or total, will not be the result of some dialogue but the result of class struggle.

In the face of parliamentary elections through their vote the unemployed and the workers must teach a lesson to the political powers which sent them into unemployment. A lesson to those who promised them a false paradise from our entry into the European Union.

I thank you for your attention and wish you success in your endeavors.

MICHALIS PAPAYANNAKIS, MEP, Representative of SYNASPISMOS (Coalition of Left and Progress)

Ladies and gentlemen of the chair, participants, we are speaking primarily about the problem of unemployment and I will concentrate on this, which as we all know is of a national scale, a European scale, and a global scale, and we do not need a lot of analyses about this. I will add that it is also a matter of immense political decision, first priority, which we either give first priority, with specific measures, or we sell words to the citizens and the unemployed.

The key words for speaking about unemployment in my opinion are, first: The goal of **full employment**. It is not true that this is really the goal of our government and the governments of the European Union. In the same treaty, which really made progress when compared to the past, mention is made of a high level of employment; it does not speak of full employment. Words have their meaning, especially when we are elaborating action programs.

The second key word is the word **development**, with whatever that means. Development, investments, etc. And certainly development not as development was in the past, because this, this which we knew and is shown marvelously through the excellent statistics in the White Book, which many fought against at the time and now remember fondly, even also development of 2.5% or 3% per annum which is very significant, creates unemployment; at least it does not create enough employment, and as a result we must look at development in other ways, but until then some more traditional formulas are not bad.

The White Book for example has a huge program of large projects all over Europe with a healthy method of financing with loans from the European Union of which one EURO has never been borrowed in its lifetime, and therefore it is the best borrowing organization in the world. Who is reacting and failing to proceed with this plan and whatever jobs it would bring? Who is reacting? What is our own government doing as a member and a voter within the committee of finance ministers?

The next key word is **the ways in which we look at employment**. In fact we can not look at employment as we did in the past, under the light of actual events. But with the goal of full employment the key word is the 35-hour week, in fact with limits and with conditions and whatever you want, but it is a key word as long as it is accompanied certainly by the policies which lead to the hiring of living manpower and not machines, automation, taking their place in the reduced working hours.

This requires expenditures, extremely significant expenditures which we will have to search to find, because they say, Where will we find it? We will finance them if there are really healthy and socially responsible means to cope with these expenditures, and there are.

The examples we have from European Union countries such as France, Italy, I hope in the future Spain, with the agreement of the Left, show that the difficult path can be trod.

The other key word is **the new occupations**. It is a fact that not all unemployed will find jobs as metal workers. Not everyone can be a metal worker or anything else. Society wants the new occupations. Society wants a lot of occupations. Society is asking for security, social solidarity; it desires care and welfare for the elderly, it asks for greater protection for children. There are occupations, there are jobs, but someone must pay, and as long as society doesn't recognize them in order to pay them in other ways they must be financed publicly and in a progressive manner and thereafter be integrated into the social mechanisms even of the private economy, and this again requires expenditures.

The third key word, ladies and gentlemen, is the word **global policy**. Social dumping -and I will not analyze this now; you are syndicalists and you know it- has reached ridiculous proportions. Thousands of children seven and eight years old work.

We can and must, without being unfair to the third-world countries who do not desire to do anything other than what capitalist Europe did at the beginning of the 18th century, the 19th century, find ways to limit these manifestations, so that competitiveness, which is unavoidable, is maintained at reasonable limits which will allow for employment policies.

Financing. Whoever speaks about solidarity with the unemployed, about the passive policy spoken of by the president, and especially about their active policy to find them jobs, and speaks about who will pay the price is fooling society. Clear matters.

How is solidarity expressed in societies? With the conveyance of funds, with the conveyance of values others would say. And how is this conveyance achieved? It is achieved with taxation, ladies and gentlemen. If someone knows another trick I would like to hear it. With taxes. And certainly by the decrease of certain expenditures and their conveyance to other policies.

So an arms decrease, and our Greece has the way to effect such a decrease. It is the arms champion in the world and in Europe.

Let's discuss the ubiquity of the income tax, when half the population of the country, which happens to be the hyperinflated middle strata does not pay income tax. Let's speak about development taxes, green taxes, which burden the use of rare natural and energy resources and lighten the employment of the living true forces of society.

Let's discuss taxation on financial capital which happens in Greece to some extent and can be increased, and primarily let's discuss, if we wish to speak about global solidarity about the doping tax, the famous doping tax, that is global taxation of financial speculation capital and its use for development purposes and for jobs.

These present huge problems of a new type regarding the exercise of politics in Greece and in Europe and in the entire world. No one said things were easy, but instead of speaking with generalizations let's speak about what its spearheads are today. Let's speak, then, about the political unification of Europe, about a common employment policy, which doesn't exist. Mr. Minister, as you told us there is a coordination of national policies. Let us speak of a common European policy regarding employment; let's talk about the employment agenda being included in all international organizations, whether official such as the UN, such as International Monetary fund, etc., or whether it is informal such as the well known G7, G8, etc., which is the actual world government, and let us demand it. Otherwise we aren't speaking of politics and jobs; we are speaking of pre-election speeches.

I am finished, Mr. President. Just one word to the foreign visitors, since I have heard that you will deal with this. Some political and social charlatans are trying to push the idea that we will evict the foreigners, who number so many thousands, and as a result will provide jobs to so many thousands of our countrymen. Mr. LePen said it and fell on his face, fortunately; Mr. Berlusconi also said it. It is now being said by the new abscess of European society, Mr. Heider.

It is a lie. Jobs for the one creates jobs for the other, and certainly there may be cases of unfair competition, some pressures in certain fields, in a certain business for some period of time. But deport those foreigners who today work in the agricultural economy and I'll tell you how many jobs you'll create. You'll cause an equal amount of unemployment. Take a look at how fruit is picked or how flocks are grazed in Ipiras.

Therefore, in the long term the problem doesn't lie there. The problem is, as is very properly stated by the Greek union movement and the European union movement, the legalization, legal employment,

which has all its aspects: the maintaining of labour law, insurance law, the revitalization of social organizations, all these matters, and on the other hand it prevents extreme exploitation, improves the terms of coexistence of the workers, allows for better solidarity among them and therefore on the union level.

And I would add, let's take consider the issue of change of nationality, so that those who are interested and truly wish to take part in the full rights afforded to Greek society may do so, and have before them bearings and prospects.

These are the progressive lines of the future, and not the robust reactions which feed racism, nationalism, xenophobia, chauvinism and indeed many times on a very left-oriented and vivid base.



PANAGIOTIS KALOGERATOS, Representative of DHKKI (Democratic Social Movement)

On behalf of DHKKI and Mr. Tsovolas, personally I have the honour, in my capacity as the head of policy-shaping of DHKKI, but allow me to mention also my other capacity, the academic, the university, that is a university professor who has the honor to teach two cognitive subjects, among others in the Pantelion University: the theory of social movement and of course political institutions, together with European matters.

I say this why? Because the issue of today's session, for which we really have to congratulate the Labour Center for its initiative, is complex. It already speaks of unemployment and one could begin from there, because I do not know if you have in mind only the recorded unemployment and not the unemployment regarding those who are not listed in official records.

In Greece we are already speaking of 18%, but I repeat that I do not know if we also have included unemployment among the self-employed, that is small tradesmen, small businessmen, shop owners, who close their shops and their businesses, and on the other hand the huge issue of agricultural jobs regarding which very little discussion takes place, and certainly in the Economic and Social Committee, has warned that in a few years the number of people employed in agriculture, in the agricultural sector, will fall to one third, and that is the percentage given also in Europe.

I will remain strictly on the subject as it has been presented. The right to work, a challenge to unions. Allow me then to remind you, especially directing myself toward the honorable foreign visitors to our country, that the words "right" and "right" have a different meaning in your languages, but they are the same words.

You know well that right (*droit constitutionel, droit penal*) is equal in French and in English (*diritto penale, diritto costituzionale* in Italian) is the same, has the same meaning; we use the same term to tell someone to go straight. Or you are right. (*Droit, va en droit, vai diritto*).

I say this to remind you, that the etymological roots of right, of straight ahead, of straight, of measurement and even of word, have the same root in Greece, have the same meaning, they are if you wish the term of measure, the aristotelean term of measure, it is the term of restraint which was taken by psychoanalysis, the measure between deprivation and excess, it is that which I maintain that if the Greek word had prevailed, which has no relation to western rationalism, perhaps mankind would have escaped the Chernobyl phenomenon - development at any cost - and the mad-cow phenomenon - profit at any cost.

The correct word leads to the resolution of differences through prudence, through discussion. This is exactly what piqued my interest to remark on it here, when I saw the speech I had prepared, when Mr. Felonis, the central speaker of EKA spoke of the fair distribution of wealth, he spoke of the necessity to convince the other side through dialogue about the fair demands, jobs, the 35-hour week, the redistribution of wealth.

Allow me then to remind you that the meaning of right carries within it the meaning of claim. When we speak of right, and certainly whether they are the personal rights of liberalism or they are social rights, the achievements following the struggles of workers whom today you and we represent, they have reference to the state, and certainly to the liberal or neutral state, with *status dectativus*. *Laissez-faire*, *laissez-passer*, allow things to run by themselves, it means a state which is above society, cut off from society, it doesn't interfere. Therefore the right of the bourgeoisie was for the state not to interfere in the social sphere.

With the achievements of workers, with the struggles of workers, even with the compromises of the ruling classes, that is to say with concessions, the social state is not a vision. The social state is an achievement of the workers which all mankind has experienced. The party I represent stands for defense of the social state. What is the social state? It is a group of rights, which means demands from the state, for social benefits. That is to say, I want the right to shelter, to work, to schooling, to education, to security, to health.

It is possible, and this impresses me, that all the political forces, whether they are liberal, conservative, centrist, left, more or less employ the same vocabulary, and I do not know if you were able to establish at this moment, with the performance we gave in front of you, which are the progressive and which the not progressive forces, since they all profess to strive for, they are all touched, they are all sensitized by the issue of unemployment.

Things are clear. Why? Because liberalism and the forces that stand for it or serve it today, with the so-called globalization, it's theoretical and a matter of policy, there stands behind it a philosophy, there is a neo-Austrian school, the so-called Vienna school, which has warned mankind as Hitler had warned that when I come to power I shall make the Jews disappear, they have been warning us since the beginning of the century.

Hajek was given the Nobel Prize, that the laws of the marketplace are enough, I do not need a state, I do not need justice, I don't need society, I don't need politics, I do not need democracy.

So the unions must also -and I come to the second branch and I will close- realize that they cannot wait as I will express poetically, for the hot water from the right-hand faucet.

I have the honor, as I told you, to teach political science. We have had a problem, you know, during the last years. You the unions express your issue here. Please, it would be good from the discussion to re-emerge a discussion that we will have at the university. The unions are present in two classes. Do they belong to social movements or do they belong to political forces?

Allow me to say two words. Unions, up until 30 years ago were the only revolutionary subject. And that is exactly why the social movement was equal, the word 'social movement' was equal to the meaning, to the lead of the labour movement.

It took May of 1968 to show that there are other revolutionary subjects. The union today, and allow me to say it, examining if you will - this is not a censure; is a sign of progress. Take a look at the sponsors of today's conference. They are people that in the normal course of events should be fought against by the unions. They are the sponsors, and this is true in all countries.

What does this mean? That they have possibly been integrated into the system? It's not that. It's that the union has changed, just as social movements have changed, and that's how the term 'social movement' has survived. How? With the Gramscian perception, the struggle has left the factory; it is on the upper-structure level, on the level of values and perceptions. A union may struggle, and this is for me the challenge for unions. To rediscover their capacity and singularity as social movements, with what meaning? It isn't necessary for them to ask what the ways of capitalism are, it is not necessary to revolt. You can make an effort at change through perceptions and principles.

Ergo, you can save, and that's how the semantic character of the social movement is saved, in the new so-called social movements: the peace movement, the ecological movement, and the rest.

Why do I say so? Because today we are able with a truly international organization of unions, otherwise we are condemned to demand the basics, to demand certainly the preserving of the state.



When the right, conservative or neo-liberal, shouts and comes out for less government, they can not then speak about planning. Liberalism is allergic to planning. There is no democratic planning any longer.

In the same way, who will provide social solidarity and protection? With what funding? When through policy you condemn social expenditures. In the same way what is meant by relative autonomy; shouldn't it come back onto the scene, which a Greek had espoused, Nikos Poulatzas? Relative state autonomy.

It is not necessary then, it is not necessary for the state to be sovereign and determining, but at least we can't surrender ourselves to the forces of the market. The representative, the dearest representative of New Democracy, who is absent, said something which is interesting. He said, We are in favour of liberalism but not in favour of license.

The question is very simple. Who will control the license of the speculator, who will destroy and who will select the region he will develop, the type of development he will perform, and with the consequences and the destruction that we know. The Danube, the mad cows, the contaminated foodstuffs from Belgium.

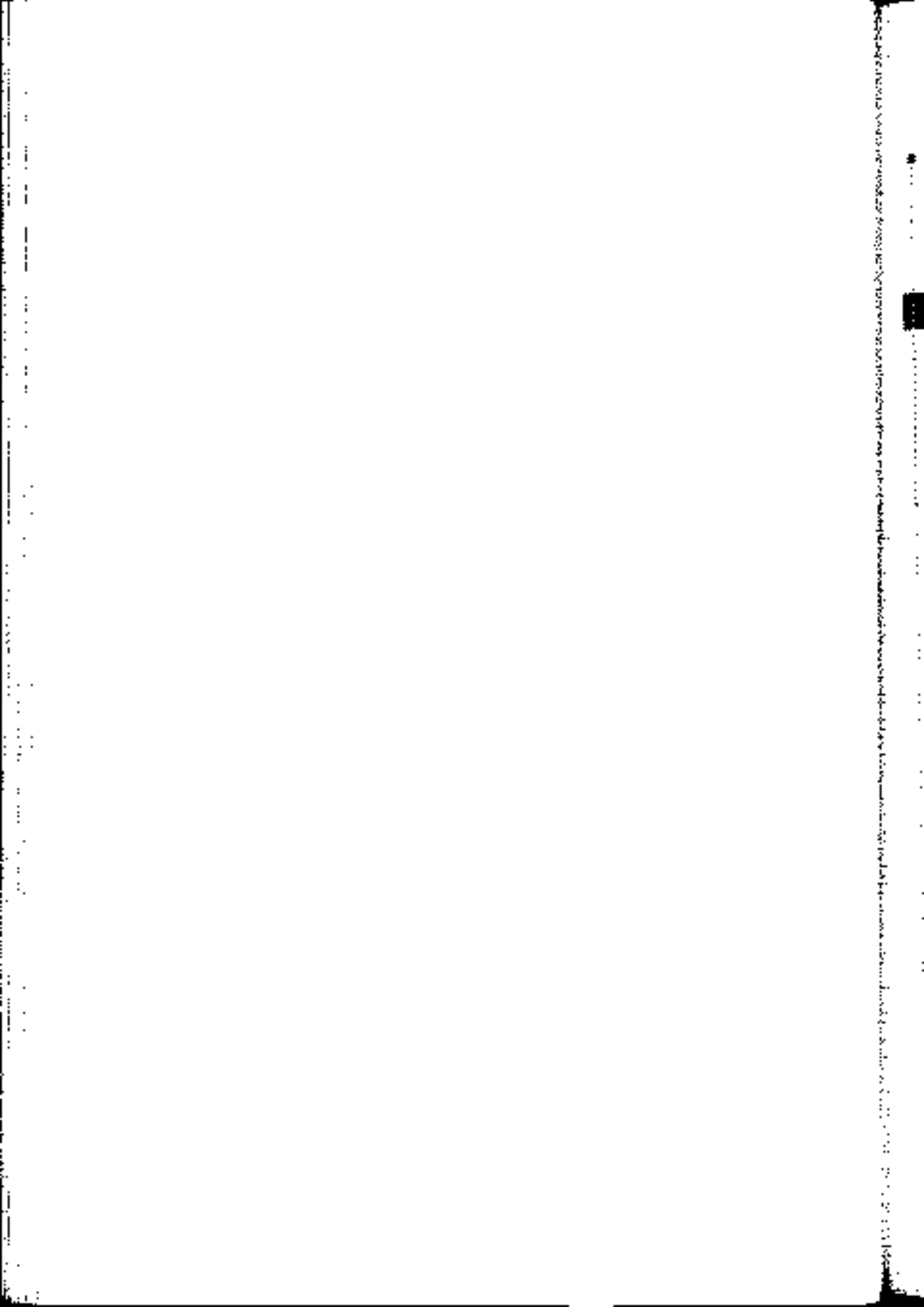
Therefore, let us not fool ourselves. It is truly a question of choice and a question of life choice for all of mankind now. Therefore we really do have to save the social state, saving the state even with its relative autonomy, even with its relative functions, the function of redistribution of income.

It is a challenge. You know, in Greece we have the problem of the paradise created by Mr. Simitis and his coterie with the stock market where today some people are ruined, but in any case already we expect the social state to be financed through the stock market.

There are huge profits; profits of banks and private business are 100% and 200% and 300%, and workers' wages are increased by 2% in order of course to save the requirements in the face let's say of entry into ONU where certainly decisions will not be taken by the government, let's not kid ourselves; they will be taken by the European Central Bank. And for this reason the only help that exists is organization on the one side, and on the other side—and then I will close—that social programs are not natural events; social programs are human creations, neither from fate nor from God, nor from the laws of history. Social programs are manmade creations, therefore they can change with changes in the correlation among socio-political forces.

As long as democracy exists let us take advantage of it, and if only with our vote improve the possibilities for change of the interdependence on a pan-European level, so that there will be hope for our children.

I thank you very much,





1st Day 24-2-2000

2nd Session

Chair: K. BERDEBE, E. JORDANOPOULOS, G. SKIADIOTIS, C. SMYRNIOTIS, L. KARYGIANNIS,
M. FRAGIADAKI (chairperson)

11:00-17:00

- HENRI LUC NIVELLE, Representative of Force Ouvrière • FRANCE
- K. KONSTANTINOY, Representative of DEOK • CYPRUS
- HUSEYIN TANRIVERDI, Representative of HAK-IS • TURKEY
- P. IOANNIDIS, Representative of SEK • CYPRUS
- ENVER OKTEM, Representative of DISK • TURKEY
- HUSEYIN BAYKAL, Representative of TURK-IS • TURKEY
- JAN STEVENS, Representative of FNV • AMSTERDAM
- KLEIV FISKVIC, Representative of L.O. • OSLO
- NADEJDA DASKALOVA, Research fellow at the Institute for Social and Trade Union Research, representative of CITUB • SOFIA
- MARIA FRAGIADAKI, Member of the Secretariat of International and Public Relations EKA • ATHENS
- MICHOT THIBAUT, International and Public Relations of FGTB • BRUSSELS
- GIORGOS SKIADIOTIS, Member of the Executive Committee of EKA • ATHENS
- BOGOLJUB MITROVIC, President of the CONFEDERATION OF AUTONOMOUS TRADE UNIONS OF BELGRADE • BELGRADE
- DANIEL PIERSOEL, Regional Secretary of CSC • BRUSSELS



Chair of 2nd Session

From the left: C. Stryniotis, Member of the Adm. Board of EKA, A. Demoulas, Member of the Adm. Board of EKA, G. Skladiotis, Member of the Executive Committee of EKA, K. Bordebe, Treasurer of EKA, L. Karygiannis, Member of the Adm. Board of EKA, N. Fragiadaki, Member of the Secr. Int. Rel. of EKA

2ND SESSION

Dear Colleagues, good morning.
Let me introduce myself. I am Henri Luc Nivelles and I represent FO of Paris region, that means France.

Dear Colleagues, first of all let me present you the fraternal salutes of the FO of Paris region.

The megapolis of Paris as you know. The city of light for those who can bear it.

Together with my colleague and friend Jacques Girod who is deputy regional secretary of FO-Paris and he is present here, we would like to thank the colleagues from Athens for the quality of their hospitality and the good organisation of the conference.

Issues like unemployment, labour relations and economic immigrants are very important for us.

The employment in the region of Paris is about 3,750,000 employees, the total number of employees in France is 14,000,000.

The point I would like to make is that unemployment rates in the Beauce area currently skyrocketing! The problem is that all too often the real state of things fails to surface because those in charge of the situation opt for a publication of untrue facts. As an example of so dire a situation I would like to mention the working hours issue. In France, working hours are now at the stage of being reduced to 35, down from 39 in the week. Without wishing to bend your ears with too many details, I would nevertheless indulge into a French version of the scenario. This is a claim originating from the trade unions effort to ascertain 35-hours-per-week employment on a 39-hours-a-week salary. A claim that came to be a real demand for workers throughout Europe. In France, such claim was enthusiastically endorsed by the Left which was at the time a minority in the Government. After 1936, the 40-hours-a-week and the paid leave achievements, placing the claim of 35 hours under the banner of an entire political wing was something more than attractive for the socialists

HENRI LUC NIVELLES, Representative of Force Ouvrière

F R A N C E
P A R I S



Representative of Force Ouvrière,
Henri Luc Nivelles

who, by definition, are meant to embark on social causes. The point is, however, that at that particular moment in time Mr. Chirac - man of the Right wing - was the President of the French Republic. Then there came a moment when that gentleman chose to dissolve the National Assembly. In the elections that followed, his party elected some 200 deputies - among who many of his personal friends - still was unable to secure a majority. This is how the Left, albeit unprepared for the challenge, found itself in Government yet under a Right-wing Presidency. The issue remains, of course, that whoever chances to be in government has the obligation to cater for the needs of as wide as possible a range of citizens - which inevitably includes the employers. This is how that highly aspiring manifest on the 35-hour week claim came to be a law providing for the management of working hours. The cost that such a law implied for us was some 200 billion FF or 16 billion EURO, in aids and reduction of social contributions to the benefit of employers, in exchange for a flexibility pushed in extremis so much as to allow for employers to operate even on a 7-days-a-week basis. There is even the possibility for some to terminate contracts, freeze wages and abusively manipulate working hours to the detriment of workers. Those who claim that 35-hours-a-week employment in France would have a negative effect on competitiveness of the national economy have been nurturing fallacious intentions. The expense of such situation is born by the workers, with consequences felt on their wages, the loss of bonuses and fringe benefits, aids etc. Thus, this is not a humanitarian law we have in hand but a legislative document catering for specific financial and entrepreneurial interests. Four additional hours per week each month could not compensate for the shrinking of our retirement pensions. What is more, with retirement age minimum limits pushed forward, we ultimately find ourselves to be working more both in terms of number of years and in term of number of hours.

So, there we are: what the Right wing had never dared venture into, the Left finally materialized. This is a major victory for employers and the capital. A counterbalance to so critical losses for us would supposedly be the creation of some 700.000 new jobs; let me tell you, 100.000 new jobs would still be just fine. Among the meager benefits we may aspire to there is also the perspective for conversion of many employment contracts from determinate to indefinite ones as far as duration is concerned. Ultimately, however, whatever benefits there may be obtained are only in terms of savings of the businesses on workers wages - economies the state capitalizes upon to create new jobs. At the end of the day, the money goes to the employers whereas what we get are tax bills to pay. Moreover, within the context of that same effort towards reducing unemployment, there are new jobs that are created for the young, remuneration for which is redeemed at 80% by the state whereas the remaining percentage is borne by various other agencies. These are for the moment jobs with the Municipalities and Communities, covered by five-year yet yearly renewable contracts without obligation for definitive integration in the future, remunerated at the minimum legal salary. There are many problems arising in such case: first of all, the contract does not stipulate an obligation for the employer to hire the worker upon completion of the five-year term, which means that upon entering the contract the worker embarks on a long period of uncertainty and a feeling of ever sitting on the fence. Secondly, there are some cases when the terms of the employment contract are simply not honored. Thus, for example, a contract whereby a person originally hired to work as a physical education teacher at a school was eventually converted into a canteen sweeper contract! Force Ouvrière de Paris has been working on files of some 30 such cases with respect to which recourse has been taken or is shortly to be taken before the competent Courts. A third point, all the more critical: for every public clerk to retire, the State makes a



point of hiring a young worker remunerated at the lowest legal salary. Thus, the State progressively shakes certain of its responsibilities. May I inform you that those young people are hired under private law employment contracts. Now, if to that we add the fact of privatization of many public sector enterprises, we may just as well grasp the importance of such actions in the spirit of the liberal policies developed under the Maastricht Treaty.

May I now refer myself to the case of the "sterilization" of the French capital. Where once stood some humble working quarters currently lie some tenths of thousands of square meters of unoccupied office buildings. The dwellers of those neighborhoods - most of them immigrants - compelled as they were to abandon their homes, inevitably came to concentrate in the suburbs and the surrounding areas. Such persons unfortunately have no way of escaping the vicious cycle of unemployment that further triggers some serious social problems like exclusion, drugs, delinquency etc. All such issues - along with the problems of xenophobia and racism, are only to be solved if stricken to the bone. In other words, substantial solutions have to be found and further proposed as an answer to mass unemployment. Thus, for instance, the incentive of anticipated retirement of those having completed 25.5 years of social fund contributions should be balanced with new hiring rather than the opposite, i.e. a prolongation of minimum age limits for retirement for those already employed, which obligates our younger generation to wait for years at an end to become professionally active.

Xenophobia and racism are deplorable issues associated with the problem of immigration. Immigration bears to very essential features: continuity and aggravation. These are elements essentially deriving from the multiplying phenomenon of immigration, migratory flows, racist discriminations and injustice, illegal employment etc. They also have to do with the complexity of responses given. The successive governments have been of the opinion that for a social integration of immigrants to be possible, there has to be control of the flow of immigrants. Eventually, whatever debate there has up to this day been in the matter seem to over-focus on the issue of flow control without sufficiently emphasizing on the need for social integration. Such integration, however, increasingly avers itself to be a necessity.

Already in 1992, by way of a special resolution, our federation of the Force Ouvriere declared that integration is perceived as an acceptance at both the social and professional levels as well as that process goes through legal assimilation. Social and professional integration is to be attained at school as well as in the workplace whereas legal assimilation will be achieved by way of appropriately shaping the Code of Nationality. Integration is further also attained through struggle for equal treatment of workers irrespective of their national origin. These are fundamental principles arduously promoted by our union at all levels. This is the spirit that governs actions by the Force Ouvriere and such the principles we have been promoting, in quest for social and labour justice, against manipulations of the enterprises to conceal funds and abusive layoffs of workers.

Thank you, colleagues, for your attention and may I also express my appreciation to the interpreters for their work.

C. CONSTANTINOU, Representative of DEOK

C Y P R U S
N I C O S I A



Representative of DEOK, C. Constantinou

I am Costas Constantinou from DEOK and I will speak about the right to work, challenge to the unions in the 21st century.

Labour relations. Labour relations in the whole spectrum of European countries have changed, transmuted, and developed to the maximum degree in the 20th century. The challenge to unions, based on the experiences of the 20th century, is becoming greater in the 21st century.

Where and how can labour relations develop, on what baseis, with what goals, and in what directions, are the troubling questions which truly must occupy our thoughts. Moreover, that is the reason were involved in the organization of this international conference, which is exceptionally useful and productive.

We congratulate the Athens Labour Centre for its initiative in bringing all of us to this conference for mutual questioning. DEOK, having in mind the experience in Cyprus, can express its satisfaction that in our country a quite good environment for labor relations was created. The trilateral cooperation, with very few exceptions, worked positively and provided solutions regarding many labor and social questions.

Having said that, we would not want to give the impression that for us, the Cypriot workers, there is no challenge for the 21st century. The big challenge for the unions and labour relations in Cyprus originates in the wider events that are occurring, the primary one being the road toward our entry into the European Union, a road of harmonization, of preparation, and of many changes at all levels.

Thus, the big changes that contribute to labor issues relate to and influence the status quo of labor relations. Many issues have to be regularized through various institutions and frameworks other than the traditional labour system.

These changes, until they become accepted and understood by the labour organizations and the government, will likely create friction and/or confrontations. In spite of this, with respect toward the procedures of democratic dialogue, and with the



maturity which is imposed on all by our country's European prospects, we need to negotiate the procedural issues.

Regarding essential issues and principles for the labour unions, the workers organizations must with substantiated arguments and with the chart of workers' and social rights of the European Union as their guide, support the rights of Cypriot workers.

On this same point I would like to emphasize that in the matter of labour relations we must demonstrate steady perseverance and dedication and the essential social dialogue for each important change with which we are faced.

We, also, the employers' organizations and unions of Cyprus, can follow the current approaches of the relevant corresponding European agencies and to follow their example. These agencies have made significant leaps of progress in bilateral relations, to a degree that already some agreements between European employers organizations and European unions have become accepted and binding directives of the European Union.

In the area of labour relations we are therefore a little optimistic that the challenge both for the Cypriot and for the European unions is such that we can deal with it successfully.

Employment: We entered the 21st with the globalization of the economy and the internationalization of trade at a very advanced stage. The European Union, the member countries, and the candidate-member states are trying to evaluate and deal with this fact. Moreover, for this reason they are looking forward to the completion of the European structure, a completion which is hopeful as far as facing social and economic challenges is concerned, such as those created by galloping globalization.

The expansion of employment and the creation of new opportunities and new jobs is a matter of highest importance and a challenge of the highest priority to the unions and the trade union movement.

Whatever economic progress or structure, whether within globalization or within the European unified and harmonized economy, must have healthy employment as a compass but also as a foundation. The unions have a primary role to play in the safeguarding of the most valuable commodity for the citizen, work. Work which indeed can be neither undignified nor insufficient.

We have the obligation to demand work as a basic human right. The right, a strong basis for dignity, for completeness, for securing a high level of existence for every citizen, for every human being.

The high percentages of unemployment shown by countries who are members of the European Union, but also by candidate countries, are not acceptable. It is, according to the opinion of DEOK, a slow-burning bomb, both for the long-term prospects for the economy as well as for the social cohesion of European national centers. It is a problem which it has not been possible to reduce, in spite of the efforts made by action programs.

This should perhaps cause us to wonder particularly about to what extent the policies followed up to now can succeed.

So we are faced with a challenge, but also with a hard reality regarding jobs and unemployment. We believe that the European labor unions, with the forerunner and leader being the Federation of European Unions, must increase the pressure on all the decision-making centers at the European and national level.

Increasing jobs must be the first matter for common union and political action. It is not enough to present and demand essential political actions. We have the obligation to act in every direction and with all means in order to simultaneously achieve economic development and improvement, qualitatively and quantitatively, in employment.

All the European unions, with a common strategic goal and the best possible coordination of deeds and actions, must convince governments, employers, and certainly also Brussels, that what is important is the essential result of economic development, it must be the securing of dignified work for all. There must be in addition the widening of choices and opportunities for employment for the unemployed, youth, women, minorities.

Such conditions can guarantee a healthy competitive place to the European Union, with citizens who are free of political but also job dependence of every kind. We don't refer especially to the Cypriot gatherings because we are of the opinion that as far as the matter of employment is concerned, we differ little from the other countries.

The issue of employment within the globalized economy cannot be dealt with either as a local or as a national problem. It is without a doubt regional and European.

Thank you very much for listening to me.

I thank you all on the part of HAK-IS and all Turkish workers for your invitation to this important conference, and for your lovely hospitality. I greet everyone who is taking part in the conference.

The main subject of this conference is the important and common problems of the trade union movement. Taking into consideration economic immigrants, we see that this is also an important problem which is of immediate interest to the international union movement. When we examine the three basic matters that have been chosen for discussion at this conference we note that we have approached the questions which create the basic problems.

Employment, immigrants, and the relation of work to wages. In fact when we look at these question it is difficult to separate what is the cause and what is the solution. In some ways these problems have some similarities. These problems remind us of the question as to which came first, the chicken or the egg. Unemployment, in spite of all the expectations and developments in the world, continues to be a nightmare for all countries and a threat to society. When we really examine it closely we see different picture:

Unemployment is a basic problem of the undeveloped and developing countries, but it is also a basic problem in the developed countries. Even in the European Union, which includes the most developed countries with high economic levels, as mentioned by the president of EKA, Mr. Felonis, there are 20 million unemployed. Also in the European Union there are 60 million people who live below the poverty line. In some way they should also be included in the category of the unemployed.

In spite of the problem of unemployment which exists in the developing countries as well as in the developed countries, the system of relations of industrial development, the laws covering the area of employment, but also the meaning of the word

HUSEYİN TANRIVERDİ, Vice President of HAK-IS □

T U R K E Y
A N K A R A



*Representative of HAK - IS,
Huseyin Tanriverdi*

unemployment differ from country to country. In the developed countries the unemployed worker, as a meaning of the word, can be translated as "the poor person" or "the one who does not have the security of a steady income."

The system of relation to industry attempts to approach the unemployed surrounding them with the socialist model, the socialist state, and the prosperity state; within this framework we had quite a few successes. Many European countries have experiences in this area for longer than a century. Unfortunately, however, in other countries, such as my own, unemployment has the same meaning as poverty and the lack of unemployment income. Because there does not exist a social security system to fill the gap in the area of employment, and to embrace the unemployed.

For example income and unemployment insurance have never been applied in Turkey. However, the new social security law which was approved last year and is scheduled to be applied as of June 2000 will provide some security and some income to the unemployed. However, the framework of this law is very limited; it is simply a beginning and a test for the application of this system. On the other hand there is no discussion regarding the contemporary social system and methods of aiding workers. Such as income assistance for workers and members of their families.

Indeed, according to unofficial data these show that unemployment in our countries has risen to 15% and even 20%. In spite of this we have a social system which is able to put industrial relations in order. When the general situation is this way people don't feel economically secure. And these people become economic immigrants. On the other hand, with increased immigration the industrial relations, which were already not on a strong foundation, are further destroyed and are transformed into a lawless form. Thus social balance is damaged.

If we look at the question of immigration from Turkey's perspective we will note that it has three basic dimensions:

- First, in Turkey there is a large internal migration.
- Second, there is a large migration from Turkey towards the outside, and
- Third, from the outside towards Turkey there is a large wave of migration.

For many years Now Turkey has been living with the phenomenon of internal migration. The percentage of urbanization is much increased. Her basic problem is the economic problem. Also, the episodes of terrorism that we have had in our country during the last years has been a basic cause of not only internal migration but of migration out of the country. Since Turkey's industry has developed in the country's western cities, internal migration of citizens has taken place from east to west. Thus, the poor distribution of the industrial region and the unfair distribution of income have touched off this problem. Last year as you all know the big earthquakes of August 17th and November 12th struck the industrial regions of Turkey. As a result of these earthquakes a large portion of Turkish industry was damaged irreparably. And now we talk about a migration in the opposite direction, that is from the west to the east. The second question is the migration from Turkey to outside. From the beginning of the 1960's a great migration started from Turkey to foreign countries. In the beginning this migration was toward the European countries.

The migration of Turks, however, towards foreign countries has undergone changes over the years. After Europe this movement has been directed towards the oil-producing countries, that is to say toward the Middle East. Later, with the changes at the beginning of the 1990's, migration has turned toward the now independent countries of the ex Soviet Union and the Eastern European countries.

Today we can say that Turks have immigrated to 80 countries. The number of immigrants in foreign countries is approximately four million, of which 2,5 million are to be found in Germany.

The third question is the massive immigration towards our country from the outside. The politicoeconomic and social problems in our neighboring countries have become the cause of mass migration towards our country. After the changes that took place in the beginning of 1990 we are receiving a large wave of immigrants from the countries of the former Soviet Union and from the countries of Eastern Europe.

As a result we note that we are inside a big crossroads. On this side we as unions have important responsibilities. We must find a solution for this problem within the framework of industrial labor relations. We must struggle together to help the immigrants achieve social and legal rights, wherever they are. We must be in a constant state of cooperation. This is a problem beyond borders.

Globalization lends a new dimension to this problem. In spite of all the problems created by immigration, the rapid globalization of capital is unavoidable, as is the free movement of labour. Configurations and changes must be so directed. Since capital is not named "immigrant", then labor must be able to move freely. Because the political systems that seek to obstruct the free movement of labour (of the workers) have not succeeded. Thus what needs to be done is for us to struggle to form a more evolved system which will include social and legal rights within an original model of industrial relations.

Thank you. My respects.

□ P. IOANNIDIS, representative of SEK

C Y P R U S
N I C O S I A



Representative of SEK, P. Ioannidis

My name is Pambos Ioannidis, I am from Cyprus, and together with my colleague Erotokritos Koumidis we represent the Labour Federation of Cyprus (SEK). I am the regional secretary of the Nicosia Labour Centre in Nicosia which continues to be the only divided capital within Europe.

I would like to express our warmest thanks for the invitation to take part in today's conference. We salute the initiative of the Labour Centre of Athens and particularly the fact that they have chosen as the subject of the conference a timely topic which is no longer national but now pan-European.

The Labour Centre of Athens is at the head of labour struggles in the country, it is in the front line and has among its credits respectable results which are valuable achievements for the workers not only of Athens but of all Greece.

Colleagues and Mr. President, colleagues at the conference,

The 20th century and particularly the last half of the century, have passed now into history as the century of the industrial revolution. Technological development has brought significant changes in the structure of businesses as well as in production methods and disposition of goods and services.

As was natural, the changes which are taking place at a rapid rate have also significantly affected employment. Needs for specialized personnel were created, while jobs were limited and decreased, since the new technology had pushed aside many workers, especially the unskilled.

Unemployment has reached troubling proportions and is today the number-one problem in many European countries. The inability of states to deal radically with the problem of unemployment, and the failure of coordinated efforts on the part of the European community for easing the problem had an immediate impact on the unions, which gathered all their efforts towards the promotion of measures which would help deal with unemployment.



Cyprus, which of course could not be an exception to the rule, as the rest of the European countries, itself shared a portion of the consequences of technological development and the globalization of the economy. What was an exception in the case of Cyprus, at least up to the beginning of the 1990's, was the lack of manpower in certain areas of the economy.

Cypriots desire for academic studies and the economy's need for specialized personnel in the technical occupations created an oxymoron as far as employment is concerned, since on the one hand we had a high rate of unemployment among graduates from institutions of higher learning, and on the other hand we had the lack of manpower in technical occupations, in manufacturing, in construction, and in the area of tourism.

In order to deal with the immediate needs of the economy the employment of foreign workers was permitted. In this way Cyprus acquired its first economic immigrants, who at first came from countries in Asia and the Middle East, and later from the former Eastern Bloc countries of Europe.

At the dawn of the millennium the problem of employment in Cyprus is even more serious. We have a reversal of the situation and the technical occupations show a surplus due to the problems that the specific sectors face.

The orientation of the Cypriot economy, with special emphasis on the provision of services, with first place going to tourism, has led other sectors of the economy to recession, resulting in the creation of high percentages of unemployment among workers employed therein. Today the official statistics show an unemployment figure of 3.8%, but with tendency to increase.

I have mentioned the above in order to outline the framework within which unions will operate in order to deal with the problem of employment in the 21st century. The questions and worry that they engender in everyone have as a basis that which we inherited from the 20th century and go even deeper. We are speaking about right to work along with other human rights which are safeguarded by the constitutions of the various countries as well as by international agreements.

How is this collected, though? What kind of right are we talking about when it can not be exercised and it's not at all safeguarded? For a right to be considered a real right must include the elements of exercise and safeguarding of this right. How can someone exercise his right to work if there are no jobs for him to work at and when the state can not protect him, ensuring him work?

In light of the prescribed unfavorable employment conditions, the challenge to the unions is even stronger. It has now been rendered an absolute necessity to re-examine the role and the perception of the safeguarding of workers rights.

Within a Europe where government intervention and its fashioning of economic policy is being eroded and capital joins forces, creating huge multinational economic units, workers are in danger of being left unprotected if there isn't the essential balance. This balance can be provided only by the unions, seeking a more active and substantial role in the making of decisions and in economic policy.

In order to achieve this goal there must be an international cooperation and solidarity among all the unions of Europe, the shaping of a common policy among unions, the coordination of their actions and their forceful representation in all European institutions and bodies.

The Federation of European Unions is the bastion from which the goals can be reached, for a strong international cooperation among unions, and we must turn our attention to the strengthening and exploitation of the opportunities it offers us.

But we must pay particular attention to the national level. In order to deal effectively with the problem of unemployment, attention must be paid to the basic causes which can contribute to the creation of increased job opportunities. This has to do with the establishing of an essential economic policy which will have as a goal development but also the offering of social services, and others, to the citizen.

The unions must have a serious and fundamental voice in the formation of this policy. The need for enactment of a social dialogue and trilateral cooperation are elements that will contribute to the governments proceeding in the right direction.

In Cyprus the institution of trilateral cooperation is at a very high level and this gives us the opportunity to discuss many issues of a labor and social nature, but this institution doesn't have a substantial application in the planning and formation of economic development programs.

We demanded and achieved the opening of a wider social dialogue on all issues regarding the problems of the Cypriot economy in the face of Cyprus march toward entry into the European Union.

Within this dialogue issues of productivity, technological upgrading, employment, etc., are discussed. Speaking particularly about the problems noted in Cypriot society and ways of dealing with them properly, in a way that the unemployment problem will be ameliorated and conditions which are characterized as conditions of full employment will be maintained, as it is today in Cyprus, we have presented to the social partners and specifically to the government, proposals such as:

Unions and employers must study new systems in the production process so that in conjunction with decrease in working hours the distribution of work to a larger number of individuals can be speeded up. Speaking of reduction in working hours, in the case of our country it is self-understood that it doesn't bring about any reduction in wages to the workers. Such a policy must aim at providing the workers with incentives so that at the same time their productivity is increased, which admittedly is at much lower levels than the productivity in European Union countries.

In order for the Cypriot economy to face international competition within the climate of globalization and entrance into united Europe, it is necessary to give incentives for technological upgrading of businesses, and of the economy in general.

Schooling, further training, further education of the labour force must be a constant objective on the part of all social partners, which will go along with every technological upgrading.

Everyone has room for enriching and improving his abilities with the goal of his utilization in productive areas, regardless of the position he holds, his age, his years of service.

We should focus our attention on the need for holders of degrees as well as all workers to realize that they must be flexible and adapt themselves to the demands of the economy due to the constant changes that are observed.

There is the need for lifelong study, because the knowledge and skills required by various occupations change constantly and it is expected that they will be changing at even faster rates. The state must implement the necessary systems for training, technical preparation and upgrading of workers' skills in a way that will be easy and accessible for them.

The Cypriot economy has a lot of latitude still. The need for social care, for environmental protection, as well as for the maintenance of our national heritage, are areas that can contribute to the creation of job opportunities and the qualitative improvement of our level of existence.

In spite of the fact that today the Cypriot economy presents low unemployment levels, as I mentioned above, this fact does not allay our fears. The experience from previous years shows us that our economy and the job crisis show periods of upturn and periods of downturn.



An examination of the situation will show us that neither the economic prosperity we have today, nor the almost full employment, nor the alleged lack of manpower in certain fields, can be considered permanent characteristics of our society, and this because of varied and sundry reasons, some of which we can not even check.

The constantly increasing interdependence of economies among the various countries has the tendency to transport economic problems from one region to the other, without, however, the possibility of avoiding their consequences, even if these problems can be forestalled.

The Cypriot economy imports almost all its energy, raw materials, as well as the greatest part of consumer goods, which makes it vulnerable to the consequences of other countries' economic problems.

A large part of today's high percentages of employment is owed primarily to tourism, which during the last years has absorbed the most investments, to the detriment of other productive areas of the economy. Tourism, however, does not contain the element of permanency and stability presented by other areas of the economy, more so in the case of our country, which due to our constantly pending political problem, as well as our geographic position, it is probable that a small-scale crisis in the wider region could decrease or nullify the tourist traffic, with the result that a large number of workers in hotels and other tourist services may find themselves from one day to the next without a job.

This fact compels the state, within the framework of economic planning, it is necessary to study the provision of incentives for productive investments as well as incentives to attract foreign investment which will be invested in the productive areas of the economy.

In parallel incentives must be given for the merging, consolidation, or cooperation of small industrial units with the goal of decreasing their administrative costs, as well as specialization in the production line and modernization of organization of labor, aimed at increasing production.

In conclusion and summarizing all of the above, it is our believe that the most serious problem that we will face as a union with the dawn of the 21st century is the problem of unemployment.

We consider the need for discussion of this issue in international conferences such as today's to follow naturally because it gives us the opportunity in addition to the exchange of opinions, to enrich our knowledge with experiences and to give the weight that is required to this serious problem.

The primary concern of the union movement is the protection of the right of every citizen to profitable employment, because from his employment he draws all the income to support his family.

The union movement must act toward the state for the taking of immediate measures to deal with unemployment, and taking of social welfare measures for the workers. The union movement must stay alert, must foresee and take interest in the defense of workers' rights and to provide union protection to all unemployed, as well as to those having jobs.

It must act to take remedial measures for dealing with unemployment; to provide practical help and advisory services to workers in a way that there will be immediate contact and communication with them.

Our attention has to also be directed to the workers themselves, to enlighten them and make them all conscious that only through the union movement, with cooperation among unions on the international and national level, with the strengthening and utilization of the international union organizations can we be effective and optimistic.

Thank you.

ENVER OKTEM, representative of DISK

T U R K E Y
A N K A R A



Representative of DISK, ENVER OKTEM

Dear guests, colleagues, members and executive officers of the Athens Labour Centre. Speaking in the name of the Turkish workers and DISK, I wish to express our heartfelt appreciation for the invitation to participate in this conference.

As of this international event some very interesting issues have been tackled which concern not only Greece but our country as well. It may just as well be that if one compares our countries to those in Europe, one might end up in various conclusions. In Turkey the per capita (national) income runs at an average of 3500 dollars. In Europe the lowest such rate is quoted in Greece - which is approximately 13,000 dollars. If we look at Turkey again, at the social index, only 4.5% of the national income has been allocated to social indexes. In European countries the same average is at a level of 30%.

Then, again, was one to compare Turkey in terms of participation rates to the trade unions, we see that in certain European countries, as in Sweden, this percentage has risen up to 90%. In Turkey the restrictions which exist, result in that percentage reaching only 8%. Considering unemployment on the European level, the average is only 10%, while in our country it has reached over 20%. Such comparison - along with the very discrepancies between Europe and Turkey - are in themselves quite striking.

One simply has to admit that within globalization, capital is given priority over labour and workers. Whenever there is question of putting interests of the international capital at issue, such interests are invariably to overshadow and outshine even national interests. As a matter of fact, the capital is engaged in ruthless and unscrupulous collaboration throughout the world, in what is clearly a connivance of sorts to the detriment of workers and labour.



When it comes to labour, perhaps the most critical gap results from poor organization on an international level along with the absence of strategic formulas, such as to help us whether the turbulence of such issues whenever they arise. In my country, neighbourhoods and regions are administered by the mayor of each area. Speaking of globalization implies turning the whole world into one neighbourhood. In my opinion the world is ruled by a mayor who is chairs a committee. This committee along with the mayor, are able to fashion a system whenever they so choose, and again - at will and whenever they so please - reshape it.

It only takes a moment, just to push the button on the TV-sets as we enter our homes, to find out how small the world is. We can watch and follow a story or an event that may have happened on the other side of the world, or which happens right now, sitting in our armchair at home. The mayor who rules the world can literally direct us very easily through his television-set or radio. Only when the working class will reach a point where workers will be listening to our own radio and watching our own television and reading our own newspapers, sitting at home, capital will perhaps not be able any more to control us, and we will be able to direct ourselves.

As regards the question of immigration, one should stress the fact that Turkey has been experiencing a large tide of immigration from other countries. What, at the same time with all the problems that exist with our immigrants in European countries, we still have our own people that continue to dwell in these countries. The third generation of those immigrants suffer serious psychological problems due to such adversities. It is perhaps appropriate moment for those countries and their respective governments to take this aspect of the matter into consideration.

Dear friends, I don't want to take up more of your precious time. Before I finish my talk I would like to emphasize that we as DISK are very pleased to have come to Greece. The people of our two countries are on the shores of the Aegean, have fought and argued many times, always under the direction of the capitalists who have managed to establish their own policies. It is, however, a very nice thing, us having at last managed to arrive at this level. We wish for peace, democracy, and freedom to reign on both sides of the Aegean always. For Greeks and Turks to remain friends and to set their sails towards the future. I thank you very much.

□ HUSEYIN BAYKAL, representative of TURK - IS

T U R K E Y
A N K A R A



Representative of TURK - IS, HUSEYIN BAYKAL

Mr. President, dear colleagues, I greet you warmly and bring you friendly greetings from TURK-IS. In the year 2000, at the beginning of a new century, the basic problems of workers which are unemployment, immigration, and economic difficulties of workers, is the reason for our meeting. We thank the president and the administrative executives of EKA very much for inviting us to this conference in order to discuss these important problems. I also thank them for their warm and friendly behavior, as well as for the perfection of the organization.

Dear colleagues, as the president of EKA noted, as well as the other colleagues, in the entire world there are problems in the area of employment which are almost similar. These problems are felt more keenly in the developing and undeveloped countries than in the others. As all the speakers have remarked, the problem is the same and we all wish, I think, to take part in finding some solutions. The solutions are the same.

The decisions we will make during the two days of the conference I believe will play an important role in finding answers that will help to reduce the problems of workers.

We all by now know that capital knows no nationality or religion. Capital, beyond national boundaries uses every means to protect its interests; by exploiting workers it is able to solve its own problems. For this reason at the end of this conference I propose we give out a common resolution, which I believe is indispensable.

As capital knows no nationality or religion, we must show that labour has no nationality or religion. And on every level the workers of every country can join and fight together. This is necessary in order to achieve success, and we all know it. In this way I believe that we must arrive at a common resolution and record it.



I do not wish to expand further, since my colleagues have already made extensive reference to the problems. I would like to take this opportunity to thank everyone who took part in this conference, the governments and the citizens for their help to my country after the destructive earthquakes that hit us. I hope the new century will be a century when the problems of workers will be fewer. I greet you all and thank you very much.

JAN STEVENS, representative of FNV

H O L L A N D
A M S T E R D A M



*The dutch delegation, from the right:
Jan Stevens and Mustapha Laboui*

My name is Jan Stevens, I represent FNV, the Dutch Workers Confederation, in Amsterdam. Ladies and Gentlemen, in our intervention within the context of the present conference we wish to discuss the current situation in the Dutch labour market, with special emphasis on major cities such as Amsterdam where problems and concerns abound. We will then be briefly tackling the issue of the condition of the immigrants.

For some years now, Holland has been experiencing considerable financial growth. Unemployment rates seem to be falling, all the more since in the past year such rate was particularly low - some 4%. Simultaneously, ever since 1969 the number of available jobs increased without any need for a proportionate increase of the number of working hours. Such outcome may be attributed to the struggles of our unions towards less working hours and the elimination of part-time employment. Meanwhile, the ranks of the unemployed are mainly peopled by children, women, elderly people as well as by low-skilled people with limited qualifications. There is also a number of handicapped people.

FNV believes that the pressure increasingly gathering within the labour matter will soon be felt; such pressure is mainly due to the lack of compatibility between what the employers have been aspiring to and what labour features job-seekers and employees have to present. Other factors believed to foment such pressure are the levels of employment and working conditions. As a matter of fact, many jobs offer but a very limited prospect for career development, provide for no social services like children daycare and relevant facilities, rely on highly inflexible working hours and sometimes feature exaggerated demands on the part of the employers, such being indeed but some of the reasons why employers find it so difficult not only to locate workers in the labor market but even retain those already on their payrolls for a sufficient period of time. This is also



why we believe that there can indeed be no hope that such problems are solved unless a careful approach is attempted to each one of such crisis factors and by all means in association with appropriate education and training being provided to the benefit of workers.

As far as workers qualifications are concerned, our union has been harboring the view that every worker is entitled to some additional education, all the more when it comes to people who at the beginning of their professional lives have had no access to such services, hence the necessity for such persons to be given a second chance. Legislators in our country have been working on the development of a specific measure which, once adopted and duly implemented, will be allowing for the provision of a special budget for workers and job-seekers alike to finance lessons and training, through which such people are to acquire whatever additional qualifications they may be in need of. Beyond that, however, there have to be specific programs through which workers will be able to improve the level of their qualifications as well as prepare and adjust themselves to the changing technical as well as organizational conditions. Our union has been endeavoring to respond to such challenges by way of special as well as sector-specific policies, strategies that are shaped on the particular needs of each target group.

On the regional level and most particularly in the region of the city of Amsterdam, our union has launched the so-called "Major Cities Policy". As a matter of fact, the most important instrument in the hands of unionist to this day have been the negotiations we carried out with employers in various industrial sectors, whereby the conditions have been set out for the entry of fair and equitable work contracts. Among the many and various points upon which agreement has so far been reached there feature covenants on alternating flow of staff as well as agreements calling for employers to ensure quality education and training for their workers. An important aspect at this point is the quality of the work product. At the level of regions and cities there is also the possibility for arrangements and combination of the various social programs as well as of the various covenants applying between employers and employees, particularly on the national level. The Dutch Government has developed and further implemented a specific policy, thereby trying to address the particular conditions prevailing in major cities in the country, with special emphasis on Amsterdam, where unemployment rates are nevertheless high. It is indeed a fact that despite the general financial boom our country has been experiencing, there is a widely felt gap between those that manage to share in the progress and those who are left out.

The consequences of such situation are particularly felt in specific quarters of the various cities. This is where another major issue rises, since many of such problems seem to be mainly affecting people of non-Dutch origin. Problems plaguing the dwellers of such areas are of a pronounced complexity: poverty, unemployment, limited demographic variation, insecurity and insufficient education. Committed as it is to its engagement towards eliminating all such obstacles, the Dutch Government has been at pains to obtain the conclusion of so-called social covenants with as many cities as possible. Most particularly within the context of the social covenant entered with the Municipality of Amsterdam there has been stipulated that specific measures be adopted against social exclusion and there has indeed been quite a number of activities launched and actions taken towards such goal. On their part, the cities commit themselves to make as rational and profitable use as possible of the resources available. At a first stage there have been located three pillars of action: the physical pillar, the social pillar and the financial pillar. All three such domains are to be addressed in an appropriately structured

and coordinated way. For instance, ensuring an appropriate milieu at the workplace requires interventions at the natural but also at the social and financial levels. Our union has been actively struggling towards all such directions, with special emphasis on those actions aiming at eliminating poverty and fomenting the creation of new employment opportunities. Moreover, acting within the context of the so-called major cities policy, our union will be working towards the creation of new services to the benefit of the unemployed.

As far as national minorities are concerned, typically enough some 9% of the people dwelling in Holland today are of no Dutch national origin. If things continue to develop this way, by the year 2050 the rate will have climbed up to 40%. In Amsterdam the percentage of foreigners is of 50%: Turks, Moroccans and Antilleans are the most highly populated foreign communities. Unemployment rates among immigrants are four times higher as those among Dutch nationals. Thus, a sizable proportion of immigrants is left in the margin, relying on financial aid and subsidies for their subsistence and with scarce if any prospect towards finding a remunerated job. At best, people of such category are compelled to make ends meet with extremely low wages. On the other hand, research has shown that through procedures and mechanisms they have been implementing at the level of recruitment, businesses have been setting unnecessary obstacles to the hiring of people originating from national minorities. It is to be acknowledged, however, that a special covenant was entered in 1996 between labor unions and workers whereby the social partners committed themselves to spare no effort towards intensifying the process of hiring of persons originating from national minorities. Moreover, a special law has been effective since the 1st of January 1998, meant to foment employment of minorities. According to such law, employers with more than 35 workers on their business payroll are required to file a detailed report on whatever specific actions they have been adopting towards materializing the objectives of such law as well as to discuss the conclusions of such report with local work counselors. On its part, our union has been making every possible effort - through actions and supervising councils - to monitor due conformation with the terms and stipulations set forth in such law.

Attracting workers from foreign countries was in the past something that was considered desirable. Today, social conditions and the current realities of the economy impose that appropriate management is ensured of a situation under which -especially in major cities like Amsterdam- there are schools where more than half of the pupils enrolled are of foreign national origin and where an increasingly large number of businesses have been employing foreign workers. Thus, in any case, adequate as well as sufficient measures are to be adopted and implemented so as to at all times ensure a truly multilateral and pluralistic approach of the various situations that arise.

Ladies and Gentlemen, I hope to have managed to provide a general overview of the situation in Holland vis-a-vis the issues on the agenda of this conference. For those interested in further details, we have brought informative literature in English, which is already made available to you.

Thank you for your attention.

Dear friends and comrades, before anything else I would like to congratulate the Labour Centre of Athens for their excellent initiative as well as for the organization of this series of meetings, as well as for the hospitality they extend to us. The three basic points around which this conference revolves are unemployment, labour relations, and problems related to immigration.

I believe that these are problems that concern us all. In spite of the varying degrees to which these problems affect our countries, they nevertheless are problems which are common to us all.

Norway is a country which is small in area and small in population -it has 5,000,000 inhabitants. As a matter of fact, 100 years ago our country was the poorest in Europe. We are not members of the European Union. The issue of our entry into the European Union occasioned two national votes, in 1992 and 1994 respectively. On both occasions the population reacted negatively to the possibility of membership. In spite of this fact, in essence our country is completely incorporated into the European economic system, including the Senger agreement. The exceptions are in the fields of commerce in foodstuffs and agricultural products. Our basic exports are oil and fish. As far as balance of trade is concerned, our country presents high surpluses, the majority of which has been invested outside Norway.

At present the Norwegian state maintains investments in the amount of 50,000,000,000 U.S. dollars in international private shares, and it should be noted that these investments are growing rapidly. It is estimated that within 5 to 7 years from today the level of these investments of the Norwegian State will have reached the amount of 200,000,000,000 U.S. dollars. As a result we are also a part of the procedure of globalization of the economy and the market. Unemployment in Norway is 3%; it is almost the

KLEIV FISKVIC, President of LO

N O R W A Y
O S L O



The President of LO OSLO, Kleiv Fiskvic

same in relation to the country's inflation rate. At the same time, however, there are fields - such as that of health care and education - where an insufficiency of workers is noted. Thus, for example, the importation of nurses from countries such as Sweden, Germany, and Finland is justified. The same holds true for the construction industry, with the importation of manpower from Sweden and Denmark. We are pleased by the fact that Sweden and Denmark are apparently living a period of economic development. On the other hand, however, this is not helpful to us with our need for skilled workers in the area of construction.

Norwegian politicians unanimously agree that the issue of employment is of immediate priority. This matter, moreover, is the pre-eminent slogan of the unions and the government. We see, in any case, that in the area of employment things are not so bad in Norway, and the cooperation between the labor party and the party of the unions make up the basis of the matter. There are, however, other areas in which Norway followed a different path than that of other European countries. Already from the beginning of the 1990's we proceeded to nationalization of all banks and insurance companies where there is capital investment. In our country there is legislation forbidding the importation of manpower from countries outside the European Union. In spite of this there is immigration from countries outside the European Union. Most of the immigrant workers are actually political refugees, but procedures are so slow in our country's bureaucratic system regarding the decision as to whether we are dealing with actual political refugees, that in the end all the immigrants receive permission to stay in our country for humanitarian reasons. Last year 15,000 immigrants entered in Norway, primarily from Iraq. It is characteristic that of the 30,000 Kurds who arrived in Europe in 1999, 4,000 ended up in Norway. For a country as small as ours this is not a negligible number. It is not possible for us to know for sure if they are true political refugees or not. For most of them finding a job is not at all easy, since they are not skilled. I'm sorry to say it, but public opinion - especially among the common citizens - has begun to turn against these people and this is something that is taken advantage of by the Norwegian right-wing party, as happens in other countries. We the people of the labor unions and syndicalism continually struggle against every form of racism, in order to obliterate all types of these strange fears which develop and are cultivated against foreigners. Solving this problem is not at all easy, especially since most of those held in Norwegian jails for crimes related to narcotics are foreigners; most of those, as a matter of fact, are Albanians from Kosovo. The criminological situations among young people show that the highest proportion is to be found in second-generation immigrants. Indeed, this isn't only a problem for Norway, but in many other countries. At bottom there is an especially critical issue, and simple answers do not exist. I believe that we, the Western European countries, have ended up creating a new lower class of people.

I have not yet mentioned the biggest challenge that the union movement and the workers have to face during our days. This is the globalization of trade and the liberalization of the economy. As we sit here and talk, the national governments are already negotiating with big capital, fashioning international trade laws which safeguard investments and repeat national laws which exist for the protection of workers and labor relations. The enactment into law of this liberalization of trade and the effort to safeguard investment capital are in my opinion the reason for the creation of this serious threat to the prosperity of all workers in the world. International capital has drawn nations



into an unbridled race of competition. A competition which presses the governments to make cuts in taxes, wages, and welfare. I believe that already in our next meeting we should discuss this problem of trade liberalization and globalization of the economy.
I thank you.

NADEJDA DASKALOVA, Research Fellow at the
Institute of Social and Trade Union Research,
Representative of CITUB

B U L G A R I A
S O F I A



*The Bulgarian delegation, from the left:
Ljuben Tomev and Nadejda Daskalova*

Colleagues, allow me to begin by thanking the organizers of this conference, the Labour Centre of Athens. I take the floor on behalf of the delegation from Bulgaria. Allow me to introduce my colleagues, Mr. Ljuben Tomev, Director of the Institute of Labour Unions and Social Research of the Federation of Labor Unions of Bulgaria. He holds a doctorate in Economics.

My name is Nadejda Daskalova. I am a Research Fellow at the same Institute. I hold a doctorate in Economics and I am in charge of various Research Programs at our Institute. The promotion and expansion of the right to work for all people is a necessary prerequisite for socioeconomic development and progress, as well as democracy. The problems of unemployment and the right to employment must be approached by way of the more general framework of the political and socioeconomic realities of each country. Along with the rest of the Eastern European countries Bulgaria is living through a transitional period from a state economy to a market economy, of free trade and the democratization of public life. But the union movement itself is going through a transitional period, since from the role of the voice of the state which it once had, it has developed into an independent area of representation of workers' interests. Despite the commonality of the origin of the problems, the situations in each of the former socialist countries has its own particularities. As a result, before I speak about the subject of this conference I would like to say a couple of words about the situation in Bulgaria. Within 10 years eight different governments from all segments of the political spectrum succeeded each other in governing the country.

For labor relations this succession meant a new beginning each time, with new trilateral apparatuses. Because of the delay in structural changes and privatization, the situation the country went through from the end of 1996 and until the beginning of 1997 can be characterized

as a deep crisis. Real income decreased and workers became ever poorer. Within the last nine years prices of goods increased 1200 times, while wages only 500 times. On July 1st, 1997, measures were put into effect regarding currency with the aim of strengthening economic discipline, to bring about stability of the national currency and decrease in inflation. Inflation decreased to 6% in 1999, but the wages as well as the buying power of workers' income continued to be limited. In December 1999 the average wage in the public sector was 108 lev, while in the private sector the average wage was 93 dollars, while the minimum pension was 90 dollars. The cost of living ran at 170 lev. Only 14% of households which were asked by the National Statistical Service of Bulgaria were able to cope with this cost of life. In the Republic of Bulgaria - as is the case in the other former socialist countries - only in the last ten years can one speak of free trade unionism, as well as about the realization and expansion of syndicalistic rights of workers. New laws were established and legal texts were adopted which allow free syndicalistic unions, and the terms that govern free union activity. Within this new climate that governs the economy and the political life of the country the union movement is continuously developing. The labour union in Bulgaria with the most members is the Federation of Labour Unions of Bulgaria, with 600,000 members. It was established on February 17, 1990, during the exceptional conference of old labour unions of Bulgaria which thereafter became Constituent Assembly. A significant place in the Bulgarian labour movement is held by the Federation of Workers of PDDKREPA, with 150,000 members.

CITUB and PDDKREPA were the first agencies which later were recognized as representatives at the national level. Both are members of the European Federation of Labour Unions, as well as the International Federation of Free Labour Unions.

We have no reason to allege that the legislation in Bulgaria allows for discrimination and unjust treatment of the workers and the union movement. It is another matter, however, that in some instances employers violate the law and the rights of the workers. The workers' employment and union rights are frequently violated also in the private sector, where the general practice is to sign private agreements instead of labor contracts, something which means that there is no provision for social security, nor for recognition of seniority. Thus payment of the basic wage is not safeguarded, but at times not even payment of the wages as agreed upon. There are also instances of violation of labor law, of workers and unions right on the part of certain foreign companies which operate on Bulgarian soil. And now allow me to tell you some things about unemployment in Bulgaria. We can say that this is the most disturbing form of violation of the people human rights. In spite of clear provisions in the constitutions of many countries for safeguarding the right to work, the high rates of unemployment continue to be a part of our lives, causing severe economic and social repercussions on society as a whole as well as on individuals.

For the Bulgarian labour unions unemployment is one of the most serious challenges, and not only because it means fewer members in its ranks. Bulgaria, as well as the remainder of former socialist countries, during the so-called communist period were characterized by the full employment of its people, employment maintained thanks to administrative measures to the detriment of efficiency and output, and resulting in the low value of work. The first repercussion from the transition to a market economy and the restructuring was massive unemployment. The unemployment rate in December 1999 reached 16%, or 600,000 officially registered unemployed. In comparison to December of the previous year (1998) the number of unemployed reached 31.2%. The social groups which have been most

affected by unemployment are as follows: first, women. There has been a clear tendency, from the beginning of the transition to a free economy, for unemployment to especially affect the country's female population. Unemployed women represent more than 55% of the officially registered unemployed citizens. In December 1999 the number of unemployed women increased -in comparison to the levels of December 1998- by 28%. The ratio of unemployed women to unemployed men was 53/47. Another large category of unemployed is youth.

In December 1999 the ratio of unemployed youth reached 30%. The lack of skills, specialization, and the necessary training are the prime causes of unemployment among young people, and particularly for new arrivals to the labor market. Another group is that of unskilled workers, who in December 1999 represented approximately 60% of the unemployed. Another category is that of individuals with a very low level of education, which in December 1999 represented 55,5% of unemployed. As far as long-term unemployed are concerned, their percentages continue to be relatively high, since they represent one-third of the officially registered unemployed. This situation causes a severe problem regarding the survival of these people's families, and makes obvious the necessity of taking measures which will help the unemployed to adapt to the changed circumstances of the labor market. The other aspect of long-term unemployment is poverty, social tension, and the parallel economy. We do not have a real reason to speak of a problem of ethnic unemployment, even though a high percentage of the unemployed are gypsies. Unemployment among the ranks of the gypsies in Bulgaria is due to certain particular characteristics of their manpower. The existence of limited skills or the complete lack of skills, low or nonexistent educational level, and limited work discipline. The distribution of unemployment in different regions of the country does not present any homogeneity. In some areas the unemployment rate is two times higher than the average.

There are many cities and villages where in effect all inhabitants are unemployed. On the other hand, those who work in certain businesses are much worse off. Many of them have had to remain unemployed for a long period of time without being paid, or many months may pass without receiving their wages. The law for protection from unemployment and the promotion of work was voted on in Bulgaria at the end of 1997. It created the national network of services for the strengthening of employment, established programs, new provinces and responsibilities for legislative agencies and managing bodies who are involved in the labour market. This law also establishes the prerequisites for the provision of unemployment aid. Among the measures -active and passive- which are foreseen in regard to the law, the funds are allocated primarily in favor of passive measures, at 62%. Unemployment carries a high cost, not only for society as a whole but also for the unemployed and their families more particularly. This is the reason our syndicalistic union, with a petition to the government, insists on the structuring and privatization procedures in conjunction with the promotion of effective measures for the strengthening of employment as well as for the priority which must be given to taking active policy measures.

For the development of the labour market special emphasis is placed on the taking of measures aimed at the prevention of exclusion from the market, as well as encouragement of utilization and employment of the long-term unemployed, elderly workers, and those workers who belong to the category of the handicapped. CITUB insists on the taking of preventive measures to encourage the creation of new and alternative types of work which must precede the realization of programs for restructuring which *inter alia* foresee the total or partial liquidation of businesses. We propose voting on a law for the creation

of a Social Investment Fund and the creation of new jobs, the development of new strategies for regional economic development, the creation of regional job programs and protection from unemployment, with the participation of agencies of local administration. The social partners and non-governmental organizations which result from the restructuring programs must promote the establishment of new, stricter rules regarding jobs and the prevention of unemployment at the local level, through social dialogue and cooperation.

The Federation of Independent Labour Unions requests that the Government adopt a national policy plan as well as clear strategies for the creation of job opportunities and the training and specialization of the country's manpower. In closing I would like to say that if they truly wish to represent workers and to affect social progress, the European labor unions must act above and beyond that of the simple creation of new jobs. We must insist on the creation of quality jobs, on the protection of the health and physical welfare of employees in the workplace, on fair wages, as well as on up-to-date education and training, so that workers can acquire high skills and accomplishments. Perhaps as regards our country this task may seem very optimistic, but for the countries which are part of the European Union it is by now something very real as well as urgent. We must not allow the social dimension of Europe to be lost. I thank you.

MARIA FRAGIADAKI, Member of the Secretariat of Public and International Relations of EKA, Vice President of POSPERT

A T H E N S



M. Fragiadaki: Member of the Secretariat of Public and International Relations of EKA and Vice President of POSPERT

Maria Fragiadaki from the Secretariat of Public and International Relations of EKA and Vice-president of the Federation of employees in the Radio and Television.

Colleagues, the 20th century was the era of the great and mass appearance of socialist ideas, the heroic uprising in Chicago and the October Revolution, of the people republics, the multiple political and social uprisings and liberation movements in countries of the third world against imperialism and colonialism.

The global interrelations were influenced by the left for approximately 75 years and conditions were created for respect for human worth, as well as more just apportionment of goods.

However, at the end of this century attempt was made to turn back the results that the popular forces had won with their struggles. Events such as the fall of Berlin wall and the collapse of the Soviet Union, but also the Gulf War, the continued presence of armies of occupation in Cyprus, and the NATO bombings of Serbia, close the circle of our century amid pessimism, helplessness and silence.

This new order which the entwined powers are attempting to form, with the mass media playing a decisive role, has been followed by the political forces, cloaked in their own ideals, cloaks of neo-liberalism, many times center-left or left-wing forces, to impose them as a necessary evil, and they try to convince us as a class to accept adaptation to new circumstances, with the alibi of the so-called one-way-street of globalization. That we accept the unchecked barbarity of the free market, the omnipotence of the financial oligarchs, which leads to the shrinking of the welfare state, of the workers but also of human rights, the intensification of work, increase of unemployment, and to the constant increase of exploitation.

Thus economic and political circles, taking advantage of the strategy crisis among the union leadership, aim to snatch their acquiescence in order to realize their anti-popular plans unopposed.

To eliminate the labour movements' ideological intentions, the argument of the collapse of the living-socialism model is used, which took place because of the lack of significant representation of the popular forces themselves.

But capitalism and all forms of imperialism are identified with the exploitation of the many by the few, with violence, with autocracy, social injustice, repression, poverty, and marginalization.

More and more people on our planet are being led into social exclusion, especially in the poor countries which have been drained; they have been exploited by the rich countries.

A new wave of immigrants is searching for a future in the modern metropolises of Europe primarily, and they are dealt with marginally, they are led to new ghettos. The underlying causes, if one unravels Ariadne's clue in the contemporary sociopolitical labyrinth, are to be found in the fabric of capitalism itself, which contains and promotes discrimination, inequality, and racist divisions.

Global capitalism, exploiting natural resources and manpower in the greatest possible way thus gives birth to pockets of great gathering or great distancing of wealth. These pockets concern entire peoples who are pushed into poverty, into underdevelopment, unemployment, hunger. A marginalization procedure of thousands of millions of people created by man.

Today, on the threshold of the 21st century, the poverty gap between north and south is widening. The exploitation of the weak by the strong is increasing.

The new technologies, the product of workers' labor and thought, are used, due to their catalytic effect, in a series of manufacturing procedures for the welfare of the global community, to overturn social and political control, to abolish democratic participation, the institutions themselves, to shape a new form of imperialistic dependence, a new form of discrimination between those who possess the new technologies and decide on how they are to be used, and those who need them, or mainly are on the receiving end of the results of their use.

In our country during the past years government policies unfolded which include strong neo-liberal characteristics, especially in the area of privatizations, labor relations, social care, using the alibi of the path of convergence, from both previous governments.

All of this with the blessing of the European establishment, the international stock-market circles, and the neo-liberal economic support. The result is the abolition of rights which had been achieved during all these years by the popular movement.

Dignity, achievements, workers' human rights themselves such as the 8-hour day and the workers' right to choose how to spend his time on a daily basis are slaughtered on the altar of the well known competitiveness. But is this a future that we want for the new workers and for our children? Flexible employment which changes jobs constantly, while being threatened by the specter of unemployment, with no connection to the organized labor movement, without protection and social security, hostages to insecure jobs, without workers' rights, without the right to a private life, to social and political activities.

Because with the sought after forms of arrangement and offsetting of working time, there will be no possibility of personal planning. In the social security system the position of workers and retirees is becoming dramatically worse. New devices are appearing. For example, the individualization of social insurance.

Today's government, despite all their announcements regarding the support for a mixed economy and improvement of social policy, followed the same policies as the previous one, which turns the DEKD into

a source of wealth and profit for private citizens, through selling off of these companies or portions of their activities. Even a portion of the activities of hospitals.

Thus the regularizing factor of economic and social life remains the intertwining with and dependence on the large economic interests in the name of modernization, which invokes competitiveness as the prime goal of a public sector.

Unfortunately regarding a lot of questions there was acquiescence on the part of the top syndicalistic entity at the social-dialogue table. With us too there was a social pact with crucial issues regarding our achievements. The reduction of non-wage cost, part-time employment in the public sector, the legalisation of interventions in free collective bargaining, became part of the seal of inform types of employment, opened the way for the change of labour relations and wages. In practice it was shown that the government's choice of social dialogue was not really sincere and was made with the following reasoning: come and let's discuss and if we as labor movement don't agree, we shall pass the law anyway, and that is what happened.

Unfortunately there is also an acquiescence evident in the European Federation and this has to do with flexibility of employment, part-time employment, which is established by the European Union's green book regarding flexibility of employment.

Thus the trade union bureaucracy handling of the economic crisis in the unhampered orientation towards the ONE accepted and looked at the challenges in a technical manner rather than a political manner, in the name of social dialogue, and handled it passively rather than unting the gray zones of relations between workers in the private sector and the public sector and the unemployed.

There is one optimistic prospect, however, my colleagues. We must respond politically to the neo-liberal class aggression, representing our class, together with farmers, small tradesmen, youth, to stand in an organized way against these objectives and to search for radical changes, for the overturning of the ruling system and the promotion of values which will be characterized by the principles of solidarity, equality, freedom, social justice, democracy, the fair reapportionment of wealth. We must extend a helping hand to peoples who are suffering the greatest imperialistic exploitation. We must resist the ruling perception that globalization is an unavoidable evil, and on this point political interventions are constantly losing strength. As unions we must develop a new internationalism based on freedom and self-determination of peoples, on security, democracy, peace, solidarity, on the respect for human rights and international law, in the cultural particularities of nations and people, in protection of the environment, in the abolition of exploitation of man by man. We must defend the right of every person to a dignified existence, to a quality of life, to full paid employment, to equal access by all to high-standard social goods with special care being taken so that those who for subjective or objective reasons cannot work can live equivalently, without exclusions. We can widen this communication using the new technologies, with a dynamic, two-way communication.

On the European level, the European Union can be a basic element of political, social, and democratic stability for our planet; to act as a counterweight to growth of the dominating actions of capital which are unchecked by social and political forces.

In order for this to occur, however, we must fight for the shaping of European developments. There isn't only one road that leads to Europe, that prescribed by Maastricht and ONE, but the road of social Europe, of a Europe of the people.

The field of social and political battle can be formed by new political circumstances if the proper political majority is created.



Within this framework the European union movement must fight for a true convergence, with political assistance to small countries with geographical particularities, many minorities and immigrant groups, in order to avoid the creation of varying rates of convergence which will be strengthened by the choice within each country of an economic policy at the national level which will support the economic interests of the people and not of the strong.

For the promotion of a policy which will have man at its center, which will take into consideration the cultural differences of each people, each inhabitant, which will embrace all with sensitivity and social care and responsibility, regardless of their origin, sex, race, religion.

For a public sector which needs in addition to being a lever for development, to provide the proper social services to the entire nation, for support of social security, with trilateral financing, without discrimination in the provision of pensions, insurance. Without slaughtering the pension rights and expectations.

My colleagues, workers' social security is not a concession. We must make it clear, and a basic and necessary part of every production procedure. Therefore we need policies for the fair assignment of burden within the tax system. The creation of a safety network from poverty. For the handling of unemployment and the just reapportionment of wealth to wage-earners and retirees, to demand the reduction of working hours, but not in the way they are going about it, but without reduction in wages, without offsets and flexibility. A five-day week, 7-hour day, with at the same time increase in full-time paid employment. The right to full employment and social security is the right of all and we must all demand it.

Finally strong assertive action is required in order to deal with the democratic and social deficit, to open the road to the Europe of the people. There is a solution, there are prospects. We must be optimistic. There is hope for the future but this can take place by strengthening our actions, hammering out our union and widening our alliances.

We must continue the fight, which is inseparable from the struggles of the wider popular movement for a society without exploitation. I believe that this must be the message of this conference.

Thank you.

**MICHAUD TIBOT, Resp. of International relations
of FGTB**

B E L G I U M
B R U S S E L S



*Resp. of International relations of FGTB,
Tibot Michaud*

My name is Tibot Michaud and I am in charge of international relations for FGTB Brussels, in Belgium.

Dear comrades, friends, I would like to begin with to express my thanks to Grigoris Felonis and the Labour Centre of Athens for organizing this conference, and for the hospitality they are offering us. So, I would like to say that if our purpose in being here is to speak about unemployment, the goal of full employment and the challenges that the union movement is called upon to face at the dawn of the 21st century, I must immediately refer to the Europe of 17,000,000 unemployed and 55,000,000 people living below the poverty line. In order to comment on the fact that this insecurity has no equal in the past. In Belgium, in Brussels, we are witnesses to the complete freeing of the labour market, with the endless procession of the working poor, that is to say the people although employed and collecting a wage, this wage is so low that it forces them to live below the poverty line. But their jobs should protect them from such a thing. It is not possible for us to accept that Europe, Belgium, within this maelstrom of globalization will become the scene of a procedure through which multinational companies are allowed to act as they wish, proceeding to a total restructuring and freeing up of the labour market. The unions must increase their power on the trade as well as on the interprofessional level. It is also important, however, to strengthen the coordination and cooperation between the various syndicalistic entities and unions in Europe, as well as in the entire world. In fact every so often we hear talk about capitalist globalization. Why, though should we not envision and - why not - proceed to a union and labour globalization? If we take into consideration the union parties that exist in the area of Europe as well as in the world in general, we will realize that in spite of our national differences we are not strangers to each other but have



something in common which unites us: we are all workers. So being aware of the points that separate us, and at the same time strengthening the elements that united us, we will be able to create a powerful counterweight to authority. It is utopian to believe that each country alone and without the collaboration of others can cope with the challenge of globalization. On the other hand, local action will make up the core upon which the union movement must structure its efforts to achieve the much desired union globalization. The local, national bases are those which unite the efforts in such a direction. I repeat: in the Brussels area there are many people who are living with job precariousness. Part-time work - in the form of supposed volunteer work - downgrading, the employment of people under the legal age, without forgetting those who are obliged to perform two jobs at once, thus living in a state of confusion from which they are unable to escape for economic or tax reasons. For exactly this reason steady and well paid jobs should be created in conjunction with the establishment of laws and directives directed against firings, restructurings, and relocation of businesses. The further aim of FGTB Brussels is the achievement of full employment for all workers, since this is the only way of ensuring true social progress. In order to achieve this goal we are trying for the reduction of working hours through the attainment of the 35-hour work week without wage cuts and indeed with legislative safeguards, guaranteed minimum wage for all, and increases in wages and pensions. So we must be specific in our goals, to labor for social progress, and above all to be true syndicalists. Let us consider: if we, the trade unionists, do not do anything for full employment, no one else will.

Thank you.

GIORGOS SKIADIOTIS, Member of the
Executive Committee of EKA

A T H E N S



G. Skiadiotis, Member of the E.C. of EKA

Dear Colleagues,

I am addressing you on behalf of the Pan-Labour Fighting Front, the movement that represents and expresses the Class Labour Movement in our country.

The dramatic developments of the years 1989 to 1991 are now leaving their mark on humanity and especially on the former socialist countries.

Humanity is experiencing new plagues. The most undisguised intervention, the competition for apportioning markets, the submission of countries, the new local wars, the new bonds of subjugation and servitude. We are living in a historic retrogression.

Millions of people on earth are starving to death, entire people are living under circumstances of utter poverty, backwardness, torture, intervention. Degradation and poverty are not only experienced by the workers and people of the Third World; they are also experienced by the workers in the large capitalistic metropolises, the workers of the former socialist countries.

The 225 richest persons on earth over doubled their property in 1999 and, according to UNESCO data, they now own property that equals the income of half of humanity. In the same year, 65 million people, mostly children, died of hunger, thirst and cold. Millions, mostly children and young men and women, died because of drugs.

The basic contrast of capitalism, the contrast between capital and labour, is getting worse. The inhumane face of capitalism, its reactionary nature, has been fully exposed. The question is coming back more forcefully, no matter how eagerly some may be trying to exorcise it.

Undoubtedly, the reshufflings under way (like takeovers and mergins of businesses-privatizations - denationalizations), at the very core of which one can find the issue of labour relations, are not recent choices of an accidental nature.



And above all they are not dependent on which political party expressing the capitalistic interests is in power (the examples of the rule by either conservative or social democrat parties in EU, as well as in the former socialist countries are self explanatory). For example, the nature of EU and NATO has not changed due to the fact that power is exercised by socialists.

These choices are ones of strategic nature on a national, regional and global level; they are objective procedures being done during the development of capitalism, on its higher level, the imperialistic one. In reference to the above, let me point out two things:

1. Some people, even using terms like globalization, post industrial era, information society, etc., (non scientific and erroneous terms), want to attach a deterministic nature to these developments and deal with them as if they were similar to the development of nature the weather phenomena.

They try to hide the fact that for those changes and mainly for the nature and the orientation of the changes underway, as well as their content, responsibility lies with specific economic and political powers. Those who voted for and accepted the "White Book" are now pretending to be innocent, are calling upon it saying that we have to accept the full freedom in connection with the terms and the preconditions of the workers' wages and the reproduction of the labour force.

2. The labour union movement can not defend its interests successfully, if it accepts as accomplished, inevitable and deterministic procedures the choices and decisions made by the capital and its political representatives. Choices like those of the European Union of Commerce and its decisions.

The struggles of the workers can have results and open up prospects only if they resist and question the basic choices of the capital, and set up their own vision in contrast.

And in this viewpoint, the struggles that were made in our country by the workers, the farmers, the students, the teachers, the pensioners, etc. in opposition to the dirty war against Yugoslavia, during the Clinton visit at the Balkans, the struggles at Seattle, US, at Davos recently, the struggles of the European Workers are encouraging and full of hope in any respect. And it is most important that these struggles took place despite the will of the officials and the compromised trade unions.

Data show that trade unions, mainly the mainstream ones, are losing their credit among the workers, are becoming less mass and are gradually being scorned.

Of course, this phenomenon also has some objective causes that have to do with the ruthless attack of the capital and its consequences on the workers.

However, the basic cause of the unreliability of the trade unions is that most of them have abandoned the basic line, the line of class fight. They have adopted the line of Social Dialogue, the Class cooperation; they have adopted the goals and visions of the capital as their own goals and visions.

We would like to remind some who think that way that the experience in our country, as well as global history, reveal that whenever, even for a limited time period, such a "social peace" was achieved the Peoples and humanity delayed, went backwards.

Since the era of slavery, the Sparakos' era, what created progress, what brought about new things, the main element of progress, every positive development was the class fight, the conflict between those who had the production means and enjoyed their results and those who worked at the production means without enjoying the results of their work.

The workers in Europe no longer need a trade union movement that makes estimates and reaches conclusions on the consequences, which records and describes the sad results.

This is what they are doing today, and it is something that even capitalists themselves can not hide. They do not need a movement that accepts the capitalistic changes underway as inevitable and unavoidable facts. The questions that arise are:

Will the trade union movement accept the commands and directions of the monopolies, the EE, the White Book as an inevitable evil or will it fight against them?

Will it accept the free movement of capitals, services and labour force under the terms and preconditions set by the capital?

Will the trade union movement accept it when the forms of fight it chooses are described as illegal and the only legal form of protest is that which is taking place in the living room of our house?

Will the trade union movement accept the consequences of realizing the EMU, the barbarism called NATO and the new order of things?

Will the trade union movement unite and pursue common action with the capital forces and the politicians who represent it or will it seek ways of unity and common action against the capital?

The class trade union movement in our country and in Europe will be gaining ground and growing day by day, year by year.

We are turning our backs in indifference to all those who have joined forces with the capital and the politicians who represent it, those who call as disruptors. We are going to fight against that kind of unity.

The fact that the prospect of the trade union movement is in contrast and against the majority of the mainstream trade union leaders in our country, in contrast with the European mainstream trade unions is not principally related with our wishes.

This prospect lies mainly in the fact that such a **class trade union movement** reflects a dynamic situation which is accumulating and maturing in quality within the capitalistic societies.

What is this:

Well, the contrast between rich and poor. The ever widening gap between the socialization of production and labour, and the usurpation of its results by the few.

The contrast between the interests of the workers, the Peoples and the policy of the international capitalistic unions like EU, WTO, NATO, etc.

In a nutshell, the future and the prospect of the class trade union movement lies exactly in the fact that it expresses a conflict that has an objective, deterministic nature, in the fact that it does not refuse the social conflict, but it is pursuing, anticipating and preparing it.

We have considered the complaints as necessary, since they are just ashes in the eyes of the workers and disorientation, it is mockery for the poor, the unemployed, the destitute, the workers who are daily watching their rights being limited to tell them:

- That these rights and freedom are compatible with EMU and the convergence plans.
- That the realization of the White Book can tackle the problem of unemployment and poverty.
- That the Balkans stabilization program and the presence of NATO troops are for their own good.
- That the measures taken by the EE and the national governments are aimed at lowering unemployment and not just strengthening the capital.



The way out is not found at the deception of the programs called "active employment" used by the EU and the national governments, at the privatization and denationalization programs in each country, in the free action of the capital.

The solution lies in defending the rights and achievements of the workers, in defending the resources of every country from the insatiable appetite of the multinational companies, in the right of every people to choose its own way, in the unity and common action of the workers, not with the capital forces, but against them.

Thank you for listening to me and have a good time in our country.

**BOGOLJUB MITROVIC, President
of Federation of Autonomous Trade Unions
of Belgrade**

Y U G O S L A V I A
B E L G R A D E



*The President of the Federation of
Autonomous Trade Unions of Belgrade,
Bogoljub Mitrović*

Respected President Felonis, ladies and gentlemen, in the name of the Federation of Autonomous Labour Unions of Belgrade, our delegation and its head, we wish to thank the Labour Centre of Athens for the invitation extended to us to attend and take part in this International Conference of Trade Unions from the various European capitals.

I bring you the warm greetings and wishes of all the associations and unions which take part in our Federation for success in your proceedings and the achievement of your goals. The mere fact that so many people gathered here for discussions reinforces the critical dimension of the problem of unemployment, labour relations, and economic immigration. All of us, therefore, are disposed to exchange ideas and experiences and to propose solutions to the benefit of today's, as well as future, members of our union organizations.

Dear colleagues, problems such as **unemployment, labour relations, and economic immigration** are common to all countries in the world. According to its level of economic development each country attempts to cope with these problems with a greater or lesser degree of success. These problems present in a much more acute form in those countries which are going through changes in the established order regarding proprietorship, and a generally transitional situation.

We especially find ourselves in a particularly difficult position. As you know, our country was attacked by NATO forces on March 24, 1999. The bombing continued for eleven weeks. The bomb-warning sirens sounded in Belgrade 146 times! Our citizens spent approximately 700 hours closed up in shelters. The bombings left behind great devastation and incurable suffering. There were many people who lost their lives, many more who were wounded, while great damage was done to the economic structure and in general the



country's infrastructure, including the installations and means which were to function as the primary levers for reform and positive changes in the economy and development of the country. Over 250 economic and industrial installations, more than 300 schools, as well as 60 hospitals and other health-care facilities were completely destroyed. Over 50 bridges collapsed, while fifteen highways collapsed, along with railway stations and bus stations. Six civil airports, 26 telecommunications installations, and a large number of electrical power stations were also destroyed. As the direct result of the destruction of buildings, structures, and equipment, some hundreds of thousands of workers were left unemployed. Over 600,000 workers lost their jobs because their jobs were directly related to the production chain of the destroyed businesses. All these installations which were affected were civilian. The financial cost of the damage is huge, over 100 billion dollars. In Belgrade alone over 962 installations were destroyed or suffered damage. As exhausted as they were already by so many years of unfairly imposed economic measures, our country's economy and society descended into an even worse situation. After approximately three months of attacks, employees - members of our federation - but also all citizens were forced to make even greater sacrifices, to accept a further decline in their living standards, to live with unemployment, and with all this to again begin the exhausting task of rebuilding roads and bridges, buildings and installations, electrical stations and electrical power distribution systems, apartment buildings, houses, hospitals and radio and television stations. Thanks to the truly superhuman efforts they made, our construction workers managed within a short period of time to rebuild many of these buildings and installations.

And as if all these misfortunes which befell our country as a result of the bombings weren't enough, already from the time that the K4 forces were deployed in Metohia - Kosovo, more than 300,000 Serbs and others of non-Albanian origin were forced to leave this province due to the terrorism carried out by the nationalist KLA who are seeking the detachment of this territory. In spite of the presence of the foreign forces, the terms of Resolution 44 of the UN Security Council are not maintained, as long as tolerance is shown for the crimes that are committed against the Serbian population.

In Kosovo-Metohia gross and violent violations of the syndicalistic and other human rights of workers are taking place. Already 125,000 workers who were driven from their homes no longer have jobs nor the means to support their families and themselves. The Federal Republic of Yugoslavia today offers shelter to more than 1,000,000 expelled people and refugees from the former Yugoslav Republics, Kosovo and Metohia. For all these people we must secure shelter, food, assistance, education for their children, medical-pharmaceutical care, social security, and - most important of all - jobs. All this exhausts our economy and puts enormous pressure on the already low employment level. The average monthly wage today ranges around a value equal to 80 German marks. Many workers, as well as the unemployed with their families, today live at the poverty line. As a result, we still have need of humanitarian aid. This situation is reflected in the situation prevalent within our union groups and organizations which, due to the decrease in the number of members, but also to the nonpayment of dues, no longer have the economic possibility to cover even the most basic needs of their workers and members.

Because of the war and everything I have mentioned until now, our labor unions need the solidarity and support of all the labor unions in the other European capitals in the form of resources and

technical equipment, things for which we would be grateful. For the help we have already received we are especially grateful to the friendly feelings and support of the Greek labour unions from Athens, Larissa, Volos, and Piraeus, as well as the Federation of Labour Unions of Moscow, who joined their forces and sent us valuable help during the duration of the attacks, and indeed by way of their missions which acted at the risk of their own lives. We also thank all those who helped us and demonstrated their demands for an end to the attacks.

As you can understand, under such conditions the problems of unemployment and finding jobs in our case present as much more critical than in any other city in Europe, especially if we compare the situation with the developed Western countries. Moreover, this is the reason why the procedures of privatization and turn towards a market economy are proceeding so slowly, more so because the priority is the preservation and safeguarding of employment and the income which helps the workers to survive.

We believe that the solution regarding this will come by way of improvement in productivity of businesses, economic and social development, the rebuilding of devastated installations, as well as comprehensive reforms. Only in this way will we succeed in having the unjust sanctions which have been imposed upon us lifted, so that again the countries of the world can approach us, and we approach them, so as to reduce the high level of unemployment, poverty, and deprivation which harm our workers, retirees and their families, in order to improve their conditions and standard of living.

There are many workers from our country, mostly young people, who work today in other European countries. We are grateful for that, especially since we are aware that this creates problems insofar as the help you provide for your own unemployed is concerned, without forgetting also the other difficult situations that are thus created in the host countries. In spite of this, due to the difficult economic situation faced by our country and many other Balkan countries, the European Labor Movement must strive to strengthen and facilitate the mobility of workers toward destinations where job opportunities and legal frameworks which safeguard such jobs, quality living conditions, security, and all their labor rights exist. All the labor unions in all countries must fight against xenophobia and in favor of acceptance and tolerance of foreign workers, as well as the regularization of all these issues with collective agreements and accompanying policies on the part of the relevant governments. Ladies and gentlemen colleagues, I direct an appeal to all of you and the union entities you represent to intervene with your governments and national federations in your countries for the following:

- Immediate lifting of all sanctions which have been imposed upon the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia which primarily harm the workers, the retirees, and the unemployed and their families. For this purpose I propose that the present Conference adopt a common resolution which will ask for an immediate lifting of the sanctions against the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia.
- The provision of material and humanitarian aid.
- The complete and total safeguarding of workers and the return of all Serbs as well as non-Albanian-origin ethnic groups to Kosovo and Metohia, and the consistent application of the terms of Resolution 44 of the UN Security Council for the restoration of the complete national sovereignty and territorial integrity of Yugoslavia in this portion of her state.



We also ask you to allow the entrance on equal footing of the unions from Serbia and the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia in the international syndicalistic unions of Europe and the world. Finally, it is my honor and my pleasure to invite all the syndicalistic unions and collective agencies present here to cooperate with the Federation of Independent Labour Unions of Belgrade on all the relevant matters of common interest, and of course once again to thank the Labour Centre of Athens for the honour they did us in inviting us to this conference, and for the flawless organization and hospitality they offer us.

Thank you.

DANIEL PIERSOEL, Secretary General
of CSC Brussels

B E L G I U M
B R U S S E L S



The representative of CSC, Daniel Piersoel

Good morning, everyone. My name is Daniel Piersoel and my capacity is that of Secretary General of CSC Brussels. My colleague Tibot from FGTB has previously elaborated on the situation prevailing in the Brussels area.

On my part, I will be trying to share with you some other things although still in the same spirit. One way or another, this will be an intervention on a subject of its own.

Thus, for instance, whilst when you - like my colleague from Cyprus - speak of Brussels, what you have in mind is the capital of Europe, the epicenter of the European Union. On the contrary, when we refer to Brussels, it is to discuss the concerns and the problems of workers in the Brussels area. As is the case with all major cities in the world, Brussels has been experiencing some major migratory waves - this is actually a thing I will be coming back to, since Tibot did not elaborate on that one. Still, Brussels' case is a particular one since out of its 1.000.000 of dwellers some 18% are aliens. For a European city of high dweller density and a very high GNP per citizen - per worker, to be more precise - as is ours, half of workers in Brussels do not originate from this city. We live in a society where jobs require an increasingly high level of specialization and qualifications - a phenomenon that is widespread in Europe, with special emphasis on tertiary and quaternary sector jobs. Still, most of immigrant-origin workers have a relatively low level of specialization.

So, here we are, having to deal with a two-faced city. You know, once when one spoke of Paris, one was prone to referring to it as "The City of Light". Now it is Brussels that has come to acquire this characterization. Still, if one ventures through certain quarters, one cannot help but realize that this is a city with two different faces. So, I really urge those of you who happen to travel to Brussels to take a stroll through such places where one usually avoids to visit, in order to see for yourself that even in this city the world likes to call the Capital of Europe, there are some real ghettos!

Now, of course, there is an entire policy that is being developed and implemented in the Brussels area with the support and participation of various social partners, aiming at achieving social integration of problems laden youths. It is true that integration policies often go through strategies of social integration. Youths having been victims of social exclusion are prone to marginalization and inevitably pushed to live with equally marginalized families with parents totally unacquainted with any form of employment, since they themselves are jobless.

We are thus faced with a dual society where one of the main and as crucial features is education. In Brussels education is one of the domains where such duality becomes all the more apparent. In other words, in Brussels there are two types of school: on one hand, the school for the rich whereas on the other the schools for the "fourth world" population of the Belgian capital. We thus have this phenomenon, where in the schools of the latter category there enroll pupils predominantly originate from immigrant families dwelling in the city. Taking moreover into consideration the fact that - contrary to what is the case in the countries of origins of many of the people in this room - in Brussels parents do have the right to chose which school they are going to enroll their offspring in, it just happens that in some schools the predominant nationality is not Belgian but Moroccan, Turkish or - as I came to personally discover quite recently and simply to make justice to some of those present in this room - even Portuguese.

So, to the many difficulties trade unionism is faced with nowadays, there come to add the problems of coexistence stemming from a situation of this kind. One such domain where such fermentation becomes all so clearly apparent is that of the enterprises. Wherever there is employment, conflicts tend to give in to compromise and problems are put at bay. This is precisely why we so arduously promote the ideal of full-time employment, the reduction of working hours down to 35 per week - which will automatically allow for implementation of an adequate social policy through the strategy of rational redistribution of labour.

In Belgium there are such unions as FGTB and CSC that are striving to attain goals in that direction. Moreover, laws in our country provide for payment of generous unemployment aids and subsidies - we are considered a haven in that domain! - while at the same time stipulating incentives that among other provide for the right of the unemployed to remain registered under their respective labor unions. This ensures consistency as well as continuity in our actions while at the same time maintaining an acceptable level of equity between active and non-active workers. This is even more critical both in terms of social complementarity and in terms of the unemployed still being allowed to participate in a union network ensuring constant contact with workers.

Now, as far as the issue of immigration is concerned - as someone before me put it, this morning - in our respective countries we have experienced various policies in the matter. During the '50s and the '60s Belgium welcomed working hands from such countries as Italy, Portugal and Spain whereas in the '70s and the '80s there came workers from other countries - like Turkey and Morocco. That latter period coincided with a deep recession of the economy. This is the reason why in the latter case the reaction towards immigrant coming from those countries into Belgium was different. So, when we hear say that a special policy has to be implemented such as to foment social integration for immigrants, I believe it is the employers that should be approached for that matter. It is true that specific measures can be adopted - as is the case of the Netherlands that impose special quotas with respect to immigrants employed in the various businesses; now, this is a measure we, in Brussels, are not particularly keen on

since in our case many of such immigrants have come to acquire Belgian citizenship, hence the probability of racism-originated problems to arise. You see, in our case, this is a racism that has not so much to do with work documents and identity cards as with the color of the skin and national origin. This is why I insist that the employers are those we should be aiming at; the employers are those we should be endeavoring to sensitize. So, if I may, I will be sharing with you our experience with a measure we've been working on in Brussels, the outcome of the implementation of which, although not ideal, at least were tangible. To the extent that, thanks to the support of the European Union and the European Social Fund there is a promotion of the cause for the entry of local work covenants, we asked the employers to sit down and discuss with us in an effort to come up with measures fomenting social integration of the immigrants. We made it clear to employers that such cooperation on the development of solutions was critical in that it may prevent social crisis in cities and urban areas, all the more since businesses bases within the urban tissue of cities are not immune to the potential risks implied by the existence of marginalised social groups. So, we started exploring ways for such social integration of workers and eventually came up with a first measure -the advisability of which remains to be assessed, since everything is still at the stage of development- providing at a first stage for the organization of sector-specific seminars to the interest of employers, human resource officers and staff managers of enterprises in the Brussels area, such persons being actually those that have the ultimate say in the integration of a worker in the human potential of an organization.

Let us always bear this in mind: medium-level officers and human resources executives - not high-rank financial executives - are those upon who hiring of a worker really depends. Such seminars are organized with the cooperation of employers and are sector-specific. There have indeed been employers willing to share data and information on specific policies fomenting equality and preventing discrimination which they have been implementing in their respective businesses and which had no negative results. These were policies launched within the context of which recruitment was effected on the basis of specialization and qualifications and not by reference to national or racial criteria; the benefits were obvious to all. Thus, we worked on a scenario that -if I may say so- was new and highly constructive and not so intensely political. One way or another, this is a real experience and there indeed has been many a representative of labor unions that also take part in such seminar, the idea being to prevent errors and discrepancies in labor unionism as well as to ensure that results are specific to the target and objectives pursued.

So, to complement my elaboration on labour union solidarity, may I say a few more words in furtherance to what I have already mentioned. I believe that such solidarity should be maintained on two levels: first of all, at the level of European labour unions as well as on the level of international labour federations, all the more since the ecumenical trait of our mission is apparent in all aspects. We thus have to underscore our universal character, which is there despite any differences in culture, all of which being hindrances of secondary nature, problems we have to overcome on the individual level.

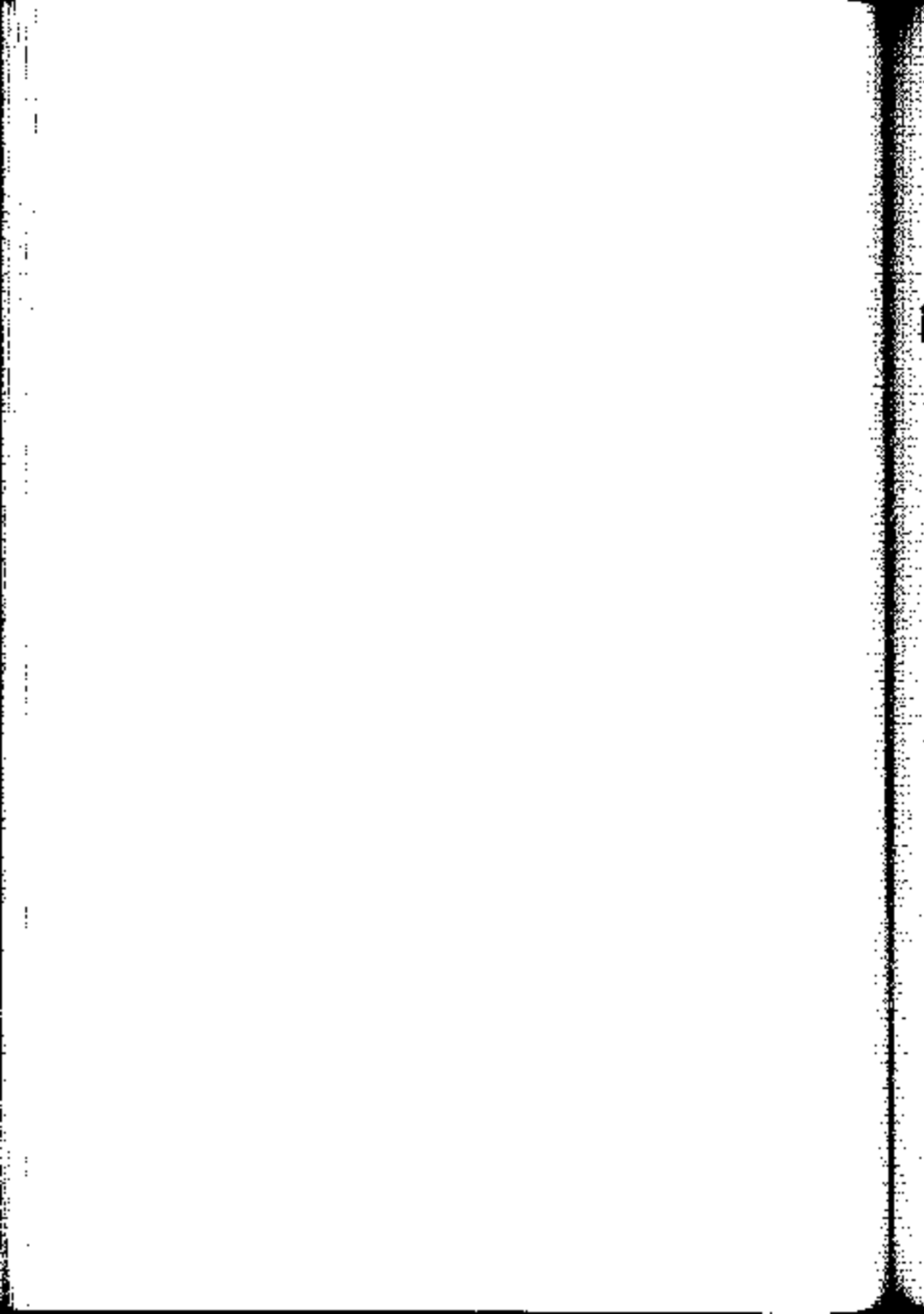
Secondly, solidarity is something we should pursue vis-a-vis all other related movements - like the feminist, pacifist and ecology movements, with manifestos that are compatible with ours. Let us remember that whatever struggles we have been and will be waging in the future are intensely social, which is a feature quite central in such other movements as well. Unionism is something we promote not only within the businesses but also beyond that, since apart from labor unionists we are also committed citizens.



We therefore believe that through such synergy of the various social movements, labour unionism shall have to acquire a leading as well as predominant role in cooperating with all other factors towards attainment of our goals.

This is all I had to share with you.

Thank you for your attention.





2nd Day 25-2-2000

3rd Session

Chair: CH. PAPADEAS, P. MANOLAKOS, A. DIMOULAS, TH. PATRIKIOS, I. TSIVGOULLIS, CHR. THEOCHARI
(chairperson)

10:00-14:00

- ◆ STELIOS EFSTRATIOU, Secretary of DEOK • NICOSIA
- ◆ MICHAEL MAGAYTSEV, President of MTUF • MOSCOW
- ◆ ANNA DIAMANTOPOULOU, Member of European Commission
- ◆ ANDRZEJ ADAMCZYC, Secretary of International and Public Relations of NSZZ SOLIDARNOSC • GDANSK
- ◆ STEFANO BIANCHI, General Secretary of CGIL •ROME
- ◆ JOAO TORRADO, Member of the Executive Committee of CGTP-IP • LISBON
- ◆ CONSTANTIN BAROI, General Secretary of CSOR • BUCHAREST
- ◆ MANUEL SELFA, Member of the Executive Committee and Secretary of Education of USMR-CCOO • MADRID
- ◆ ANNA GONZALES, Coordinator of Social Policy and Immigrants of USMR-CCOO • MADRID
- ◆ PHILIPPOS TAVRIS, Deputy President of EKA • ATHENS
- ◆ KOSTAS GOUTZAMANIS, Vice President of EKA • ATHENS
- ◆ DINAH DJALINOUS, OGB • VIENNA
- ◆ VAGELIS MOUTAFIS, Deputy General Secretary of EKA • ATHENS
- ◆ ISABEL NAVARRO CENDON, Regional Secretary of UGT • MADRID
- ◆ Closure, GR. FELONIS, President of EKA



Chair of the 3rd Session

From the left: C. Sniyriotis, Secr. Env. of EKA, P. Manolakas, Member Adm. Board of EKA, A. Demoulas, Member Adm. Board of EKA, Th. Patikiotis, Member of Adm. Board of EKA, I. Tsigoullis, Member Adm. Board of EKA, Chr. Theochari, Head Dept. of the Environment and Intern. Rel. of EKA

3RD SESSION

Good morning. I am Stelios Efstratiou from Cyprus and I, along with my colleague Costas Constantinou, represent the Democratic Labour Federation of Cyprus.

I would like in my turn to congratulate the Athens Labour Centre for having taken the initiative to organize this meeting, and to thank you on behalf of the DEOK for inviting us to take part. I bring you all warm greetings on behalf of the General Secretary, the leadership, and the members of the DEOK.

My colleagues, I will make reference only to the matter of economic refugees, since yesterday my colleague Costas Constantinou referred to the other two subjects: **labour relations** and **employment**.

The DEOK and the rest of the labour movement in Cyprus have taken the position for a long time now in favor of Cyprus full entry into the European Union. With this position, we the politicians recognize very well as a given, and understand that the Cypriot economy and society must adopt certain principles, policies, and practices which are in force in the European Union. That is to say, we must be attuned to European interests. A process which is not at all simple and which most certainly will be painful and time consuming.

Within this framework, then, arises also the change in the economic scene in Cyprus. The European integration passes and is imposed through the now unified market, and this unified market brought with it in turn the freedom of movement of human resources, capital, products and goods, within the member states of the European Union. That is to say, economic borders have been done away with to a large degree within the European Union. The countries which today are candidates for membership, among which is Cyprus, do not have the possibility to by-pass this reality.

One could say that the most difficult element in this united-market situation is the movement of

S. EFSTRATIOU, Secretary of DEOK

C Y P R U S
N I C O S I A



Representative of DEOK, S. Efstratiou

human labour resources, primarily indeed because within the human factor other consequences and circumstances are created beyond the economic, which affect societies of national states.

On the long-term basis and perspective what will result from the movement of workers will be the prevalence of a European-citizen consciousness.

In the meantime, however, there is no doubt that in the short term great problems are created in places wherever mass movement of workers from one country to another is noted.

In the case of countries in the process of becoming members a particular picture is noted. The countries of middle and eastern Europe present, due to economic problems, a picture of large outflow of citizens who seek employment in other, more vigorous economies, and in their movement they prefer European Union member countries.

In contrast to this picture, in Cyprus we have today a great increase in the appearance of foreign workers. Foreigners who come primarily from countries who are not members of the European Union, primarily from Asian and Arab countries, and countries of central and eastern Europe.

Explaining the present situation in Cyprus we can say honestly that we have before us a more difficult and complicated reality to face. Because while we call out and sincerely applaud the movement of human resources for labour within the European union, we have created, voluntarily or involuntarily, an uncontrolled presence of foreign workers who for the most part originate in non-European Union countries.

The presence of almost 40,000 foreigners seeking employment in an economy whose active labor force is approximately 280,000 and out of which only 200,000 are salaried, shows emphatically that the situation has gone off the rails in an extremely negative way.

Of these 40,000 it is estimated with the most conservative calculations that 12,000 are employed, work, and are in Cyprus illegally. We are aware that this phenomenon exists in all European Union countries. There does not exist, however, similar precedent for such a proportion in relation to the local labor force. The problems which have been created today are acknowledged by all social partners to be enormous.

As a matter of fact over the past year these problems have been the subject of works by a parliamentary committee and labor unions, who are extremely worried. Along with the economic consequences and side effects which are created there are also social problems to complete the picture.

The foreign workers themselves are of course not the cause of the problem. On the contrary we believe strongly that they are the victims of a bad situation, and many times the victims of exploitation.

We have arrived at this point today regarding this matter because we decided in 1993, due to overheating of the Cypriot economy, to import and employ foreigners. We over-estimated our economic possibilities and resistance and our social infrastructure and base. And much worse, we underestimated the seriousness of such practice and policy.

The temporary positive economic result didn't allow the estimation of the middle- and long-term damage which would result from such a frivolous approach. We didn't create the proper framework with analogous resistance and safety valves which would have created a strictly evolving economic scene based on need, possibilities and successes on the economic scene with truly free movement of labor resources. A free movement which should be supported not only by economic conditions and basic values established, adopted and legislated by the European Union.



What happened and is happening in Cyprus is a distortion which is accepted neither by either the European Union nor by Cypriot economy and society. And in any case it is the unchanging goal of the European Union that economic stability and social prosperity be equal in all the member countries. The same is true regarding the European Union's policy regarding the countries which are candidates for membership, because only by such policies can you avoid mass movement of labor forces. Economic balances maintain and protect the population balances which are necessary for the European integration.

In addition to this demand what is sought after is a united and practical policy, with measures for action the large chapter of workers' migration from non-member countries into the bosom of the European Union.

Lately there has been special mention and discussion regarding this chapter

in summit meetings, with the most recent example being the special meeting in Dabek, Finland.

In closing I would like to stress that the DEOK proposes to the remaining social partners that regarding such large questions we must be very careful and very cautious. Unplanned and hasty initiatives, bad imitations of European practices, leads us to mistaken and harmful policies.

The free movement of human labor resources is a large and multifaceted question. We must handle it accordingly and not in isolation or without following the framework, the policies and practices of the European Union. In any event this is our obligation which arises from our path towards coming into line with the European Union for the European achievements.

I would like again to thank the Athens Labour Centre for their hospitality.

Thank you.

MICHAEL NAGAYTSEV, President of MTUF

R U S S I A
M O S C O W



*The Russian delegation, from the left:
Michail Nagaytsev, President, Boris Alkin, Interpreter and
Alexander Nazimov, in charge of International and Public Relations*

Dear friends, it is a great pleasure for me today to welcome you in the name of the Federation of Labour Unions of Moscow, anticipating a fertile discussion and mutually beneficial exchange of opinions.

It is obvious that above and beyond everything we should express our gratitude to the Labour Centre of Athens for taking the initiative to organize this extra conference aimed at securing and continuing the exchange of experiences within the labor union organizations at the level of European capitals. I believe the various subjects which are going to be discussed to be especially important, as well as the fact that within these matters is that of economic immigrants. And this because in European countries this specific question is a matter of dissatisfaction and discontent to the local inhabitants, a discontent which at some point brings conflict and open collision in the streets. There are indeed certain political quarters in nationalistic circles who rush to take advantage of the problem in order to influence the electorate and attract voters. In Austria for example, in the very center of Europe, the new government by its actions leads one to thoughts about the threat of a neo-Nazism. Mr. Le Pen in the West and Zhirinovski in the East manipulate public opinion, taking advantage of the discontent of local workers faced with the influx of foreign workers.

Obviously the reasons which lead to the exodus of immigrants from their countries and their influx into some others differ from place to place. If we go back a few years we will discover the significant degree of sheer integration which the Western European countries experienced in the areas of economy, culture, and athletics as well. Following the collapse of the Soviet Union and the dismantling of the Warsaw Pact a vacuum was created which there was a rush to fill with a very high crime rate, narcotics trafficking, prostitution, AIDS. At the source of all these negative effects are to be found the immigrants who it appears commit



most of the crimes. In Moscow for example more than 35% of crimes are committed by non-permanent residents of this city. There is no doubt that immigration with the aim of finding employment has economic causes. This is now a legal action, as well unavoidable. The data of the European Commission show that the average hourly wage varies between 5 ECU in Portugal and 25 ECU in Germany, or 24 ECU in the area of Paris, in France. In France, indeed, the difference between the prosperous areas and those less favored from an economic point of view is greater than 35%. Based on these facts, then, what can one say about the inequality that exists between the developed and developing countries? As an example we mention that the economically prosperous areas of Russia show this specific index at 0.3 ECU.

It is obvious that the solution to such an acute problem has as a precondition the erosion of the difference between the rate of development of the immigrants countries of origin and their countries of destination. This is something far in the future, so for the present what we can look forward to is a civilized solution to the problem of immigration, as well as the putting to use of the experiences which we have lived through up to today with an aim of safeguarding the social and economic rights of immigrants and members of their families. Until today what has been accomplished in this area is not negligible, thanks to, *inter alia*, the efforts of unions. Thus already various texts of international force regarding the protection and securing of immigrant workers' rights have been signed and ratified, with a characteristic example being the UN convention of 1990 for the safeguarding of all immigrant workers and the members of their families. We refer also to some agreements and recommendations of EUT, the resolution of the Council for Security and Employment in Europe. All of the above are for the unions legal bases and grounds through which they can demand from the governments of the respective countries not only the bringing into line of the legislative frameworks of their countries with international models and norms, but -even more important- to aggressively claim the essential application of the aforementioned models in fact. The actual data show that we are very far away from the basic principles, especially as concerns the equality of immigrants with permanent inhabitants of the host country, but as far as everyday justice is concerned, the incorporation of the immigrants into the everyday life of the country, the recognition of foreign diplomas and certificates, the right to union membership, the ease of reunification of immigrants with their families, etc. Each of us has his own life experience regarding this specific matter, so the exchange of experiences and thoughts clearly will help us greatly to not repeat the same mistakes in the future. Russia found herself violently confronted with the problems of immigrant workers already from the beginning of the 90's. The creation of the free market in connection with the rash fragmentation of the basic procedures in the federal system of former Soviet territory created an intense wave of immigration.

It is therefore obvious that the regulative adjustment of the question of immigration takes absolute precedence for the federal government as well as for the governments of the countries which were created out of the former Soviet republics. In spite of this, areas such as Moscow, with all of their relative prosperity, feel acutely the problems and the pressures which the wave of immigrants creates. Today the percentage of unemployment in Moscow - estimated on the basis of EUT methods - is in the region of 5.1%. At the same time the Workers Employment Service estimates that at the beginning of the year 2000 there existed up to 140,000 jobs available which no Muscovites were interested in filling, either because of lowered prestige or even because of low remuneration. In order to more precisely illustrate the situation created by immigration, allow me to mention some statistic data.

At the beginning of 1999 the permanent population of Moscow reached 8.7 million people. According to the data which recently - we received them just two days ago - the population of Moscow has reached 11.5 million people. Daily travel by bus in Moscow by the residents of the city's various suburbs is on the order of 2 million people, half of whom are workers. The decrease in the population at the level of difference between number of deaths and number of births is on the order of 65,000 people per year, approximately. Compared with this last statistic, it is estimated that the number of people leaving Moscow each year reaches 60,000. The number of foreigners who are legally and officially recorded in the relative records as employed in Moscow reaches approximately 70,000. Each year approximately 2000 Muscovites leave for foreign countries to work temporarily at various jobs. There is, however, on the other side the question of illegal immigration. Thus, according to the official data the number of illegal immigrants - foreigners who have not been recorded in the relevant records and who come primarily from countries such as Afghanistan, Africa and Southeast Asia - comes to 30,000 people. If we take into consideration the predictions of experts for the immediate future there will be an increase in the wave of immigrants from neighboring countries towards the regions which show a relatively greater prosperity - especially to Russia and with the primary destination being Moscow. In light of this situation the Federation of Labor Unions of Moscow in cooperation with the municipal authorities of the city and employers, striving first of all for social cooperation, searches for effective and accurate ways to achieve the regularization of immigrant status. Any and all questions having to do with foreigners are a subject for study at the level of the Interdisciplinary Committee which has been formed especially to deal with matters of use of foreign workers in Moscow. In this Committee one of the vice-presidents of our Union Federation takes part. On this subject, the Municipality of Moscow in cooperation with the various unions is occupying itself with the elaboration of the program for regulation of immigration in Moscow for the next two years, with prime goals being the security and increase of efficiency of control of immigration, the safeguarding of the rights and legal interests of the immigrants and the permanent residents of Moscow, and the creation of favorable conditions of social and economic development. The program foresees the application of four basic methods for the regularization of immigrant status:

- economic
- administrative
- socio-psychologic, and
- operational.

The importance attached by the Union Federation of Moscow to the matter of economic immigration is made apparent also by the fact that already for several years we have included the specific question in the tripartite agreement between the Municipal Authority of Moscow, the Unions and the various employer organizations. It would therefore be especially interesting for us to know the experience of other union organizations regarding the particular matter, and we declare that we are ready to provide any data or information from our own experiences.

We would be interested in learning what your experience has been regarding the question of the contribution of foreign workers to the various organizations, how much the foreign workers enter into union life, the help provided to them in order for them to enter into their new areas of employment, as well as what opportunities are provided for the seeking and finding of possibilities for supplementary employment. Undoubtedly all the attempts which are being made toward the mingling and combining the efforts made by the different unions in the Russian capital - which in any case play the main role in



the circles of our national union movement - create additional guarantees for the safeguarding of the social and economic rights of workers. From this viewpoint I believe that the Russian unions, in line with the decisions and resolutions of the General Council of the Federation of Independent Unions of Russia for acceptance into the international Federation of Independent Unions can develop their field of activities further, making use of the global power and possibilities of the union movement.

Dear Colleagues, as we are already speaking of the matter of economic immigration, we should take into consideration the conditions and the circumstances which force people to immigrate.

Regarding this, then, I embrace everything our brother from Yugoslavia, Mr. Mitrovic, referred to in his report regarding the situation that has been created in his country and I agree with supporting all the proposals and resolutions that will exist with the goal of solving this problem.

The international embargo against Yugoslavia which in the end affects not Milosevic but the simple every-day people.

Finally, I would like once more to emphasize the importance of this international gathering in Athens whose subject is the right to work and the basic needs of the unions on the threshold of the 21st century, with the goal of constructive exchange of opinions and the development of general ideas for solving the most basic of the problems we have to face.

I thank you for your attention.

ANNA DIAMANTOPOULOU, Member of
the European Commission



*Anna Diamantopoulou, member of
the European Commission*

Mr. President of the Athens Labour Centre, ladies and gentlemen representatives of labour centres from all parts of Europe, thank you very much for this invitation, and I would like to beg your pardon for not being present at yesterday's opening.

This happened due to a reason directly related to the labour centres, and to the overall matter of labour. Yesterday there was a snag and a disagreement in the European Parliament regarding the directive being discussed concerning working time for many of the fields which as you know, are exempted from the European Union's general legislation.

Since today is the second day and the president was kind enough to inform me regarding yesterday's procedures, it is clear that I should take more part in the dialogue rather than making an opening speech.

The right to work, the securing of the right to work, is a great challenge not only to trade unions but to governments, to the European Union, to European political forces. And of course it must be made clear that this right to work is not greater or lesser for certain categories of people. The same right to work is enjoyed by all the citizens living in a country, living in the European Union in the present case, regardless of race, regardless of sex, regardless of their place of residence.

So the securing of the right to work for everyone is a major political question. The recent developments in Austria show that political points of view are being formed which separate citizens into different categories. For our era such an approach would be criminal. Europe is not the Europe of 50 or 60 years ago. Europe, an area with great prosperity as compared to the remaining areas of the planet, with a history of democracy and culture, is a Europe with an especially large percentage of immigrants from all over the earth. From Africa, from Latin America, from Asia, from Eastern Europe.

The tide of immigrants is not going to stop. It is clear that it will increase over the next years, and Europe has two choices. One is to close her eyes and imagine that the tide of immigrants can be stopped by raising walls, and the second is to organize a specific policy of incorporation of immigrants and assistance to their countries of origin.

Already there is a clear policy expressing the second option. And voices which call up the nightmares of racism, voices which want to close off Europe with barbed wire, must be isolated and condemned.

What is the European Union's policy today? First, the big decision to expand has been taken. The decision for expansion which was taken in Helsinki last December is an historic decision. Already Europe has decided to almost double, to include in the form of a united Europe all the countries which belong geographically to the continent.

This is not being done for historical reasons or for cultural reasons or for geographical reasons. It is being done primarily because it is clear that when a specific area is very prosperous and next door great inequalities exist, collisions, either in the form of societies or in the form of nationalities, will not be far away.

Prosperity, then, cannot be western Europe's advantage. It must be spread around and Europe must acquire a homogeneity, something which is equally important for the west and for the east.

The decision to expand is a political decision with economic and societal ramifications. Already, as you know, there exist programs for all countries in the expansion area, programs which support governments, local self-governments, social partners, to attain social achievements. The social achievement as you know is a group of laws which ensure both the free market and balanced social development in order that these countries might, at the fastest possible rate, enter the European Union. This as far as concerns our relations with the countries receiving immigrants.

Of course, what are Europe's internal policies? Internally there are large problems and large differences. Not only the capitals of the large countries and the small countries of Europe, capitals known for wealth, for their prosperity, their culture, their progress in high technology have two or three different faces. Cities that throb with economic development and at the peripheries of which there exist poverty, unemployment and great discrimination. Cities where there exists a legal framework but where discrimination on the basis of race, on the basis of origin, are today very significant.

Europe's famous competitiveness and its relationship with the United States of America, which we must be clear and honest and must say clearly that Europe must be competitive and clearly must reach the level and rate of development and technological progress of the United States of America, this relation is based to a large extent on social stability, on the framework of social stability.

Europe's political history is not the same with that of the United States of America. Europe enjoys a social movement, enjoys citizens who react. Enjoys trade unions. Large social differences will lead to collisions which will destroy this framework of economic prosperity and stability which they are seeking. Therefore, intervention on a social level is equally important as the need to improve our competitiveness.

Europe has a different past and a different goal. In the United States of America the goal is clear. Competitiveness. And of course it is the first country in the world in rate of development, it is the first country in the world in high technology, and I would say one of the first countries in the world in isolation, poverty, and you will have seen recently that there are 2,000,000 American citizens in prison, a record number.

Europe cannot have one goal because of its political history and because of its political forces. Europe has two goals. **Competitiveness and cohesion**. Competitiveness and cohesion at the same moment. We cannot have competitiveness if we do not have social calm; we cannot have social calm if we do not have high competitiveness.

So there are different policies which cooperate with each other, and it is noteworthy that after the Amsterdam agreement this is the first time that employment policies have the same force as economic policies.

How are these policies put into effect in practice? I am speaking for the presidents of labor centers of the member states, they know well, but certainly also for presidents of the countries who are not at this moment in the European Union.

Following the Amsterdam agreement there exists a European strategy which is set out in 24 guidelines which have been decided upon by all the member countries and which all member countries are obligated to embody in their plans regarding employment.

These specific lines, these specific directions, are printed, become policy in the member states, and every year the European Union judges them and makes recommendations to each member nation. Thus there are recommendations for the percentage of employment, for the percentage of unemployment, for the percentage of long-term unemployed, for the percentage of young people, for the problem of differences between the two sexes, the problem of incorporation of immigrants, for the problem of incorporation of social categories who are subject to discrimination, such as is often the case for the handicapped.

This new approach until now we must remember that we were criticizing Europe because we were discussing only numbers and economic indicators. About the debt, about inflation, about the fiscal deficit. Now there is comparison and criticism about the employment indicators and social indicators which concern social balances.

And at this point I arrive at Lisbon. We have before us a big summit meeting, the Lisbon meeting. The goal is first to bring back something that's been discussed in Europe for many years: the goal of full employment. Something which can be achievable because it appears that the rate of development for the coming years allows such types of planning. In Europe we are speaking of a rate of development of 2.5% to 3% during the next years, which allows the increase of employment by 10,000,000 per five-year period. 10,000,000 jobs per five-year period.

At the same time in Lisbon for the first time it will be decided at the level of heads of state ñ this is the recommendation, of course; we'll see what happens in April ñ for social isolation, the large social problems, to be put on the agenda of European policy and to judge each member country with the degree of accession it can have on special groups, on the population on the edge of poverty, in each member country.

Something very important is taking place in Europe during this period. We should not see this social dimension simply as a matter of social justice. We should not see it simply as a victory for those who were endeavoring to bring the social dimension to European policy. It is, and this is why it has been convincing, an element of economic policy. It is clear that with isolation, with large unemployment numbers, with great problems of social conflict, with immigrants who in some countries comprise more than 15% of the citizens, we cannot secure a framework within which Europe can develop.

We find ourselves, therefore, at a critical crossroads, and very important decisions are being made which have consequences not only in countries of the European Union, but also in the expansion countries and in the countries which desire a new form of union, whether customs, whether commercial, which is the first stage of communication with the European Union.

I must now emphasize that these are not only policies. There are specific funds. The social funds in all member countries promote allocations for balance of the labour market. This means, first: Regarding the unemployed, high technology, new qualifications, unemployment \bar{n} and I imagine that you have spoken more specifically about this \bar{n} has new characteristics. The jobs that are created cannot be filled by the existing unemployed, and here one can see the role, not only of governments but of social partners, how we can see the labor force, and those that are over 50 and those that are over 30 and the very young, to arm them, to provide them with the qualifications with which to respond to the needs of the labor market. So one great and primary question of the social fund is this, and second, how we support the people who are isolated either because of language or because of special problems or because of indigence, to adapt themselves to the needs of this labour market.

There are, therefore, funds from the social fund. There is a new initiation which is being readied now and will begin in 2001, which is the equali initiative and has as a goal common programs among the member states, but also between member states and countries which are candidates for expansion, in order to integrate special categories into the labor market.

Here very important programs for immigrants could be put in place, and certainly with the cooperation of the social partners, because the program primarily relates to social partners and not government organizations.

There are another two programs which are being developed and which happen to be in the realm of my responsibility. One is a program regarding social isolation, one is a program against discrimination, and in these cases also their application will concern the social partners and non-governmental organizations and Local Self-government.

Ladies and gentlemen, it is certain that the Europe in which we live today is different from the one we knew yesterday and different from that which we will know tomorrow. High technology, change in production, change in the labour market, with reforms which must take place right now, the change in the European social model which cannot remain as we knew it up to today, a European social model which has been put in place to deal with the needs of the industrial age. An industrial model which corresponded to another form of family and another form of economy is unable to deal with today's problems.

Thus the change of this European social model, the makeup of European societies which is very different from what it was in the past, create a new sphere. This is a sphere which we lack the political luxury to analyze, to assess and to recommend new solutions in the future.

Every day we must suggest solutions for the problems which appear today and which are different from those that will appear tomorrow. This is the problem of our times: that many times developments come before political decisions.

Therefore the solution is to be found within a very close cooperation, at the European level, at the national level, with the social partners, within the venture with the social partners within society for the social problems with the social partners. So the role that is played now surpasses even the role that was played in the past by legislation.

It is very important that the social partners in this case the unions, be aware, have the technical basis, have the support that is needed, in order to actively take part in this new era.

And here we must say that within the procedure for expansion there is great room for cooperation, mutual support, exchange, as was very properly mentioned by the president of the Labor Centre of Moscow, experience. Because the unions of Europe can offer a lot to the unions of the eastern countries, but the expansion countries have a very different experience which can help the countries of the European Union.

Therefore in this great effort the European Union plays an important role, because it has been essentially accepted by all the member states that the European Union must expand and become an organization very quickly.

In this new era the European Union, and in tandem with you, with the unions, can much better deal with the great challenges which are remaining.

Thank you very much.

First allow me to congratulate you on your initiative for the organization of this meeting which gives us the opportunity to exchange ideas and experiences regarding these very critical problems and, certainly, to thank you for the extraordinary hospitality which up to this moment we have enjoyed with you. So, we must discuss the problem of unemployment, and this is something upon which we all agree: unemployment indeed is a great problem in Europe. The summit meeting in Amsterdam put the question of unemployment among the priorities of the European Union, and this is certainly an innovation, since as you know, such a thing has not happened in the past. The other thing that has now started to change is our own position - I mean the position of trade unions - vis-a-vis the problem of unemployment.

I remember as an example that the 1995 ETUC meeting, the European Committee of the European Unions, and specifically during elaboration of the relative documents, one of our standing claims was to have full employment included as one of the vital targets of action. Thereafter, certainly, we learned to listen to all about life changing, about Europe which is being transformed, and about the realities which are no longer the same. Now we have to discuss matters of lifetime working hours, flexibility of employment, and generally the need for adaptation to the new shape of things. They tell us further that we should not present goals which do not have a great chance of being achieved, that we must be pragmatists, etc, etc. There were, then, a pile of excuses in order that the specific question not be brought up in the agenda of the European Federation of Labour Unions then, in 1995. In spite of that, last year we had another meeting of the European Federation of Labour Unions and it was then that the union Solidarnosc attempted to bring up the matter of full employment in the minutes of the meeting. Then finally we achieved this goal of ours, thanks to the help of our friends from Belgium and the countries of the North. We

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Representative of NSZZ SOLIDARNOSC,
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succeeded in placing the question of full employment in one of the primary documents of the specific meeting. On the other hand, when we discuss the matter of unemployment we try to use many arguments which substantiate the advisability of the efforts to fight unemployment. We are speaking of the 25-hour flexible work schedule and a lot of other things which to a lesser or greater degree argue in favor of the necessity to struggle for the support of employment. There is, in spite of all this, an argument which is rarely called upon and which, however, in my opinion is of vital importance within the framework of the specific problem.

We maintain, therefore, that along as there exists on earth even one place with homeless and hungry people, there is no excuse for the existence of even one person without a job. This means we must take care of everyone who is without food and shelter. This, of course, is very simple and we can all understand it. As basic as this argument is we rarely call upon it, even we within the unions, among ourselves. So this is a problem we have to deal with, as we also have to examine the problem of globalization. Globalization of trade and globalization of the economy. And I agree with those who maintain that in the globalization of trade and of the economy there must exist the respective global and globalized reaction on the part of trade unions. One of the points on which we can all cooperate, joining our forces, is that of the WTO and the social provisions. We do believe that as long as there are people in the world who fall victim to exploitation, as for example in China, wherever there exists the institution of forced labour wherever, then, there are such people, political prisoners who are obliged to work without the smallest remuneration - and let's not forget that there are children who are obliged to work in many parts of the world.

All these situations create unfair competition and finally these people not only are deprived of their basic personal and labor rights, but further, they are made part of a mechanism of unfair competition which limits the opportunities for employment in other countries, in places where guarantees for workers exist. For this reason I also believe that world trade should take into consideration the question of social provisions and social guarantees more generally. In spite of this, I have noticed that we the trade unionists have the tendency to adapt our practices to actuality and indeed we are concentrated on a specific ideal: our mission as syndicalists is not only to adapt our practices to reality and to pass on to our worker colleagues how this reality is being formed.

Even more so, our mission is to change the shape of things, and it is not possible for us to put up with things such as unrestrained profiteering. I don't think anyone will disagree that there are multinational companies whose profits surpass even the national budgets of some countries with a population of forty million, as we in any case all agree that the gap between poor and rich continuously increases. Clearly we do not accept such a thing, from which arises our need to adopt a more aggressive union policy against all these negative phenomena. It is not possible for us to be satisfied with adapting to the realities shaped by global capital. Regarding the problem of immigrant workers, here allow me to adopt a position somewhat different from that of the preceding speakers. Indeed we believe that the problem is not the immigrant workers per se or the jobs which open up for them. In our opinion what could really be considered a problem is the non-legislated character of the particular branch; in other words, the illegal employment. I say this because the best way to put a brake on the immigration of working hands, if this is necessary - and there are times when such a necessity exists - is to legalize the employment of aliens. In truth if we take as an example the situation here in Greece, you can imagine what I just learned today, that is to say that at this moment somewhere been 600,000 and 1,000,000 foreigners



live and work in Greece, many of whom are employed in the area of the unofficial economy. You can imagine what will happen when the foreign worker who is hired by a Greek employer, as soon as he steps off the ship that brought him here, will be covered by an encompassing regular collective employment agreement valid on Greek soil. Imagine what will happen from the side of Greek employers when all these foreigners who don't speak Greek and are not assimilated into Greek society will finally have to be paid the same daily wage as any Greek employee who would be hired by the same employer. It does not seem to me that there is a possibility of this happening. Exactly for this reason I believe firmly that the best way to deal with the question of immigrant workers is to legalize this type of immigration and secure the possibility of legal employment, covered by regular collective agreements, for all those who show the relevant interest. In fact looking at the particular question within the framework of the more general problem for the expansion of the European Union, as well as in anticipation of the entrance of various candidates into the European Union, indeed the statement of the new-right government in Austria troubled us, according to which there may be two types of entrance of a country into the European Union. Thus there is a division between member states and new member states, with the result that the citizens of the latter will not have the right of free flow through the territory of the European Union. And this reminded me of the case of a Union -of a state which had the term union as part of its name- where in spite of that its citizens lacked the right to circulate freely. The name of that country was Soviet Union and not European Union. Thus we believe that something like this is of vital importance for the countries which are candidates for entry, but also for the workers of said countries.

We must have in mind the fact that prior to joining the European Union we will call plebiscites in our countries regarding exactly this accession. How then could we convince the workers and members of labor unions in these countries that the guarantees really do exist for the free movement of capital, goods and services, but not for the free movement of people, of workers? Because then the question will be asked: Finally who benefits from this joining of Europe, we or capital? We know that capital has no specific need for this accession, since there already exist guarantees for the free movement of capital. What we need, then, is guarantees regarding the free movement of workers, the free movement of working hands from the moment of a country's joining, and I really believe that something of this kind will solve the problem of illegal workers, the illegal immigration of workers.

Thank you very much.

STEFANO BIANCHI, General Secretary of CGIL
Representative of: CGIL - CISL - UIL

I T A L Y
R O M E



The Italian delegation. From the left:
Sergio Carboni, Secretary of International Relations CGIL
Roma-Lazio, Stefano Bianchi General Secretary CGIL Roma-Lazio
and Franco Dove Regional Confederal Secretary UIL Roma-Lazio



At the first line from the left: Gabrielle Antinolfi, Secretary of
International Relations of CISL, ROMA-LAZIO

Good day to you all. Obviously I wish to thank all the friends and colleagues from the Labour Centre of Athens in the name of CGIL of Rome. Rome lived through several years of particular difficulties, on the one hand because of the great reduction of public spending which in our city always represented the developmental hub of the economy. Moreover because of the loss of the concentration that the Italian federal system gradually creates.

Finally, the freeing of markets in the fields of networked services, because the basic agencies, national and local, had their headquarters and offered employment mainly in Rome. These three factors which coincided created within a few years a very sensitive situation. In relation to the GNP the City of Rome fell from tenth to seventeenth place on the national scale. The number of workers decreased by 48,000, primarily in industry and agriculture. The unemployed increased by 41,000 and the unemployment figure in 1998 reached 12.2%, the highest to date. The labour market has undergone an intense freeing-up over the last year, with the widespread practice of part-time and temporary work.

Today it is estimated that 140,000 people are involved in informal types of work in Rome, which corresponds to 10.7% of Rome's labour force. Those employed part-time account for 19.2% of employment in our city. Therefore it follows that conditions of imminent poverty have been created which have drastically reduced the ability of Rome's population to consume and to rent by 8 to 9 points when compared to 1993 levels, and by 3 points in relation to current national norms. During those years immigration increased at a rate of 14,000 per year, reaching by the end of 1998 the figure of 185,000 people, which represents 6.6% of the city's population. All scenarios lead to the conclusion that the capital's development potential for the year 2001 will be lower than that of other urban areas in the center and the north of our country.



Unfortunately, however, it was not able to reverse the trend of reduced employment. Confronted with this situation, for a long time now the union movement of Rome through unified actions pointed out the danger of Rome being stricken from the list of great European capitals, and appealed to the local authorities and the employers to try creating a table of consensus, an agreement for development and employment. After many unsuccessful attempts, last December a meeting was held on this issue. The product of this meeting was a document with three basic points. It contains first of all an analysis of the condition of the City of Rome, the strong points on which one can count for the creation of new strategies for development of the city and the tools that must be put to use for a short period of time, such as the individualization of the intense initiatives primarily in relation to materials and technologies. The creation of a marketing company on the local level, and a keen innovation and acceleration of the promotion of business procedures.

The signing of this agreement of this protocol will probably take place within the next few weeks and will directly involve the Municipality, the employment organizations, and the unions, and thereafter the financing-credit system, the universities, and wider circles. This is the first act. Thereafter the dealing with each field individually will begin, which must include these new strategies and innovative plans, and innovative plans for the support of small-to-midsize businesses which make up the backbone of the City of Rome. Public and private investment, time and manner of their implementation, employment possibilities, permanent or otherwise, the use of the tool of training. The powers that we have already recognised are the productive branches of communication and electronics by the quantity and specialization of the enterprises who are already to be found in the Rome area as well as in the appreciation of the huge cultural archeological heritage the city enjoys. Among other things it is necessary for us to work in cooperation in order to unite these two areas in order to create this particular character of the city, the added value which is necessary in order for us to be able to compete with the new globalized market. It is clear that our choices, our priorities grade our values and touch other branches of the economy. It is necessary, beyond the conservation of our cultural heritage also the protection of the urban fabric of the city in such a way that the commercialization and tourism which through the procedure of freeing and creation of the foundations for the creation of great opportunities for innovative processes.

In addition to all this the procedures for freeing of services, modernizing of public and municipal administration, the reorganization of social welfare and social security. Legislative interventions are required to strengthen the feeling of participation and responsibility. At the center of all these efforts the decentralized administrative system which creates new dynamics in the wider urban area must intervene in ways that will reinforce feelings of security and will combat social exclusion, especially in immigrant areas.

In relation to this particular effort the Municipality during the coming days will create, based on the Barcelona decisions, a program for the strategic development of the city in which all the basic entities which are involved with funds and support this project will take part. So that is our project for development and employment which I mentioned earlier. We will proceed at a fast pace and we will succeed in making this strategic plan part of a wider development plan for the region. It fires up forces for development which will have a multiplying effect on the results.

Up till now I have spoken mainly about local policies. However, these union policies on the local level are included in a more general policy on a national scale. We believe that competition can be a lever for development and a great opportunity for improving the living conditions of workers and the weakest strata of society.

It is for exactly this reason that we consider that competition must have a strong capability of putting into order its own dynamics and its own negative elements. This capability for regularization is secured by the method of participation and agreement and with the development and unification of safety valves and employment. For these reasons and with whatever is related to immigration more than the general freeing up of borders, we will be in favour of a planned acceptance of foreign immigrants based on employment conditions and the social reality of the region. And this in order to avoid extreme political expressions, which in our country are already a reality, with the establishment of a political party, and in order to avoid the taking root of these xenophobic notions which in Austria resulted in the creation of this new government. As far as working hours are concerned we believe that a law concerning the 35-hour week is essential, considering that the work week in Italy is 36 to 38 hours. But beyond the legislation we must ensure a process of reduction of work hours through collective labor agreements, on a national basis or by occupation.

In Italy the problem isn't presented as reduction of hours by legislation, it is that as well. But primarily it is the ensuring of enforcement of the legislative or standard regularization. In Italy there are fields that have contracts for 36-hour work weeks, but this is circumvented and they work 42 to 44 hours. So the problem isn't solved through legislation but through a powerful collectivity, whether through national collective agreement with reduction of extra work, or through contracts with businesses creating the proper conditions for the decrease of working hours without this meaning increase of the workload, but with increase of employment conditions.

Finally, in relation to the proposal which was made regarding support for the weaker economies, as you know the discussions continue still. During these days in Italy among other things are being discussed freezing the debt of the countries who are compromised by debt. I believe that within this support measures must be discussed which will be able to assist in the construction of positive actions equal to consensus in order to avoid creating any long this phenomenon which we are discussing here, that is to say the exit of so many workers toward the most economically robust countries. This means that union movements in the large capitals must do something more to affect the dialogue and political choices of the governments. In the large capitals the procedures for innovations and changes are more rapid and more radical. Thus we have the need of a great cohesion, cooperation and union in order to promote these initiatives.

Thank you for your attention..

Good day to all of you. I will speak in Portuguese and I believe that since a person was found who could translate until now everything that was heard at this meeting in Spanish, certainly it will be possible to do the same with Portuguese. On my part I will make every effort so that the interpreter can do his job as best as possible. I would like first of all to direct a greeting to all our friend organizations who are present at this meeting.

Concerning the matters that have been brought up here for discussion, I believe that they are all timely questions, problems of our every-day life, points which are recorded in the circle of efforts and proceedings of our union organizations.

More than anything else employment appears to be a problem which claims the attention of all societies. But when we are dealing with societies and their problems I think that it is important for us to know who is the one who will effect the real ground-breaking changes in a situation. I believe furthermore that the degree of responsibility which each of us has towards society as a whole differs. Therefore it is not enough to diagnose a problem as social or to express the opinion that a question concerns society as a whole if we wish to sensitive the neo-liberal politics.

Such a position does not serve the necessity for adaptation of policies which national governments apply at a local level, neither, certainly, in order to change positions and behaviors which until now have been adopted by employers in their quest to manipulate at will and according to their interests the activities of businesses. It is a fact that workers and trade unions frequently argue regarding the question of employment but also regarding the actions which could make up the solution to the specific problem. It is something expected since neither the position in which we find ourselves nor the goals we are aiming for are common. There are truly reasons why our considerations do not coincide with the speculations of employers and

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P O R T U G A L
L I S B O N



*Representatives from CGTP - IN, Lisbon.
From the left: Sara Carneveses and Joao Torrado*

national governments. I believe that what is accomplished by the European Federation of Labour Unions in cooperation with the European Union is to make the question of employment into a central problem, something which is expected to result in the securing of stable employment for all workers, since we already crossed the threshold of the 20th century. It is a fact that we all speak about employment. I am, nonetheless, sure that we don't all understand employment in the same way. There are those who speak about employment on a partial basis, as well as those who speak about the reduction of working hours but with a parallel cut in wages. Some discuss the question of flexibility with every cost while some others seek versatility but without specialization. For us, however, I think things are clear: what we are interested in discussing is employment which is steady as well as of quality. The vision of employment which is secure and with uncertainty is not utopia; it is something attainable. As far as quality employment is concerned, we consider this not employment to which one aspires at any cost, but work which is safeguarded by specific rights. Quality employment is the goal we should be striving for continuously. In Portugal the percentages of unemployment decreased as the number of those who were able to find employment increased - an increase on the order of approximately 2%. We could say that such a development is generally positive. However, this situation in the end conceals another, different reality. The increase in the number of workers at the cost of temporary jobs in the area of unskilled labor. It should be noted that women and children are the ones who are harmed most by this situation, more so because from these classes of citizens comes 41% of temporary and in any case not steadily employed. From the data that exist and the statistics that have seen the light of publicity it appears that in Portugal as well - perhaps indeed more so in my country- but in various other countries, this situation seriously affects the level of competitiveness. It should also be noted that in the classes of these workers unemployment increased in Portugal, reaching 10%. In order to strengthen, then, the different point of view from which the correlation between employment and unemployment is approached, as well as in order to underline the manner in which we understand the problem and our relevant demands, we announce that on the 23rd of March, the day on which as has already been announced by Mme. Commissioner, the pan-European conference will take place in Lisbon, we, at the SGTP level, will carry out a large national demonstration next to the place where the proceedings of said conference will be held. Certainly there are those who will speak to us with numbers and statistics, attempting to document programs for the creation of jobs and opportunities for employment. I will tell you as a characteristic example that if in Portugal in fact all these jobs which were announced and quantified at a program level had been created, it would be impossible to find enough workers to fill them.

With immigrants, of course, things change. The problem of immigration in Portugal began to become more acute in the last 25 years, as one after another Portugal's colonies in Africa began to achieve independence. In an effort to arrange the matter -and with the belief that this stance was the correct one- three successive periods of legalization were organized. To begin with it must be noted that African workers in Portugal are the ones who are paid less, have no rights, and fall victim to all kinds of discrimination and extortion. In any case, the direction that's been taken can't be changed. What we need is a further cycle of legalizations in connection with the continual and essential intervention of labor unions with the aim of maintaining the basic principles in order that these workers also have the opportunity of enjoying all social, individual and collective rights to which they are entitled on the basis of absolute equality. The good example must of course be given by the State itself - and a beginning



for something like this is the concluding of the contracts for the large public works, where African working hands are employed under a regime of unfairness, discrimination and social exclusion. I emphasize again that for us in the CGTP the solution to the problem of immigrant workers is to be found in their legalization and in providing them with the possibility to enjoy all the rights which belong to workers. In any case, in Portugal today Immigrant workers don't come only from the African countries but from many other countries. This, then, is the road that I think we must take, this is the path we must follow.

Finally, a big thank you to the organizers for the opportunity they gave me to speak.

KONSTANTIN BAPOL, General Secretary of CSDR

Representative of: CNSLR - FRATIA, CSDR, CARTEL ALFA

R O M A N I A
B U C H A R E S T



The delegation from Romania:

Anca Otiulescu, Vice President Romanian Air Transport Trade Unions, CARTEL ALFA, Lucia Vulpescu, Treasurer FMS TAROM, CARTEL ALFA, Huletia Gheorghe, Member of the Adm. Board and President of the Regional Organisation of Bacau FRATIA and Radu Cornel, Member of the Adm. Board and President of the Regional Organisation of Bacau of FRATIA Trade Union.

Mr President, esteemed chairman, ladies and gentlemen taking part in the meeting. It is a great honour for the representatives of Romania, which representation is made up of representatives from three organizations: the FRATIA union, the ALFA union, and the Federation of Democratic Unions, to take part in this meeting whose central theme is a basic problem of modern society, that is employment and the consequences of unemployment.

Following the first day of speeches different viewpoints were presented, even diametrically opposite ones, but this shows that in the land where democracy was born, that is to say in Greece, where we can feel the steps of Pericles, of Aristotle and of Socrates, I repeat in the land where democracy was born, it was natural for opinions to differ so widely.

As different as they were, nonetheless these approaches had a common point. The need to struggle all together in order to deal with under-employment, for the reduction of unemployment which according to our opinion is the basic reason for poverty, poverty which today affects over two billion people.

In Romania as well as in other countries of central and eastern Europe, unemployment made its appearance after 1990. Today there are over 1,000,000 unemployed in Romania. This is the official number. That is to say, there are some others in the so-called gray zone.

The percentage of unemployment is 10% to 12%, but there are regions where unemployment exceeds 20%. A very serious issue is the decrease in the number of salaried employees, from 8,200,000 in 1990 to 4,600,000 in 1999. That is, salaried employees have decreased by 3,600,000. The most serious situation is in industry, where the number of salaried employees, of workers, decreased by over one half; from 3,800,000 to 1,800,000.



Equally painful is the situation in relation to unemployment benefits which are in an amount of 30 dollars per month, which means that the unemployed find themselves in a situation of complete poverty and wretchedness.

A ray of hope is the fact that Romania was accepted into negotiations for entry into the expanded European Union. This will mean also economic development and we hope that this will create new job openings and will thereby lead to a decrease in unemployment.

From 1990, over the last ten years, I would like to note that foreign investment in Romania was 4,000,000 dollars, but this amount is way too small for Romanian needs taking into consideration that other countries in the region clearly took much more money from these investments.

The purpose of this meeting isn't only to remark on the reasons for unemployment, which in any case are known, but to find solutions in order to deal with and reduce unemployment and to fight in order to make these proposals reality.

Globalization, which was referred to many times during yesterday's session, is the union of large capital in order to have the largest profit. Trade unions must also do the same thing in order to be able to impose a fair apportionment of global profit, that is from that which is obtained through the various procedures.

The activity of trade union organizations of global range is today more necessary than ever, and a start was made in Seattle, in Davos, and in Bangkok. But this beginning, this start must continue and be synchronized by the big global-range trade union organizations.

There must ensue a specific program for the reduction of unemployment which will be the result of an inclusive and effective social dialogue, on a national and international level.

In closing, we would like to thank you and to congratulate the organizers for the exceptional organization, for the exceptional conditions which were offered to us and for the wonderful Balkan hospitality. Thank you.

MANUEL SELFA, Member of the Executive Committee and Secretary of Education of USMR-CCOO

S P A I N
M A D R I D



Member of the Executive Committee and Secretary of Education of USMR-CCOO, Manuel Selfa

Good morning. To start I would like to thank the Labour Centre of Athens for their invitation to me. Also, in the name of the Union of Labour Committees of the Madrid region I greet all the representatives which are present at this meeting. I must also congratulate all the colleagues of the Labour Centre for the organization of this conference. The topic of my talk is unemployment and labour relations while my colleague Ana will speak about the issue of immigration. The reality that we are living today in Spain -where the percentage of unemployment exceeds the average of the European Union- is that in spite of the continued economic development in our country, the specific ratio continues to be higher than the average European level. A recent study which was done in the category of capable-of-working employment Spanish population encountered the proportion of unemployment at 15.43% or 2,562,000 people, and this in spite of the fact that during the year 1999 the number of unemployed decreased by 400,400, decreasing the national rate of unemployment by three points in comparison with what the country showed in the past. In the administrative area of Madrid the rate of unemployment reaches 12.22%, a fact which means that 275,000 people in this area are without jobs. The rate of seasonality is on the order of 32.6%. This, then is the picture that is presented by unemployment in our country, and certainly once we have seen the situation we must seek out ways and methods that we should follow in our efforts to remedy the problem. Continuing the speculation raised yesterday by the Minister of Labour during his speech I note that the first point brought up was that of training, the recycling within these same classes of workers. We from our part already in 1992 took care to have an agreement signed between the Committees and UGT on the one side, and COE of the employers on the other, with the object of finding the maximal way of managing the funds made available to us, both on a national level.



as well as on the part of the European Training Fund. In the past training of workers was carried out by the State, through INEN - it should be noted that during the era that training was the responsibility of the State, about 100,000 workers had passed through the program.

In the year 1998 -those are also the most recent statistical data which I have at my disposal- 1,400,000 workers passed the training periods. Of course what counts and what should be taken into consideration is not only the number of works who took part in such programs, but also the quality of the training which the workers finally were exposed to. Another matter which for us, the labor unions, also takes precedence is that of the reduction of weekly working hours to 35, a claim which we promote to the Government as well as to employer circles. We should say that employers as well as the right-wing government which presently governs Spain refuse to occupy themselves with the problem at the level of a legislative regularization. We should, in any case, take into consideration that parliamentary elections are going to be held in our country on the 12th of next March, as well as the fact that there is the prospect of the Labour Unions coming to an agreement with the Left -with the Spanish Socialist Party- so that the latter may adopt our claim for a 35-hour work week.

Already since 1997 we had managed to make such an agreement on the subject of unemployment and job instability. Thanks to this agreement with the Government - an agreement which as its keystone of inspiration had the aim of stability, we managed that 1,200,000 workers without essential employment contracts achieve employment contracts for specific or nonspecific periods of time. With this agreement as well labor relations generally were placed on a different level as concerns collective employment contracts, etc.

Now, as far as our new goals are concerned, starting from some drastic changes in the area of labor and sectoral relations, these new aims can be serviced only within a truly powerful unionism. For this reason one of our first priorities must be our quantitative but also qualitative development -this means not only that we must interpret the economic and social changes, but also- as an element of fundamental importance within its wider meaning - but which they are, how they function, what kind of strategies they follow, how they are applied, and from that point to determine specific strategies and initiatives within the union field. It is certain that the changes in production procedures and the globalization of the economy, in combination with the absolute internationalization of the financial realities lead us to at times follow negative paths regarding the role of unions and our ability to react to the attacks to which workers are subjected. On the other hand, however, we cannot but recognize that what we have already achieved is not negligible. I am speaking of union maturity as well as of the increased participation that we are experiencing. Our strategy lies in the expansion of our capability to influence, the ability to intervene exactly at the moment when the various regions make up their budgets, since it is at that specific level and not that of the businesses where the most important supports of the welfare state are constructed. When we speak of social protection, public services and health, education.. Here we are dealing with another manifestation of collective bargaining, that which has to do with the differentiated wage and the more general prosperity of the workers. But be careful that we don't fall into error; here we are not dealing with political syndicalism, cut off from its sectoral professional manifestation. On the contrary, we are speaking of a syndicalism of the future which represents the more general interests of workers. The proper combination of sectoral bargaining within the businesses, at labour centres, with political institutional participation does not mean that we are speaking of political unionism, without sectoral professional complexion. On the contrary, this action

must be dealt with as an extension of union activity. It is essential that we transform the social model of Europe. For this reason the European Federation of Unions during its last conference set out those bases which now, today, with our activities and actions we are called upon to strengthen with organized and coordinated practices. We have in our hands more than ample data, questions such as this one regarding collective bargaining, the reduction of the number of working hours, the reduction and write-off of foreign debt, the attainment of an at least 0.7% participation in development, the code of ethics for multinational businesses, the social provisions and commercial contracts, the opposition to practices resulting in social discrimination, the guarantee of equal opportunity and dealing with men and women, along with uncounted other points which are called upon to specify. The most important, however, is to be able, through these yearly meetings, to establish goals, the attainment of which will thereafter be sought by all the cities.

Finally, since I am from Spain I believe it is proper to make a reference to what happened the beginning of this month in the village of Elegido in Andalusia. Although this area is separated by many hundreds of kilometers from Madrid, the outbreak of racism and xenophobia which was noted there is something that must make us all uneasy. Immigrants, who as we know are almost always employed in unsteady and unsystematized jobs are the factors who contribute decisively to the attainment of economic miracles which are the pride of certain regions. In spite of this, we must always be aware of the danger of lines of separation being created between the immigrant workers and the local population. We, the unions, must learn to accept the responsibilities which suit us. To propose such measures that will avoid marginalization of the immigrant workers while at the same time safeguarding respect for the various mentalities and cultures of these people, along with strategies which will favor circumstances allowing their entry into their new social and work environment. We must make every effort to act from the first moment and not wait for it to happen before intervening.

As my colleague Manuel stated previously, I will speak especially about the matter of immigrants. Before anything else, however, I would like to direct a greeting to the participating union organizations, and of course to thank the Labour Centre of Athens for their kindness and hospitality. I will try -as difficult as this is for me- to speak slowly in order to dispel somewhat the reputation we Spanish have for speaking rapidly. The factors which are to be found behind the underlying reasons for immigration vary in each case and have to do with the socio-economic and political reality in certain regions of the planet, and as a matter of fact in the countries of origin of the immigrants as well as in the countries of destination. These factors must be examined in the light of the complexity which characterizes the modern world. In spite of this, we can pinpoint some of the causes which are common to all tides of immigration and which are usually accepted as common causes of departure. Among these common reasons are included, among other, the dearth of produced goods, the uncontrolled increase of population, national conflicts, and others. A probable grouping of factors would be one the one social, economic, and demographic imbalances which exist between the European Union on the one side and various other zones of the world on the other - especially areas in underdeveloped regions. On the other hand, the constantly increasing influence by the mass communication and information media, more so because these media allow citizens of these less developed regions to be informed about the European reality and the opportunities the latter offers. On this subject, Spain is included among countries receiving immigrants. This fact, however, should not lead us to ignore Spain's long tradition as a country with a current of emigrants towards outside. Even today approximately 2,000,000 Spanish men and women live in foreign countries. As is the case with other Mediterranean countries -Greece, Italy, but

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Representative of USMR-CC00, Anna Gonzales

Portugal as well, Spain was a place of origin of immigrants up to the 1980's, at which time it began to take on the character of a country receiving immigrant workers. Among so many changes that Spanish society has seen, two are set apart as factors which radically affected the picture and character of our country: these are the entrance of Spain into the European Union in 1986 as well as the change in orientation of the tide of immigration. During the current period the primary tendency is that of immigration towards Spain, while at the same time a current of return of Spanish to their places of origin is noted. In spite of this, if we take into consideration this ever more apparent reality in the light of immigration pressure as well as the need to adopt policies of control of immigrant tides, we are frequently in danger of ignoring the actual volume of immigration as well as the relative burden this imposes on the native Spanish population. According to data of the Constant Immigration Watch 719,647 immigrants already lived in Spain in December 1998. These are numbers that as you can see are at levels much lower than the European Union average. In percentage terms, this means 2% of the native population. It must also be noted that most of these people are of European origin. More specifically 329,956 of these immigrants are European, as they come from countries such as Portugal, the United Kingdom, and Germany. Now let's look at the situation of those who come from countries outside the Community. There are today 190,600 people who have been granted official work permits. Madrid and Barcelona gather 41% of the immigrants, followed by the region of Andalucia and Valencia. As far as the characteristics and the nationalities of these groups, they are, in order of size, the following: Moroccan, Peruvian, citizens of the Dominican Republic, and Chinese. The data I referred to previously concern studies done within groups of people who are in our country legally. It is, however, difficult to estimate the true number of immigrants who live and work illegally on Spanish soil. The data which exist for the specific subject -the results of various estimates- place the number of foreigners who stay in our country illegally at 70,000. We, from the side of the Workers' Committees, understand the fact that the labor market in Spain is the basic reason for the presence of immigrants in our country. In spite of this we cannot ignore the influence that immigration policies of the European Union had on the way of dealing Spain had and has vis-a-vis the immigration situation.

At this time the new Law concerning Alien Status is being put into effect in our country. This is a piece of legislation that was voted for even by the opposition in the Spanish Parliament - today the PP (Popular Party) is in power. The previous regime was governed by a more general perception of police and bureaucratic nature, with its keystone being the attempt at controlling the tide as well as dealing with the phenomenon of immigration as a question of public interest. The interest in integration of the immigrant population is indeed obvious within the framework of government policy, but -until today at least- as a matter of secondary importance. Exactly because of this we believe that an acceleration and promotion of procedures is urgently necessary in order to develop a truly essential and effective policy of integration. The new Spanish legislation regarding aliens must replace the previous situation which led to reduction and discrimination against these population group. Spanish union organizations, and especially the Workers Committees, contributed in an essential manner to the forming and thereafter voting for this new legislation, through mechanisms of demands and proposals. It is our responsibility now to be on the alert for the respect and recognition of the rights that immigrants thus acquire, with the basic goal of achieving a fundamental and full work and social integration of these immigrant groups who live in our country.

Thank you,

I N T E R V E N T I O N

Good morning, dear colleagues. I would like to make a very short intervention, wishing to share with you some thoughts I had as a result of the speeches heard here yesterday and this morning.

Many of the speakers emphasized the strong symbolism of Greece and more particularly of Athens as the cradle of democracy. We are all well aware, though, that democratic values are undermined by the movements and activities of the Far Right. Recently, a fascist party made its entry into the government of one of the countries of the European Union. I propose, therefore, emphatically, and call upon the meeting to condemn the rise to power of Mr. Heider's party, and to make its support evident to the democratic unionists of Austria who are the victims of such political alliance.

Thank you.

MICHAUT TIBOT, Representative of FGTB

B E L G I U M
B R U S S E L S

PHILIPPOS TAVRIS, Deputy President of EKA

A T H E N S



The Deputy President of EKA, Ph. Tavis

Dear colleagues, ladies and gentlemen, in my welcome to all of you I would like to add my special satisfaction regarding this meeting, as with every similar meeting among representatives of the workers of Europe, who must discuss their common problems more often, more completely, and in more detail.

Colleagues, the century we leave behind us was the century of realization of the great ideologies, the visions, and the struggles. But it was also the century of totalitarianism either with the fascist regimes of the years between the wars, or with the military regimes of living socialism.

Today, even if we accept that the end of history has not arrived, we are living through a more general crisis and we see a society whose members, or at least the majority of them, are absent from common actions and collective expression.

The absence of ideals, individualization, distancing from events, may be some of the reasons for this situation. However, possibly these themselves may be results of the failure of some ready so-called solutions from the past and the disappointment in the expectations of several generations.

The discrediting and collapse of ideas, values, positions and principles, the lack of visions and high aims, should not be perceived as leading us to inertia and isolation. It is not possible that the only ideal left is the satisfaction of individual needs, by every means and in every way, and thus to be led away from the body of society and against our fellow man. This has led today's man, while he lives in a society with infinitely better means, greater opportunities, and limitless goods, to feel more unhappy.

On the other side, this distance of the majority of citizens from the social progression, frequently presents the opportunity to those who are self-interested or opportunistic, incompetent or even dangerous, but who have the means, primarily the financial means, to play a decisive role in the



social, economic life, and more generally in society.

Today's vision of I believe millions of citizens must be and in fact is the close cooperation of European countries for the benefit of Europe's people. All people, from the Urals to the Atlantic, who are joined by a common European culture, based on Greco-Roman tradition and Christian ideals, shaped a mass of values, which within a syntheses, antitheses; collisions and interactions, dominates the planet.

Unfortunately, however, the European governments did not prove worthy of circumstances. They did not recognize and didn't appreciate the meaning of this call and proved unable to follow a policy that would satisfy the entirety of the European peoples.

Today policies dominate which do not represent social groups any longer, who lack ideological orientation, and who have prosperity as their sole alternative, not, however, prosperity of the people, but of indices and numbers. It is noteworthy here, of course, that the vehicles for the realization of these policies are the social-democratic governments.

But when sentiment is taken out of politics, humanity, vision, when politics is conducted by technocratic accountants, then the situation becomes dangerous and the door opens either for various messiahs and demagogues, or for those who have the financial means.

We in Greece have lived with many such policies of lust for numbers and indicator- prosperity over the last years. Within the struggle and the necessity to beautify the economic results, are interwoven at times the inability to achieve goals, at times expediency, and at times lies.

Yesterday our Greek Minister of Labour moved among these, saying that there was a clear increase of jobs, when we all know that the constant increase of unemployment over the last years increased more this last year as well.

It would be untrue and misleading for one to allege that the European Union is responsible for this, or if you wish that the European Union alone is responsible. Because what is to blame is the existence or not of a national policy for dealing with such types of problems.

In order to understand the problem that exists in carving out and application of a policy which is specific or not there is the area of information -I am speaking of course as far as Greece is concerned- information for the unemployed, which is carried out with no planning, from many independent agencies, maybe ten, maybe more.

An example of this lack of essential policy is also that they failed; since they failed to apply an energetic policy regarding employment and job creation, they now push for a measure of speeding up workers' retirement by five years, at a cost that will not be paid by the state but will be paid only by the social partners.

My dear colleagues, the criteria for convergence of the European countries have to do with accounting and numbers: inflation, deficits, debts, etc. The criteria for entrance of the countries outside the European Union also are based primarily on economic indices. In each case criteria such as unemployment, the level of social insurance and social protection, the inequalities from country to country or from region to region inside the same country, the degree of democracy, freedom, respect for human rights, carry little or no weight.

I have noted, of course, with satisfaction what we heard a little while ago from the European Union committee member, Mrs. Diamantopoulou, that discussion has begun regarding the examination of these criteria as well.

According to the last available data from EUROSTAT, which are for 1997, the gross national product in the European Union, where Finland with 100% is the community average, Luxembourg holds the first place with 174%, and Greece the last from the European Union countries, with 66%.

Of course in the countries of primarily Eastern Europe, these levels are even lower. For example, Poland is at 39% of the community average, Latvia and Romania at 27%, and Bulgaria at 23%.

Within Greece the income of residents of the greater Athens area is at 75% of the community average, while in Ipiros, the northwestern area of Greece, it is at 43%.

As far as unemployment is concerned, there is Luxembourg with approximately 2.5%, but there is also Spain with over 15%. But if we accept that unemployment is a complex problem, how are the unemployed dealt with in European Union countries? What is the extent of their protection? The expenditures for the unemployed make up 7.3% of the gross national product in Denmark, approximately 4.5% in Ireland, Belgium and Holland, but in Italy it is only 1.96%, in Portugal 1.97%, and in Greece 0.87% of the gross national product.

Naturally if we refer to countries outside the European Union the differences are tragically greater. Of course when we speak about percentage of unemployment we must not forget that we don't refer simply to indices, but to people who want to work and don't find jobs, to people who want to live but don't have the opportunity. To people who want to and can contribute to production, but are unable to.

The consequences aren't limited only to the effects on a personal level as far as way of living is concerned due to lack of income, but often to more permanent consequences, as has been shown by recent studies, affecting the physical and mental health of the unemployed. The loss of a job is followed by anxiety, violent behavior, feelings of fatigue, depression, and many other conditions which we do not need to mention.

This means that of the 20,000,000 unemployed in the European Union, and a further unknown number in the rest of Europe, the consequences are tragic and many times permanent. However, following the prevalence of the new forms of employment relations, it is very possible that these consequences no longer affect only certain people, but they affect all of us, not now because of solidarity and humanity, but directly, because all workers must now be considered potential unemployed.

Part-time employment, that is the ceding by a worker of half his unemployment position to an unemployed person in many cases takes on disturbing proportions in my opinion, such as the 40% it has reached in Holland.

Periodic employment, split shifts, adjustable working hours, create a new situation where under the threat of continuing to work or passing into a state of unemployment the worker loses rights to education, to recreation, to rest, always to the benefit of production and index prosperity.

With the new situations being created a worker no longer has a personal life, not knowing when and how much he will work, adjusting his working hours according to production needs, but sharing his income with the unemployed.

The opinion expressed by some that rather than jobs being lost it is better to accept a cut in pay is tragic. In this case, while production remains the same the cost is decreased; thus the workers accept to finance a portion of unemployment rather than this obligation being undertaken by society as a whole.

Unfortunately, even the progress toward application of the just and necessary request for a 35-hour work week, and after everything was heard also from our colleague from France, but also with a pilot



program which has been put in place in a certain number of banks in Greece, is being used as an opportunity to overturn the traditional model of employment with fixed remuneration, working hours, rights and obligations, and putting into place that model which the Americans call workers on call, that is to say hanging on the telephone, and which in Greece has been served up to us with the meaning of (the employable) and which unfortunately we heard again yesterday from the Minister of Employment. This situation of uncertainty and overturning is exacerbated by the arrival in the more developed countries of economic immigrants, primarily from the former living-socialism countries, but from third world countries as well.

We are called to and we must deal with this problem because it is our creation. Countries which as colonies or protectorates were not allowed to function as organized societies and thus develop, countries which were robbed blind by primarily European countries, were left to their own devices.

We are obliged to help these countries and their people because they make up a part of our history. Furthermore, as far as the countries of the former living socialism are concerned, where all of us believed in values of democracy, freedom, and European humanism. We called upon them to break their bonds and when they did this we looked at them with pity for the historical accident they had suffered, and we also have the obligation to help these countries and their people because they make up our common historical perspective.

On the European continent there is a huge divergence in development, as can be gathered from what I said above, resulting in the destabilization of many regions and the movement of great numbers of people, with consequences both to the countries of origin and to the countries of destination.

What is necessary, then, is the determined and essential contribution of the developed countries toward a more balanced development, because the problems in the European village in which we live know no borders, and let the people of certain countries which have voluntarily remained outside the European Union not deceive themselves, because no one can remain for long in a sterile test tube. Because we still are obligated to maintain one of the main characteristics of our European culture, humanism.

We further have to redouble our efforts to unite Europe. A Europe where the people, while maintaining their national characteristics, must enjoy to the same degree democracy, freedom, social justice and development. A Europe which can and must make decisions independently in order to play an essential role at a global level. A Europe which above and beyond everything else must make decisions and solve her own problems.

Because if we the European people truly wish to exist as independent beings it is not possible for us to allow forces outside European to act on our account. As it is also not possible to leave problems unresolved. The European governments should have solved the Cyprus problem, which is a problem of the occupation of a sovereign country by a foreign power.

It is not possible for European governments to allow the bombing of European territory and noncombatant European citizens by European forces as happened recently in Serbia, when they themselves should have handled decisively and in a timely manner whatever problems of democracy and equality before the law presented in the region during the breaking up of Yugoslavia.

And we mustn't forget that neither the policy of bombing, nor of the embargo, is turned against the political system or those exercising it, but against common citizens, and more particularly workers.

For this reason we have the obligation as workers, as citizens of Europe, to call upon the governments of Europe to stop pushing our fellow workers, our fellow citizens and their children, into poverty in Serbia.

Within such an independent Europe we need to aim at development with respect for the:

- Environment,
- Equal distribution of wealth,
- Social protection for the unemployed, poor, and excluded

Above all, there must be development of all those factors which are not measured by indices and numbers, that is to say:

- Democracy,
- Freedom,
- Social justice, and
- Human rights.

The achievement of the above requires cooperation and effort. Within the globalized economic environment every day we see mergers, strategic alliances and similar things in large business enterprises. In order to deal with the problems created by such situation and the consequences regarding unemployment, immigration for economic reasons, negative evolution of labour relations, we on our part must create our own strategic alliances, increasing our contacts, developing our relationships, coordinating our actions.

The century which is beginning must be the best for all European citizens and not only for some of them. We can and must contribute in this direction.

I N T E R V E N T I O N

Thank you very much. Dear colleagues, I did not have the intention to spend your precious time, but after the speech of Madame Commissioner from Brussels, it appears that the language she uses is different from that to which our comrades here are accustomed to. Therefore, I would like to make some comments on this matter. We here in Europe constantly hear them talking about competitiveness; that we need to be competitive. Competitive as regards what? That is what I am asking myself.

Certainly there is an answer to this: we must be competitive towards the USA and the countries of Southeast Asia, as towards every other country and area of the world.

Over the last 20 years the United States of America have applied a specific policy in the specific field, a policy which has resulted in the dramatic reduction in the wages of all workers.

Trade Unions may develop actions as a reaction to this situation, with strikes and other rallies, even at the inter-union level, but in the end the workers are the ones who lose the game, since they are removed from their jobs. Forty (40) million citizens of the USA live below the poverty line. Twenty (20) million are homeless, while two (2) million are in penal institutions.

Faced with this situation, the workers of America are obliged to look for part-time work and to accept wage cuts. The European Union with all those Directives which are aimed at the freeing up of the labour market, is about to follow the same path.

Competitiveness is what finally rules within the European Union. It is competitiveness which, for example forbids the official authorities from demanding that businesses and large enterprises pay wages based on common agreements. Such a thing is obviously forbidden, and I would like to know why. It is based on the principle of the so-called equality of competition. Companies and

KLEIV FISCVIC, President of LO

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businesses who base their existence on the trafficking in working hands and who finally pay wages below the limit typically foreseen by the contracts. It is my opinion that it is the laws and directives of the European Union, which concern competitiveness favor capital and not workers.

Within such a system the workers who sign collective contracts in the end find themselves excluded from the market. The competitiveness described to us by the Commissioner is shown to be a factor in the creation of unemployment. Low wages and part-time work. I wonder why percentage of unemployment is increasing in the European Union? Is industrial development leading us back or forward? The truth is that unemployment in Europe is becoming more acute and increasing in parallel with such rules and directives on the part of the European Union.

The European Union is now preparing to launch a new currency - the EURO. The argument presented is that in this manner speculation with various currencies is prevented, devaluations are prevented, and as a result economic stability is increased. It is my opinion that again by way of the policies which will be followed by the Central European Bank unemployment will increase further, indeed dramatically, exactly because the philosophy of steady interest rates exists. Interest rates will be uniform in the whole European Union territory. The relationship between interest rates and the exchange value of the currency will become in my opinion an instrument of financial policy. I truly believe that finally the imposition of a unified currency will further weaken the poorer areas of Europe and in fact will become a weapon in the hands of global Capital through which the countries of Eastern Europe will sink into endless poverty. You see, the World bank and the International Monetary Fund press for more and more cuts in welfare benefits in Eastern Europe. The thing is that through various pretexts regarding supposed economic security etc., in the end they trapped these countries into large debts. Global capital has already secured these nations, something that will continue to be done by the Central European Bank.

There are, therefore, some answers to these questions and perhaps some initiatives which could be undertaken? One solution would be, of course, to not be part of the unified currency. A more realistic solution would be to establish a tax on all international transactions of values, since 99% of all transactions don't really concern trade but speculation. Imagine! 99%! The imposition of such a tax would discourage speculators from their plans to monopolize the world economy. Something of this nature could oblige speculation to convert to a certain degree to substantial investment activity.

Thank you.

Ladies and gentlemen, esteemed invitees, welcome, we wish you a pleasant stay, with good and positive opinions about our country when you return home.

Our meeting is called to answer with a positive and substantiated word and deed to the most important problems which are faced today by the planet, that is to the problems faced by citizens, workers, creators.

I think that we can agree, despite the individual differences that exist in nation - states, to certain constants, for example could we agree on one constant, that wealth is produced, the necessary wealth which can be fairly distributed in order for citizens to live on this earth?

I think that the answer is simple, realistic, not populist, that wealth is produced. But this wealth is gathered liberally and daily by the few. And as the president of the Labour Centre of Athens mentioned yesterday in his address, 80% - we must keep that well I mind - 80% of consumption is by 20% of the population, and the other 20% is consumed by the rest.

This is a significant point which we the workers who must reject the reasoning that we are the cost factor in production and we are factors of production and goods, that we deserve to claim, to demand to win the produced product.

In the decade of the 90's we saw the end as we now it of the cold war, of bipolarism, and unfortunately, in my opinion, the unchallenged monocacy of the United States. The labor movement must resist the new conditions of globalization, that is the globalization of markets only, and succeed in the globalization of societies and the solution of problems faced by citizens in these societies.

The explosion of unemployment and underemployment, environmental catastrophes, create the need for political intervention, for systematic control of the unrestrained mechanism of the market on a global basis.

KOSTAS GOUTZAMANIS, Vice-President EKA

A T H E N S



Vice-President EKA, Kostas Goutzamanis

Allow me here, and I think that we can and must in my opinion draft some resolution in this our meeting, that the criminal act which took place over the last days on the Danube and the areas bordering on the Danube certain measures must be taken regarding the company and its responsibility for this crime. It is a crime which concerns not only these areas but concerns the destruction of nature generally. It is imperative that today's political interrelations be changed. Europe, in spite of whatever opinions each of us has, in spite of what is said, must take the lead in political and social pursuits, must decisively influence global developments, and bring the citizens, the workers, to center stage.

This is the future and the promise for Europe, for her people, for the workers, and I would say for the entire world. The trade-union movement must struggle and promote basic keystones. These keystones could be the guaranteeing of social cohesion and solidarity, the upgrading of human resources, the promotion of structural changes in the area of the economy, the fair redistribution of income, ecological reconstruction, and sensitivity.

It is a serious responsibility and basic obligation of the trade-union movement to place its own seal, the seal of solidarity, the seal of humanity. Only in this way can such a movement bring together the workers, can it become a point of resistance to what we are experiencing every day.

It is necessary that we raise an impenetrable wall against the voices and the policies that cultivate xenophobia and racism, which methodically incubate the serpent's egg, a recent example of which that was mentioned by everyone was what took place in Austria.

Every Heider must be isolated. But we must search for the causes that lead us to such kinds of dangerous phenomena. We must look at the policies which are applied, in order to see, unfortunately, those negative and dangerous results.

Thus all those voices must be isolated, as I said before, with walls, with borders, with measures. The wretched of the earth cannot but resist and will sweep through everything. And since it is proposed to us at the European level and at the Greek national level that deportations, prosecutions, legislation, the use of force against these miserable people, I should say what I believe we're all aware of, the ones who propose these measures, the cathedral of capitalism, America, have a nation imprisoned, an entire nation of 2,000,000, a small nation is in prison. These are the measures they take in the name of democracy.

At the Labour Centre of Athens we have the common estimation, all of us, that we worked seriously and responsibly with the huge question of economic immigrants. We performed a specific task and got close to the immigrants and the immigrants came close to us, and these immigrants, albeit late, tormentedly, with a thousand and one problems, are becoming union members, which must be our basic goal so that we can face the problems united.

My colleagues, I believe that this meeting of ours can contribute, must contribute to coordination, working out of vacant positions, respecting the special circumstances presented by each country but which will result finally in a united front in dealing with a sweeping neoliberal policy at the expense of the social, democratic, and all our other rights.

The unions must raise high the flag of peace on a global level, to react actively and effectively against the selective policies of local wars, the wars conducted by few, possibly counted on the fingers of one hand, who are the only ones who profit, literally destroying the person, the citizen, the worker.

Peace was, is and will be the ideal and the prerequisite for the building of a just and efficient society. Arms are an unacceptable challenge, that when millions of children die, when millions of people are



socially excluded, when people are hungry and miserable at all levels. And for those few, for their profits, for them who unfortunately practice politics, these huge, these unimaginable appropriations are spent.

We reject, colleagues, the rationale (if I may be allowed) which has been developing intensely recently, and allow me again to say that we have been affected, that the increase of profits plus the decrease of wages is equal to investments, plus development, plus increase in jobs. And we're not doing this because of some dogmatism. Unfortunately we observe this in life, in reality, that exactly the opposite happens. These two questions are not connected to each other and the results are the ones which we know and which manifest themselves with the colossal matter of unemployment.

This collapses, in any case, from what we have heard here and from everything we know and from what is happening in Europe, with the 20,000,000 unemployed, the excluded, etc. Our country's official recorded unemployment is 11.3%, and unfortunately the unofficial, the latent, the black, the informal, the part-time, the piecework as we call it here, when all this is added up one can see it to be around 20%.

What is this? This is the result of a policy which unfortunately has been applied for decades in our country. It is the provocative profit-making on the part of businesses in Greece, where we, the developing country, or describe it as you wish, are second in business profit-making after the cathedral of capitalism, America.

One hundred or more years ago, as we all know, through struggle, through sacrifices, with blood, with imprisonment and exile, with suffering, the 8-hour work day was achieved, with differences from country to country according to what labor movement and what level of democracy each enjoyed.

And today they present us with the dilemma, after we won the 8-hour work day 110 years ago, that we are demagogues, we are populists, it isn't right, production will decrease, competitiveness, when we reduce working time.

And yes, we heard from the Labour Centre of Athens a specific proposal for establishment of the 35-hour work week. I again repeat respectfully the opinions and this expectation and the struggle engaged in by the organizations, the union movement for the other countries. This is not the question. The question for us is that we want the 35-hour work week without side effects. And side effects are those we heard from France, from the representative here from France, etc. We do not want this kind of 35-hour work week. But it is one thing, what side effects and what happens when it was attempted to apply the 35-hour work week, and it is another thing how we are asking for this, to be put into law, to be secured, to be part of labor law, as a compass for the workers.

The coordination at the European level for the reduction of working hours is a tool, a weapon, a possibility that will stand up to employers and to governments applied policies, to be secured.

Steady and permanent employment is not a utopia. It is not our vice. It is what man deserves, what we will continue to strive for, and the employable in all forms cannot be shaped and exist in a society which we want to call democratic and socially cohesive.

It is necessary, observed by all of us, and here we have a serious deficit as a labour-union movement, about the theory of individuality as I would call it, that everyone is out for himself, each with his own, everyone for himself, and collectivity, common actions, initiatives, struggles, all of these are put aside. Unfortunately the workers who get involved with and accept such life attitudes, they themselves and their children and their future are at the least not suspicious.

We are all called upon, each from his own bulwark, to make a fight which will reject the situation which has been formed, where millions of people as I said before find themselves at a dead end.

The frightening catastrophe to the environment of the Danube, and the preceding events, which we didn't learn about some of them but we see them and we live them, obligate us as a trade-union movement to involve ourselves seriously, specifically and effectively with the environment. Because it is self understood that without the environment man himself cannot exist, let alone workers.

Wrapping up, I think that our meeting of yesterday, of today, and the ensuing procedure of meetings of this type or in any form, what is required in order to create at least optimistic feelings for something better, is the need for them to acquire as specific as possible realistic character.

It is self understood that the struggle is difficult. Everything that's been heard here from the previous speakers are serious problems, intractable at present. We have no other road. The economic indices, those of this economy, are not one-way streets. Man is a one-way street, his interests; the worker who creates.

Thank you.

Given that certain of the previous speakers referred to the current political situation in Austria, I would like to read the statement of the President of the Union of Trade Unions of Austria, Mr. Fritz Vertzeinis.

"The majority of the electoral body -3/4ths- did not vote for the Austrian Freedom Party, AFP. The people who voted for the AFP cannot generally be placed in the category of right-wing radicals. The insinuation that the people of Austria are against democratic ideals with only the reference to some sporadic demonstrations of disrespect towards human values is mistaken. This statement is neither a value judgement nor some effort to excuse or defend the behavior of certain political representative such as Heider, head of the AFP or other officials of the latter. On the contrary, indeed, these types of behavior frequently become the reason for demonstrations. Many are the people and the organizations -as for example the Labour Unions of Austria- who revile this type of behavior in harsh terms. It is therefore obvious adherence to democratic ideas. As a result, the exercise of undifferentiated negative criticism against Austria, regardless of who exercises it, cannot be accepted and must be rejected unequivocally. Saying this, we don't reject the criticism against the leader and officials of the AFP. In such cases criticism and castigation are frequently essential. Only the AFP itself I in a position to transform the disdainful nature of such judgments and certainly through radical changes and the adoption of a convincingly democratic behavior. The AFP's behavior cannot be used by foreign countries as a criterion for placing Austria and her people in the right radical wing, so that finally the country and the people become bound by one political party. The position of the trade unions and the Federation of Trade Unions in Austria has not political complexion. In spite of this, we participate actively in the struggle against racism and every effort towards the prevalence of

DINAH DJALINOUS, representative OGB

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Representative OGB, Dinah Djalinous

totalitarianism. The trade unions and the Federation of Trade Unions in Austria are independent bodies and as such wish to proceed to a clear and unequivocal statement of compliance with the law and adherence to the ideals of improvement of the workers' and employees' level of life in Austria, as well as to the principles of global solidarity. The trade unions and the Federation of Trade Unions of Austria do not depend on the state, the employers, and the political parties. They just each government according to what it is willing to do for the employees and the workers. They are neither on the side of the opposition, nor do they take part in the national administrative mechanism. We neither want to make the government's life difficult nor to help them in their task. The cooperation of all employees and workers within the trade unions, regardless of their political and ideological orientations, is a strong point which must at all costs be safeguarded. This gathered power must be used as an element for achieving and safeguarding democracy, but also the social and economic rights of the worker population; in any case that is our mission. As an agency with its eyes turned toward the future we must do whatever is in our power so that government and workers can take a path that will allow the establishment of true democratic principles and values so that our country may continue toward development along with all those who on an international level toil for universal prosperity."

Dear colleagues, I would like to thank you on the part of the Labour Centre of Athens for the honour you do us by accepting our invitation and thus giving us the opportunity for two days to exchange experiences and queries.

The problem of unemployment is developing into the problem of problems in the countries that make up the European Union, since it is reaching new record levels. At the same time, long-term unemployment and social exclusion threaten social cohesion, since a large portion of the work force, entire sections of the population, are marginalized and distanced from any participation in the social and economic progression.

Twenty million unemployed and more than 50,000,000 people live below the poverty line, while the social-security system and welfare policies are lacking the funds necessary in order to deal with the consequences of these problems.

In our country unemployment, despite the triumphant announcements regarding the Greek economy, increases by leaps and bounds. In 1980 it was at a level of 2.8%. In 1990 it was 7%. Today it reaches 12%.

Some indicative data show that unemployment in young people up to 29 years of age reaches 32%. Women, while they make up 37% of the work force, are 58% of the unemployed. Graduates secondary and higher education institutions have an unemployment rate which reaches 45%. And the ironic thing is that we have had a quadrupling of profits. The net profits of the industrial enterprises during the period '92-'98 went from 174 billion to 10,2 trillion, and employment in industry decreased by 10,000 people.

What is it that causes unemployment, not only in Greece but in all European countries, to be the problem of problems? What is the reason for this paradox, that while the economic indices prosper, while we are in a period of development, not only in Greece but globally, in parallel we see acute evidence of crisis, with the main one being unemployment?

VAGELIS MOUTAFIS,
Deputy General Secretary EKA

A T H E N S



*Deputy General Secretary EKA,
E. Moutafis*

Causes of unemployment: If we do not try to see the causes of unemployment in accordance with the market economy and its function, we will be making a great mistake. Unemployment is due to the same rules that govern the market economy and its reasoning.

The basic core of the market economy is the maximization of profit. Thus, in order for the percentage of profit to increase wages are compressed and as a result the purchasing power of workers is decreased, resulting in a reduction in consumption. The pace of work is intensified resulting in the employment of fewer workers, who put out a greater volume of production.

The application of modern technology without the reduction of working hours results in greater volume of product being produced, and the inability of society to consume it due to devaluation of work.

The gathering of wealth in ever fewer hands and the increase of poverty in significant portions of society, the wealthiest 20% of the Greek economy has an income 6.7 times higher than the equivalent poorest 20%.

Finally, we find in a period of growth all the elements of a crisis of over-production, with unsold goods, intensification of labor, with heightening of social inequalities and widening of the gap to the detriment of the weakest classes, with acquisitions and mergers which decrease the production sections of businesses. With the new technology which instead of being a means of freeing workers as a result of decrease in working hours, has become a tyrant in the hands of capital, with investments turning toward speculative directions (see the stock market) and not toward production units, and all of these exacerbating unemployment and problems of workers.

What does the future hold? What we must emphasize is that the future doesn't show any auspicious signs regarding a change in the terms that increase unemployment. As a matter of fact that which is to come is possibly even bleaker than what we are living through now. Capital's attack on workers will increase, with the main target being an even further decrease in labor costs, which is close to 60% of the European average, the promotion and increase of privatization, attacks on social-security funds and their reserves.

Thus, within an ever harsher economic situation unemployment will increase and not decrease. The unemployment figures would be clearly larger as far as Greece is concerned if they included those who take part in programs of the Organization for the Employment of Work Force (OAED) who are trainees and are employed for certain periods of time.

And if we didn't deduct from the unemployed those who work part time, who are in essence semi-unemployed, semi-employed, at wages which are near the limits of poverty.

According to a Greek university study one in five residents of the country has an income smaller than 60% of the average, which corresponds to the lowest wages of the national general collective agreement, while over 550,000 people live in conditions of extreme poverty, with a monthly personal income of 43,000 drachmas. Some individuals live on even lower amounts, while some mothers with a child live on 43,000 drachmas per month and four-member families on 87,000 drachmas per month.

The unemployed are within these categories of absolute poverty. Today the unemployment benefits according to data of the Institute of General Labor Federation of Greece represents 46% of the basic daily wage. The law establishes 66.5% and the General Federation proposes 80%. In shining nations many dark corners exist.

What is the solution to the problem? The overall solution to the problem of unemployment is an economy which would place at the center not profit but human beings. Instead of competitiveness and



conflict and anarchy, planning on the basis of social needs; instead of privatization a social economy; instead of the maximization of wealth in the hands of the few, it would place the use of wealth for the many.

The ten richest people on earth have assets greater than the 50 poorest countries on earth. With only 10% of their wealth poverty could be wiped out, along with illiteracy, shortage of water, under-nourishment, epidemics, and the problem of housing for the wretched and disinherited of this world. But until this happens, direct measures are required.

The 35-hour work week without reduction in wages and compensatory working hours. The reduction of retirement age first of all for the heavy and unhealthy occupations are demands which can free up approximately 200,000 to 250,000 jobs in Greece.

If this is combined with an economic policy which will be based on development, the creation of united agencies for each branch of production, with an economic development plan for all branches of the economy, then unemployment can actually be reduced.

In addition expenditures have to be increased for public works for social causes. Workers' housing, hospitals, schools, anti-flooding works. At the same time, however, immediate measures must be taken to protect the unemployed. The increase of unemployment benefits to 80% is mandatory, and the extension of benefits for whatever period the worker is unemployed.

The years of unemployment to be included in calculations for retirement benefits, with lowered insurance coverage. Card free of charge for public transportation. Forbidding of evictions and aid for paying rent, forbidding the interruption of services such as electricity and water. The establishment of municipal restaurants in areas with increased unemployment, taking advantage of abandoned buildings, as well as state, municipal, and church buildings, to serve as residences for the indigent and homeless.

For these reasons in each municipality offices for assisting the unemployed are needed, for providing information, help in claims, employment orientation, and psychological support, legal advice, etc.

However, at the same time a great movement against unemployment must be created. In every union, in every labor center, in every neighborhood, committees against unemployment must be created. A movement for claims must be developed which will bring hope to the hopeless, a dream to the disadvantaged of life.

Colleagues, these are some thoughts - proposals which must be discussed along with the others and claimed by the European labor movement in order to deal with this problem of problems which is unemployment.

Certainly, always with the goal of unemployment disappearing and full salaried work existing for all, we are obliged to find ways of mitigating the problems of the unemployed.

It is an essential prerequisite that the European unions raise their voices, show their power, making the problems of each unemployed worker their own, with the central motto *solidarity, social justice, work for all*.

Thank you.

ISABEL NAVARRO CENDON,
Regional Secretary of UGT

S P A I N
M A D R I D



From the left: Astencion Ferrato Astigieros
and Isabel Navarro Cendon, UGT-Madrid

Good day. First of all I would like to thank the Labour Centre of Athens for the invitation they directed to us to take part in the present conference here in Athens. I would also like to thank the interpreters for the job they are doing throughout this meeting. Before beginning with my speech I would like to declare my support for the proposal made by my Belgian comrade. I believe truly that a resolution condemning Helder and supporting the Austrian unions should emerge from the present conference. I am of the opinion that such a resolution should meet with unanimous acceptance and support from all who are present at this meeting.

Personally, I will concentrate on the problem of **immigration**. I will begin by discussing the means which have been established by the UGT for the benefit of immigrants, and thereafter I will speak about the situation of the latter within the Spanish labour market.

The UGT has created specialized organizations for helping immigrants with specific problems, such as those confronted by foreign workers. The appearance of these DIAS centers -centers for the care of immigrants and refugees as they are called- coincided with the development in Spain of the first of these immigrant population groups from the countries of North Africa and countries south of the Sahara. The creation of these centers was inspired by the realization on the part of our organization of the importance of the entrance of immigrants into the social and working atmosphere where they come to live. The living conditions of the immigrants determine all the manifestations of his life, among these that of work. For this reason the union's mission is to help and facilitate the immigrants from every point of view. The improvement of the immigrants living conditions will have an effect on his working life and vice versa. As an example of these centers' activities I will refer to the general effects resulting from their



activities in the administrative region of Madrid. During the year 1999 14,000 cases were handled which concerned an average of approximately 10,000 individuals who requested information, estimation or aid in transactions with administrative services or other organs, regarding various legal, labor, and social matters. One such example was the claim of lack of medical-pharmalogical attention, a matter which fortunately was solved last year.

Our organization conducted an investigation - the report of which I will comment upon later - through these DIAS centers, with the purpose of determining discrimination to which immigrants fall prey in the places where they work, the inability to take part in circles and training programs, as well as wage differences. On the contrary, in areas with high proportions of unemployment the greatest problem appeared to be centered on the access to temporary jobs.

A study by UGT in 1995 showed that Spanish employers had the tendency to discriminate against young Moroccan immigrants who were looking for work as unskilled laborers. This same study revealed that the most serious cases of discrimination are to be found in the service field, immediately followed by the industrial sector. It was noted that another form of discrimination was practiced by farmers, who when they need to hire hands, apparently prefer foreigners from countries south of the Sahara at the expense of the Moroccans. Now regarding the place held in the Spanish labour market by Latin Americans, the distribution appears equal among the high, the middle, and the low level. Seventy-one percent of the Asian immigrants and 84% of the Africans are found at the lowest level of the Spanish labour market. Given that the area in which we are by nature created to be active is that of work, we have put into effect a series of mobilizations, claims, and proposals aimed at the entrance of foreign workers into their work environment. Through collective bargaining we gradually establish the benefits of non-discrimination. This non-discrimination, in any case, should not be applicable only to the workplace, where its nonenforcement presents an immediate injustice against the worker. It is equally important to head off and denounce instances of indirect discrimination which through practices which as a rule are applicable to all, in the end become a disadvantage to the detriment of the foreign workers. Illegal and legal, immigrant workers as a whole believe that the labor scene into which they enter is radically different from the given situation of Spanish workers. In general this comprises a labor reality which in most of its manifestations is obviously disadvantageous for the group of immigrant workers as far as the established order, the laws and the rules which govern labour rights and working conditions for the workers who are citizens of the country. As it appears from the answers given to the questions in our study, finally foreigners come to Spain to perform the jobs which Spanish have refused to perform for a long time.

These are jobs which require minimal training but an increased volume of effort and responsibility for which remuneration is generally penurious. Fishermen, day workers, construction workers, waiters, maids and employees of courier companies are some of the more basic professions we are talking about. The strenuous effort required by the performance of such jobs does not coincide with some improvement in working conditions or greater respect for social rights. These are matters that are foreseen theoretically in a labor contract but which, however, are usually not maintained. On the contrary, indeed, these specific matters have in the end very negative repercussions, since on the one hand governments don't make any special effort to ensure their observance, while employers from their part know well that the specific jobs are finally the only ones to which most immigrants can have access. This

is the reason employers hardly bother themselves at all with improving terms of employment, an employment, an improvement in any case which due to the extremely small ability to influence that they enjoy, immigrant workers are not in a position to impose. According to whether their immigrant position is legal or not, foreigners come into their work environment facing two different types of challenges which are critical importance: the area of legality and that of illegality. However, in spite of the fact that the foreign workers do not compete with the native-born as regards the type of job, among themselves and according to their national origin there is discrimination, and in fact to such a degree that one can speak of an actual system of social categorization within the group of workers itself. So all workers are not equal vis-a-vis employment opportunities.

These opportunities sometimes stand in relation to their national origin. A prime factor of discrimination within this specific social group is language, an objective factor employers cite as an element of differentiation of their judgment as to whom they will finally hire. Latin Americans and Portuguese face the fewest linguistic problems, the former because in essence they are speaking their mother tongue, while the latter because their language is very similar to Spanish, a fact which allows them to learn it very quickly. Moroccans, despite the essential differences existing between their language and Spanish, are able within a relatively short period of time to acquire knowledge such as to enable them to communicate in the Spanish language at a basic level. On the contrary, African immigrants, regardless of whether they come from anglophone or francophone countries, present the most differences in communication as far as the use of our language is concerned. Regarding female immigrants, the process of their essential entrance into their new social and work environment appears not to have begun yet. As an example for this conclusion I refer to the usual working activities of female immigrants in Spain: household help, child care, jobs in areas of production and decentralization, and in general the various activities included in the so-called field of at-home work. This means that women are employed in production activities the majority of which are performed at home, where the raw materials are received and the semi-finished or finished product is delivered. The lack of labor contracts, the low daily wage and the harsh working conditions incur all the other sufferings which go along with such production procedures. If one excepts the case of students and single women, in general such types of activities are considered as contribution to the family income and not as a means of achieving financial independence, something in and of itself already extremely difficult if one takes into consideration the endless hours of work and the extremely low prices per piece which these people are paid for their work. It is obvious that due to the lack of alternative working solutions not a few female immigrants in their attempts to secure an income are led even into prostitution.

We, from the side of UGT, have assumed the responsibility of taking as many measures as necessary with a view to ensuring the full social and labor integration of the immigrants, both male and female, into our society. The government's role is fundamental as well as indispensable for achieving this goal. For this reason the government must direct its efforts to the formation of a specific policy based on criteria of integration and consummation. Until today the strategy -or to be more precise- the lack of strategy on the part of whatever Spanish government was replaced by International Agreements such as the Schengen Agreement regarding national borders. Prior to any other action the establishment of legislative framework through which the legalization of the situation of all these people who can show adequate ties to Spanish society takes priority, without needing to exhaust oneself in bureaucratic



procedures which are based on the collection of papers and other documentation and which in the past have proven to be temporary as well as inadequate. Finishing, I would like to report that on February 2nd of this year the new law governing the rights and position of immigrants was voted into law in Spain. In spite of the position of the country's government which did not believe that this law would ever pass, the administrative area of Madrid will now be able to legalize around 35,000 to 40,000 people. We believe, however, that the effort should not stop here. Even after this legalization it is my belief that governments as well as we, the unions, must take care that this legalization procedure be stable and enduring so that we are not faced with questions and situations such as those which the country and more especially the administrative region of Madrid, recently lived and lives through. I thank you very much.

ASTENCION FERRATO ASTIGIEROS:

Good day. First of all I would like to thank you for the permission that you give me to present a request very briefly. We, the members of the Spanish delegation, were coming to attend this conference consumed with the fear that the recent terrorist attack caused us. We would like to ask this conference to unequivocally condemn the terrorist attacks in Spain and the deaths which can only harm Democracy. I thank you.

JACQUES GIROD:

Good day and rest easy; my speech will be very short. What is published in today's Greek press as well as what has been heard in this room in the form of interventions urge me to intervene. To begin with I would like to refer to a mistake that managed to slip by and be published in the Greek newspaper. Contrary to what was written the implementation of the 35-hour week did not create 700,000 new jobs, but rather only 100,000 - and indeed at a cost to the workers! I repeat that the Force Ouvriere supports the proposal of our comrade from the FGTP, but with one specific differentiation: we, the people of Force Ouvriere state that we are against any form of totalitarianism, xenophobia, and racism. If, however, we need to proceed to the publication of a resolution at the level of a European conference such as ours, this must be generalized and must not be directed against a particular political party or country. Even if such a thing is not set out in the goals of this conference, Force Ouvriere clarifies that in every case we look for the safeguarding of one of its particular characteristics, which is its independence vis-a-vis political parties, governments, and whatever religion. I thank you for your attention.

Ladies and gentlemen, dear colleagues,
I would ask the Greek colleagues to facilitate the evolution and the completion of the proceedings. Colleagues, I already will direct myself especially to our colleagues from the other cities who are present at our meeting.

You have noticed from our colleagues speeches something of which you were perhaps unaware. In Greece the labour union movement is expressed within united organizations; however, within these organizations differing views are expressed. That is to say the members of the boards of directors of the organizations in our country, in the first degree, in the second degree, and in the General Federation of Greek Workers, are elected from different ballots, and these ballots are put together according to the opinions which are followed by each ballot.

For this reason it is logical that the opinions expressed by the members of the presidency of EKA would have some differing characteristics.

It is a factor, if you wish, that within our differences we can arrive to agreements on important matters and thus we go ahead.

Unfortunately, time - and we could not fix the time, the room must be surrendered at a specific hour did not allow all our Greek colleagues who would have like to express a position, and possibly some of our foreign colleagues who during the meeting might have desired to add something to their speech or to state a position if they had not done so. We are therefore obliged to put an end to the conference. However, mainly all opinions were expressed, even if by one representative of each group, referring to the opinions of the Labour Centre of Athens.

It will be a little difficult for me to make a synopsis, because you know, at the same moment I was obliged and I had the disposition and the interest to follow the questioning of each participant who took part in our conference, and I needed at the same time to keep some notes because there was no intermission, a break toward the end, to give me the possibility of summarizing.

GRIGORIS FELONIS, President EKA

C L O S U R E



The President of EKA, G. Felonis

I would like, however, to say a few things regarding the procedure, and thereafter to remark on certain points that I believe express the opinion of all of us.

The minutes, as you have been informed, will be transcribed, and a book will be printed in Greek and one in English which will be sent to all representatives. Possibly the text will be sent to you before publishing the book in order for certain corrections to be made which possibly were not able to be understood during transcription. I would say that these would be more in the nature of clarifications, and thereafter this book will be sent to all the organizations and if you wish it will be what remains, one of the elements that will have remained from these two days of discussions and from your almost four days here in our city.

I would like, however, to enter into certain conclusions and certain remarks which I believe to be necessary. First of all, I consider that all these representatives pointed out some matters which were referred to in our proposal, that the primary problem today in Europe is the problem of unemployment. What exacerbates this problem are the restrictive policies, technology and the way in which it is used, removing workers from production, the movement of populations, for which movements, however, are not responsible those who are moving but rather the economic situation in their countries which forces them to move.

I believe that the opinions regarding these matters, even if there were some small differences, were common. Certainly there was evidence of more anxiety on the part of the countries who I would say export economic immigrants, referring to what the economic situation is in those countries that forces the workers of those countries to seek a daily wage in third countries. The problems in the host countries are fewer, but there too there are problems which you all described vividly, the problems of accepting a situation, of a very large number of citizens and their integration into society.

Of course, beyond this there were references, and descriptions if you wish, of certain events that recently took place on our continent. I am speaking about the last years. There were the descriptions by our colleague from Yugoslavia regarding what the war means, and I in my talk referred to what war means and perhaps we could through this today from here underline that wars and exclusion and embargoes do not help to solve the problems that exist in certain countries. On the contrary, they punish these countries' people. Because of this our goal must be peace in all countries, that the UN be the open embrace to all countries and have the responsibility to follow up as to whether they respect or infringe on human rights, and to endeavor through dialogue to solve whatever problems are created in whatever countries, but not through war and isolation, because finally the aim might be to punish some leader, but the result is that certain peoples are punished and driven into poverty, and human creations destroyed.

I believe with certainty that we must all agree to the proposal of our colleague from Spain which relates to the condemnation of the recent terrorist acts which occurred in Spain. I don't think we need to take a vote; I believe that this is accepted by all of us. In any case, by these two strikes, regardless of the reasons invoked by those responsible for these actions, in the final analysis it is innocent citizens who are killed.

Also I must mention regarding the Austrian question, in no case did any of those who expressed an opinion take aim at the people of Austria, or take aim at the country of Austria. It was everyone's intention to turn our backs and express our opposition to Nazi-type phenomena which are being reborn in our time and which will result in the rebirth of new holocausts.



For that we reason the peoples of Europe as one, and we believe the majority of the people of Austria, not the majority as expressed in the elections but an even greater majority, must condemn these manifestations following the same reasoning that leads us to wish to condemn them. In no case do we wish to for a country to be excluded because Mr. Heider and his party must be punished. I think this should be our position.

Now, certain Eastern European and Cypriot organizations made references to the Federation of Labor Unions. We believe that the Federation of Labour Unions must be the European Trade Union Confederation, it must be the big embrace which will encompass all the organizations of the countries of Europe. Within that whatever differences that may exist can be solved, within that solutions can be agreed upon for which we have to fight, in order that they constitute policies.

In light of the summit meeting in Lisbon, our colleague mentioned what is being prepared in Lisbon. We will transmit to the General Labour Confederation of Greece of which we are a member the opinion that all national federations, as well as the Federation of European Unions should express not the wish, but express the demand that the summit meeting in Lisbon should proceed not only to legislate certain measures aimed at full employment, but should select enforceable measures aimed at full employment. Because otherwise, if these measures are not specific they will not give the results we all expect.

I don't know if you consider that there has been a record by me of all matters of importance. In any case the proposal is, regarding the Austrian matter and the matter concerning Spain, the matter brought up by our colleague the president from Moscow, Nagaytsev, that they be in the form of specific resolutions. Yes, there is another suggestion; I had not made note of it, maybe I was absent at that moment inside the hall, for the matters concerning the environment and the problem that existed recently with the leakage of cyanide into the Danube, something he had included in his first talk.

If you consider that a specific text should be drafted for these matters, that text is not ready today. If the body wishes to formulate such text we could draft these small texts this afternoon, to place them at your disposal from tonight up to noon tomorrow, if there are some verbal remarks to make these remarks tomorrow evening at the farewell dinner, for an announcement to be made that we have arrived at these texts, and there to be considered as texts of agreement.

I do not know; perhaps at this time we should take a vote on the matter, or if you consider that we should proceed in this way, we to prepare these texts.

CHAIR:

If there is a proposal regarding this matter, or some opinion from the colleagues from the European capitals, we ask for your opinion and that of the chair.

SMYRNIDIS:

I think that beyond the procedural portion which the specific matters form, other matters were brought up in the President's closing, which I do not know if they will be included in this general summary, for which there exist, as were heard inside, various shades.

I am talking about matters such as the interpretation of unemployment and the way in which to deal with it, matters such as the evaluation of Yugoslavia and the way in which it should be expressed, because the necessity for support was heard in here, regarding the specific aggression suffered by the specific country.

As a result, then, I do not know what the procedure we shall follow, will be from here on, but if we are going to arrive at a text surely all proposals should be given in writing to everyone in order to be able to arrive at a final text.

CHAIR:

The colleague Manolakos, member of the administration of EKA.

MANOLAKOS:

We consider that outside the agreement, the exclusion of one opinion in today's procedure, is not fair. Second is the matter of essence for the closing, regarding the war in Yugoslavia, according to our opinion the invasion of the American imperialism must be categorically condemned by this conference.



PRESIDENT OF EKA:

I spoke of four different texts, because the effort must be toward having, since such a desire was expressed, toward having certain decisions. And since we may not be able to arrive at a united text, I think at least regarding the points we agree upon, that we can record them, the ones that we all agree upon.

Since regarding some matters, from what I could interpret from the opinions submitted there is the possibility for agreement on these matters I would say, forming four different texts: **one of Yugoslavia, one for the matter of Spain, one for the question of Austria, one for the environment.** These texts can express the whole. I would say, of those attending here, to be given perusal this evening and by tomorrow evening, after corrections are made, each text separately will be a distinct decision.

I also said that all opinions, since they have been tape-recorded, will be referred to in the book. Therefore there was no possibility of exclusion.

Allow me, however, to say something that I neglected to say these two days. Other unions were invited which for reasons of some exceptional procedures they had in their countries, or problems which arose at the last minute, were unable to attend. There was not one organization in all of Europe which was not invited to participate. I mean no one organization from a European capital which was not invited to take part in these procedures. That is a given.

CHAIR:

In the order I saw, the colleague from Turkey, the colleague from Belgrade, the colleague from Skopja, and the colleague from Nicosia. Colleague from Turkey, please.

SPEAKER (TURK-15):

Mr. President, esteemed colleagues, I greet you warmly and bring you friendly greetings from TURK-15. In the year 2000, at the beginning of a new century, the basic problems of workers which are **unemployment, immigration, and economic difficulties of workers,** is the reason for our meeting. We thank the President and the administrative executives of EKA very much for inviting us to this conference in order to discuss these important problems. I also thank them for their warm and friendly behaviour, as well as for the perfection of the organization.

Dear colleagues, as the President of EKA noted, as well as the other colleagues, in the entire world there are problems in the area of employment which are almost similar. These problems are felt more keenly in the developing and undeveloped countries than in the others. As all the speakers have remarked, the problem is the same and we all wish, I think, to take part in finding some solutions. The solutions are the same.

The decisions we will make during the two days of the conference I believe will play an important role in finding answers that will help to reduce the problems of workers.

We all by now know that capital knows no nationality or religion. Capital, beyond national boundaries uses every means to protect its interests; by exploiting workers it is able to solve its own problems. For this reason at the end of this conference I propose we give out a common resolution, which I believe is indispensable.

As capital knows no nationality or religion, we must show that the rights of workers have no nationality or religion. And on every level the workers of every country can join and fight together. This is necessary in order to achieve success, and we all know it. In this way I believe that we must arrive at a common resolution and record it.

I do not wish to expand further, since my colleagues have already made extensive reference to the problems. I would like to take this opportunity to thank everyone who took part in this conference, the governments and the citizens for their help to my country after the destructive earthquakes that hit us. I hope the new century will be a century when the problems of workers will be fewer. I greet you all and thank you very much.

CHAIR:

We thank our colleague from Turkey. The colleague from Belgrade, the President.

BOGOLJUB MITROVIC, President of Conf. of Autonomous Unions of Belgrade:

Dear colleagues, I think we should proceed in the same way that we have been for the last two days. I think that the subjects of the conference were first of all economic, social, we spoke about employment and other matters. First of all it has to do with economic problems, but we spoke also about social questions, and as we see also about the political side to the problems.

It is good to speak of democracy, of rights against racism, terrorism, and war. I thank all the delegations who understood well the proposal I gave as representative of the Labor Centre of Belgrade. I thank everyone who supported my proposal, because it was not at all against any race, any nation, against any union.

I do not see why we can not accept the proposal of our colleague Grigoris. I think they are good suggestions and we like the idea of the book a lot.

I am satisfied, we in the delegation, that our colleague Grigoris accepted my proposal of yesterday which was also supported by my colleague Nagaytsev from Moscow. It has to do with the end of the sanctions, because I think we should end the sanctions if we wish to have a solution to the Yugoslavian problem. Because the economy and society in our country depend and are very affected by the sanctions.

I think that another good idea was the European Confederation of Trade of Unions, to accept all the unions of the present, today's Europe, because I believe that problems should be solved there, inside the organization.

Also, a good idea was expressed here by the colleague who spoke about a new role for the United Nations, the UN, and because we think that Resolution 1244 of the Security Council of the United Nations must be respected in our country, that is to say the international community must protect a country's borders and the rights of the people.

I agree also with other suggestions, I am in agreement regarding the problem of terrorism in Spain and the problems which our colleagues in Austria have, and I think that in general we support the proposals and we thank you for everything.

Thank you.



CHAIR:

We thank the president of the Labour Centre of Belgrade. The colleague from Skopja has the floor.

GENERAL SECRETARY OF SKOPJA UNIONS, ATANAS LEFTEROV:

I am the general secretary of the independent unions of Skopja, from the Macedonian Republic. Unfortunately I do not have time to speak more and to a great extent about our country and its problems. I was waiting to say two or three words about our problems, but I have some specific proposals with which we could close this meeting of the European unions.

I agree and am completely satisfied that I heard colleagues from Spain, Turkey, Norway and Serbia who were sincere, speaking about their problems, and I can say that I am thinking that the basic problem in these countries is always the economic one.

I agree with my colleague from Turkey who said that we are not strong enough to help ourselves. I have a specific proposal: I can say that my country, a former Yugoslav republic, Macedonia, has many problems, provoked by the war, and there are first of all economic causes for the crisis we have in our country, because all transport which go from Northern to Southern Europe must pass, almost all of them, through our country, and with the war and with the boycott we had problems.

I would like to say that we should send a message to international institutions. A message that will speak of the events, the sad events of Spain, Turkey, and Serbia, and to also show them how good people can live without such problems. We also heard some very good thoughts regarding this from our friend from Norway.

We must send a message also to the European Union and to the United Nations, to put an end to the sanctions in the Balkans because only in the absence of sanctions will we have a normal economy, and only in this way will we be able to live normally.

I propose that the people who organized the conference should prepare a document. We will be patient, we'll wait and then when the document is ready we can vote, we can raise our hands, we will see.

Many thanks for your attention. I wished to speak about the difficult and tragic events in my country, but I see that we do not have time.

Thank you very much.

SPEAKER (NICOSIA):

My intervention will consist of an essential proposal as a procedural matter. As a matter of procedure I believe that in the conference program there is not a subject regarding resolutions. As a result I believe that the question of resolutions should be brought up and issued today.

If there were such a possibility the chair should have previously prepared resolutions to be sent to the various countries, to be studied by the various organizations, and then come here with their own interventions, the correct selections to be made, and the proper resolutions to be issued which would in any case be resolutions which would cover the matter, which is covered by today's two-day conference which has taken place.

I believe that during two days here we have discovered that all the countries, regardless of what is represented by each who participates, we found common results regarding a question which had neither country, nor political coloring, nor sexual discrimination; it is a problem that tortures us all, all the countries, some to a very small extent, others to a very great extent, and for which we need to find answers.

Some proposals were made which each country, either on a national level or through our organizations on an international level can be developed, promoted, in order to solve the problem which was the problem of the conference, and I believe that political matters would be left for other areas and other conferences.

At least we from Cyprus, in spite of the fact that we are facing some problem and it is quite crucial for us, endeavored in this conference to be friends with our union colleagues from Turkey, spoke with them, exchanged business cards with them. We did not bring up problems, and we respected these surroundings. We did not bring up the matter because the common matter that we are here to discuss isn't the political or bilateral relations of each of us, but the problem of unemployment which we also have and which the colleagues from Turkey also face, and that's what we need to look at.

I believe that the scenario should unfold within this framework, the conference; the closing should be as it was done by the president of EKA, to make the summary of the speeches, the proposals that have been made during these two days, and to exploit them, the book as it has been proposed to be sent to the various countries, to be used by the various organization.

Beyond this, what I was going to say, there is no question of us going to prepare resolutions, aside from the fact that it is outside procedure, a resolution can't be prepared which will be given in a hotel room and an answer be given by each. And if we have twenty-five different opinions? How can a common resolution be reached? This is an additional difficulty, beyond the basic one, which for me is procedural and the proper procedures should be maintained from the beginning.

Thank you.

CHAIR:

The colleague from FORCE OUVRIERE.

JACQUES GIROD

We absolutely agree with the views of the previous speakers. We are not the Security Council of the UN, certainly not. We have been invited here to discuss about concrete issues, trade union issues. I think that it would be difficult to go any further, considering our limitations and because there was no expectations of reaching such a resolution.

Therefore, such a resolution could come into existence as a result of the minutes of the conference, which we shall receive in due course, in order to approve or to make any alterations.

Under no circumstances would the French delegation approve of a resolution which departs from the subject of the Trade Union content.

Thank you for your attention.



PRESIDENT OF EKA:

I would ask for your attention for a little while because a matter has been raised which is important. The subject of the conference was specific. I believe that the majority of the speakers spoke on the subject of the conference.

Without this being our intention, there were proposals from colleagues who did not come from the Labour Centre of Athens to elaborate resolutions. You can understand, as hosts we could not avoid bringing up for discussion by all the delegations the possibility of having some resolutions or not.

It appeared that we have common struggles for lot of things, it appears that there is some difficulty involved in elaborating some resolution. Since we respect also those who have difficulty with the issuing of this resolution in fact there cannot be a resolution, there will be these minutes and each organization according to its estimation of the quality of this conference can take a position. I think this should be our closing.

I simply would like to thank you for all the questioning that was introduced these days. Let us consider that this meeting of ours was one more step towards the development of relations among us and to continue these steps, because the more steps we take, the closer one will come to the other, until we are finally able, regarding all the questions and the problems that will arise, we are able to have unanimous opinions, and in coordination we will demand the resolution of these problems.

In closing I wish the rest of your stay to be pleasant. We will have the opportunity over the remaining hours that we will be together to discuss various issues. We would like to thank the interpreters for their help during these days, and all the personnel of EKA for the efforts they made for the organization of this conference. We would like it to be understood that whatever problems or omissions may have been noted were due to, if you wish, human weakness.

We thank you very much.

C L O S U R E O F T H E C O N F E R E N C E

PARTICIPANTS AT THE CONFERENCE

COUNTRY	ORGANISATION
Austria	OGB
Belgium	CSC FGTB
Bulgaria	PODKREPA CITUB
France	FO
Fyrom	UIASM
Spain	UGT USMR - CC00
Italy	CGIL GISL UIL
Cyprus	SEK DEDK
Norway	LO
Holland	FNV
Poland	NSZZ SOLIDARNOSC
Portugal	OGTP-IN UGT
Roumania	CSDR FRATIA CARTEL ALFA
Russia	MTUF
Serbia	CONF. OF AUT. UNIONS OF BELGRADE
Turkey	HAK- IS DISK TURK - IS



A general view of the Conference room



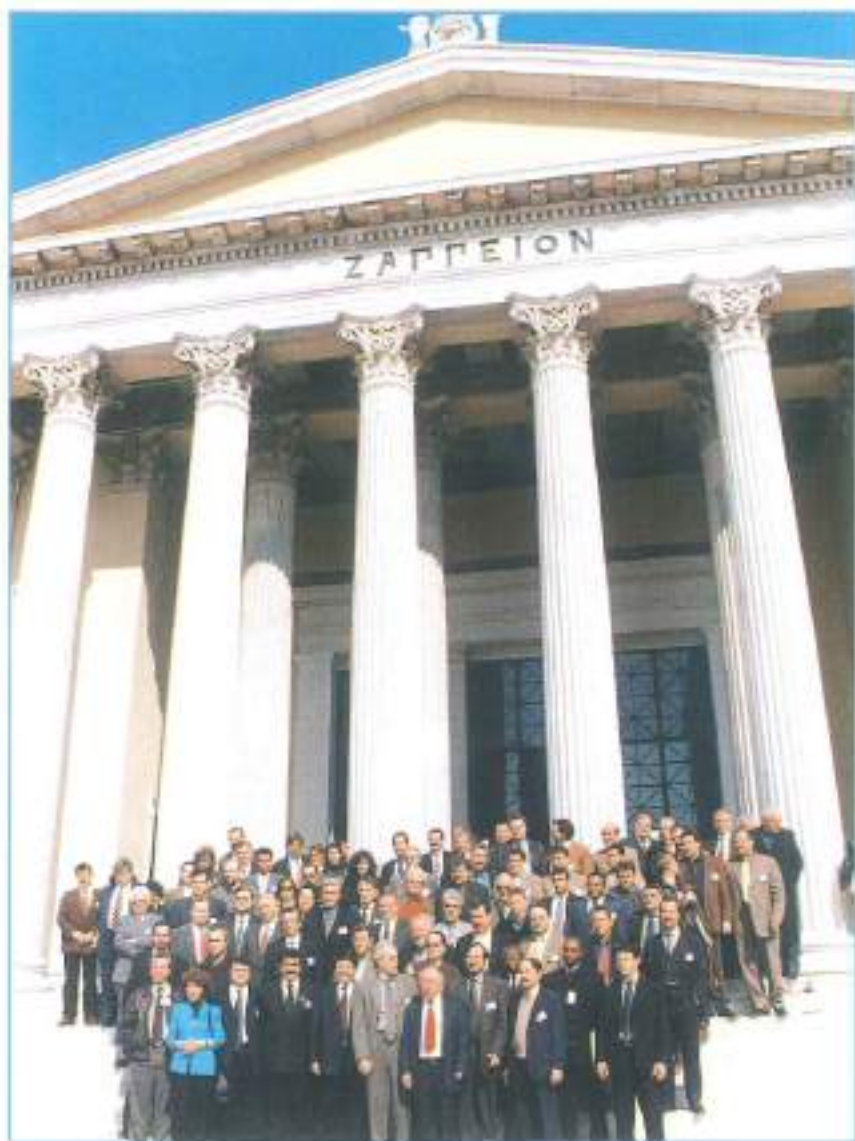
The Mayor of Athens D. Avramopoulos and the President of EKA Gr. Felonis at the reception



Reception at the City Hall of Athens



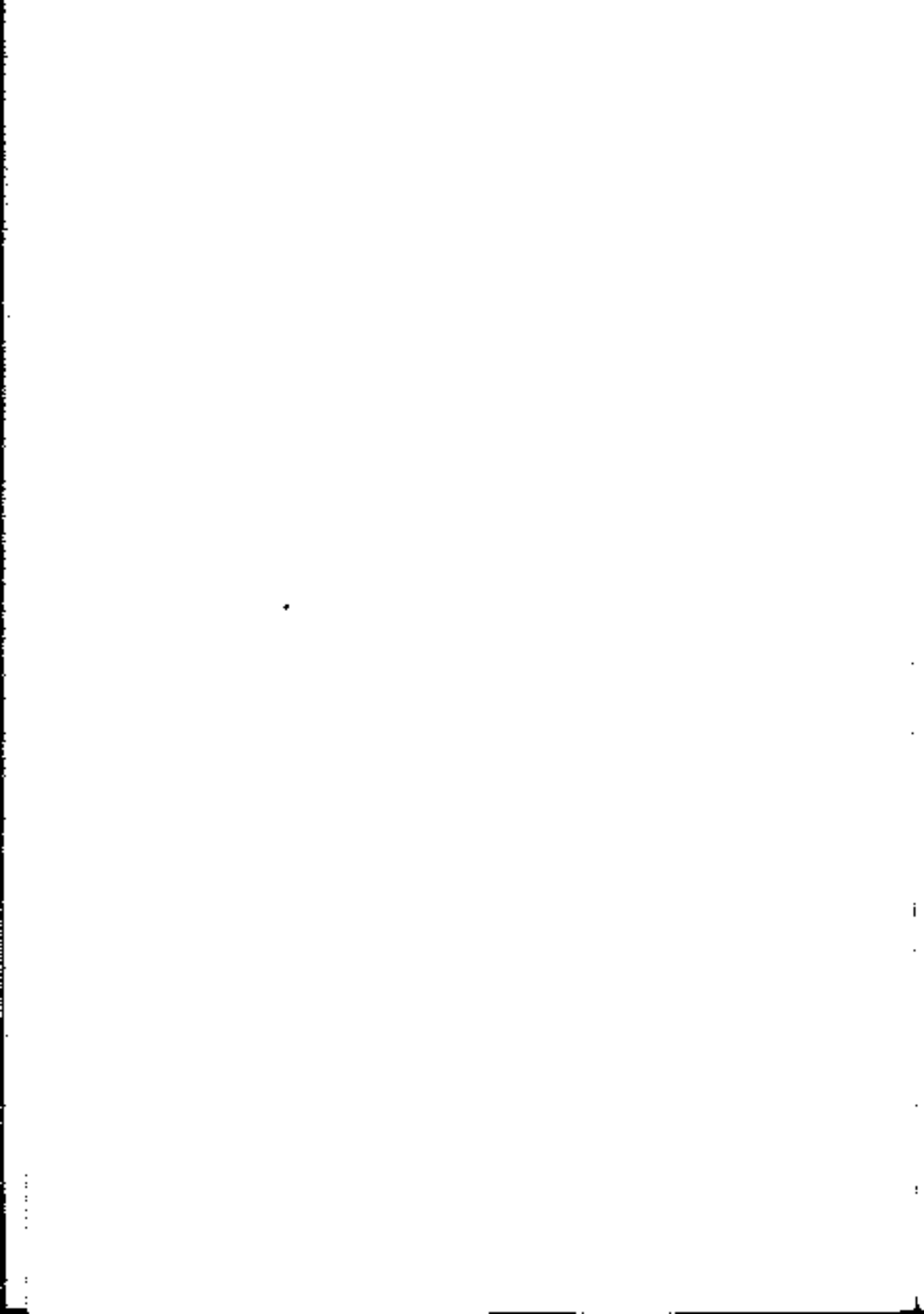
Conference delegates at the City Hall of Athens



Conference delegates



Conference delegates





WORKERS' WELFARE
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LABOUR FORCE EMPLOYMENT
ORGANISATION



STATE TELECOMMUNICATIONS
COMPANY



WATER SUPPLY
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