

Global Issues

The WFTU – Hydroponic Stalinism

Dan Gallin, Global Labour Institute

Hydroponics: A method of growing plants using mineral nutrient solutions, in water, without soil. When the required mineral nutrients are introduced into a plant's water supply artificially, soil is no longer required for the plant to thrive.

After a long lapse, the World Federation of Trade Unions (WFTU) is again in the news. Experienced observers are wondering if this is not a 'second coming'¹: it certainly looks that way in South Africa, where four affiliated unions of the leading confederation, the ITUC-affiliated Congress of South African Trade Unions (COSATU), have affiliated to the WFTU and are pressing the Congress itself to follow suit.² Much of the discussion is framed in terms of a possible unity overcoming the last major split in the international trade union movement.

The Presidential Council (the smaller governing body) of the WFTU met in Johannesburg in February 2012 on the invitation of the four WFTU-affiliated COSATU member unions. It was addressed by COSATU president Sdumo Dlamini who told the Council that 'we (COSATU) will be entering into a discussion about the type of a relationship we must have with the WFTU and how such a relationship can take forward our commitment to achieve unity between the WFTU and the ITUC'.³

The 11th National COSATU Congress last September was addressed by both Sharan Burrow, general secretary of the ITUC,⁴ and by WFTU general secretary George Mavrikos.⁵ Faced with strong support within COSATU for an affiliation with the WFTU, and in the presence of its general secretary, Burrow struck a conciliatory note. She referred to 'workers in China and Vietnam with who we have a close engagement', and Cuba, 'where I am working to strengthen our engagement', blurring the fact that the ITUC has no 'close engagement' at all with the workers of these three countries but is seeking such an engagement with their State-controlled trade union organizations. They are among the few remaining labour structures inherited from the Soviet model, which no ITUC affiliate, including COSATU, would ever accept in their own country.

With respect to the WFTU, she explained that, although she deplored the 'misinformation and misguided criticism' of the ITUC, neither she, nor 'any of her team', would ever criticize the WFTU, because they believed in freedom of association and, whilst unity was preferable, pluralism could legitimately emerge from this fundamental workers' right. 'The last thing workers need is unions fighting' she said, adding: 'George, my door is always open to dialogue and I hope there will be a time when we can unite all the workers in the world'.

Burrow goes on to say 'we do have a fundamental difference'. What is it? 'It is not communism or socialism', because she is 'a proud woman of the Left'. The 'fundamental difference' is the attitude to the Arab popular revolutions, in particular in Syria, where the

WFTU (like Russia and China) is supporting the State-controlled labour organization (not unlike those of China, Vietnam and Cuba) in a bloody civil war. Burrow 'hopes there will be a time beyond the dictators' club where we can fight together', and 'frankly, dialogue never hurts'.

Is this a discussion between representatives of different, but equally legitimate, tendencies in the international labour movement? The 'historical achievement' of the merger between the ICFTU and WCL was touted as 'overcoming the divisions of the Cold War'. In fact, it had done no such thing, since the ICFTU and the WCL were pretty much on the same side of the Cold War and the WFTU, on the other side of the Cold War, had been left out. Are we now about to move towards another 'historical achievement'? Or, as Bongani Masuku, COSATU's International Secretary, put it, coinciding with Sharan Burrow: 'a unified global trade union movement that would unite all the various strands of the international trade union movement into a mighty wave'?⁶

What has been missing in this discussion has been any awareness that one is dealing here with very different organizations. The ITUC is the latest organizational form of the historical labour movement which arose in the 19th and 20th centuries, from Marxist, Syndicalist and Catholic roots, hardly recognizable today but nonetheless real. Its current policies, such as they are, are pathetic in some crucial respects and should be challenged. This does not change the fact that its legitimacy derives from the history of self-organization of the working class, in all continents, spanning 150 years.

The origin of the WFTU is very different. In its first version (1945) it was an artificial construct based on the requirements of the wartime alliance of the Allied Powers and the USSR. None of the issues that had caused the earlier split (1921) between the International Federation of Trade Unions (socialist) and the Red International of Labour Unions (communist), had been resolved. These involved questions like whether 'bourgeois democracy' was preferable to no democracy at all, whether unions should be accountable to their members or to a State, and whether this State represented some form of socialism or a new class exercising total control over society, including the working class, by means of terror (as Karl Kautsky held already in 1929).⁷

In the first four years of the WFTU, socialist and communist unions had been locked in a struggle over the control of the organization, a struggle which the socialist (and other non-communist) unions lost, given the massive resources of the Soviet State and the automatic majority of its State-controlled unions.

The beginning of the Cold War simply meant that the political clamp of the war time antifascist alliance, that briefly held together organisations with fundamentally opposed views, political cultures and practices, had come off, and a split which had existed for the past thirty years was no longer papered over.

In its second version (after 1949, when the non-communist unions had left to found the ICFTU) the WFTU remained under the total control of the USSR. Its true function became apparent after the split, when it became one of a number of Soviet-controlled international organizations, which constituted the political bodyguards of Soviet foreign policy in civil society (unions, but also youth, students, women, the peace movement, lawyers, academics and scientists, etc.). Had it been anything else, the Yugoslav and Chinese organizations would not have left it when their governments declared their independence of the government of the USSR. At that point the vast majority of WFTU membership was constituted by the State-controlled labour organisations of the USSR and of the other countries of the Soviet bloc.

So, finally, this brings us to the fundamental issue: the class nature of the USSR. Why is it fundamental? Because all international trade union structures which were sponsored by the USSR, from the Profintern to the WFTU, were tightly controlled by the Party-State and always reflected its priorities.

The Red International of Labour Unions (RILU, also known by its shortened Russian name Profintern), founded in 1921 in a period of revolutionary upsurge, was ostensibly intended to be an alliance of Communist and revolutionary syndicalist unions. A year later, the syndicalists had left to found their own International in Berlin, having witnessed the military crushing of the rebellious Kronstadt garrison and the repression against the anarchists and syndicalists in the USSR. They realized that their role in the Profintern could only be a subordinate one to the Russian Party-State and that no alliance was possible on these terms.⁸

Subsequently, the Profintern faithfully followed all gyrations of Soviet policy, from revolutionary confrontation in 1920/21 to the 'United Front from below' of 1922/23, followed by the disastrous ultra-sectarian turn of 1929 where social-democracy ('social fascism') was declared to be the main enemy, to be followed, from 1934, by the Popular Front policy which required an alliance with social-democracy. From 1936 the Profintern, which had become an embarrassment to the Soviet leadership, was wound down by successive decisions of the Executive Committee of the Comintern (ECCI) and on December 27, 1937 it was finally dissolved. None of these policy decisions, including its final dissolution, had any basis in its statutes and none were taken by its own governing bodies, but by an external body: the ECCI, itself controlled by the Soviet leadership. A public black-out over the entire process served to cover up this reality, so much so that the IWW journal wrote in May 1938 of the 'lost International', which 'seems to have disappeared without a trace'.⁹

Once the Profintern was out of the way, the State-controlled unions of the USSR reopened discussions with the International Federation of Trade Unions (IFTU) about affiliation, an issue which had come up in various contexts since the 1920s. These discussions were cut short by the war, but were followed up and given effect by the creation of the WFTU in 1945 and the dissolution of the IFTU.

By 1928 the Stalinization of the USSR was well under way. By the late 1930s, the process was complete, after the murder of hundreds of thousands of communists, socialists and anarchists, and the destruction of what was left of the Bolshevik party.

Whatever society had emerged from this process, 'socialist' it was not by any recognisable definition other than the Stalinists' own claims, nor did it represent the working class in any way. In the USSR a class society of a new type had established itself by means of police terror; and by means of military occupation in Eastern Europe after 1945. It was to last until it disintegrated and collapsed in the late 1980s, without the working class which it claimed to represent making the slightest move in its defense, on the contrary.

The question then arises: given the total control of the Party-State over the Profintern in its last decade, and over the Communist rump of the WFTU after 1949, what class interests did these organisations serve? When the USSR sponsored the WFTU, did it do so in the interests of the world working class or in the interest of its bureaucratic ruling class?

Contrary to what Sharan Burrow seems to believe, the fundamental difference between herself and Mavrikos is indeed 'socialism or communism' and when she declares herself to be a 'proud woman of the Left', seeking common ground with Mavrikos, she is crossing a line which

separates the 'Left' of democratic socialism, and of all other independent workers' movements, from the 'Left' of their assassins. That line was traced in blood.

But hold on: if Stalinism was the political expression of the bureaucratic ruling class of the USSR, and the USSR exists no more, and neither does its ruling class, how can the WFTU express the interests of a non-existing ruling class?

The answer is that Stalinism is not simply the ideology of the vanished (or recycled) ruling class of the USSR, it is also the ideology of those elements in the labour movement and beyond who aspire to become that kind of ruling class in their own countries, historically in the industrialised capitalist countries, but now mostly in the colonial and semi-colonial countries, in a later terminology the 'Third World', and a still later terminology, the 'South'.

The WFTU is today the principal international organisation through which Stalinism survives as an ideology. This is due to several factors, in the first place by its composition. Although it lost much of its traditional membership when most of the State-controlled labour organizations of the Soviet bloc collapsed and transformed themselves into trade unions which affiliated to the ITUC, it still retains substantial membership in the remaining Stalinist Party-States: Vietnam, North Korea, Cuba. China, which is not a member, nevertheless looms large. Although the Chinese Party-State has embraced capitalism, the All-China Federation of Trade Unions (ACFTU) remains the instrument through which it seeks to maintain control over the working class. The WFTU is actively courting the ACFTU, but the increasing struggles of the Chinese workers and their growing self-awareness are challenging its role. Before long, the ACFTU may have to change, and it is unlikely that at this stage the Chinese Party-State is prepared to invest its credibility in an organization such as the WFTU.

The WFTU has another source of support in the residual political loyalties of its affiliates in the global 'South'. They are essentially two Indian national centres (All India Trade Union Congress [AITUC] and Centre of Indian Trade Unions [CITU]), the Confederación General de Trabajadores del Peru (CGTP), the Central Obrera Boliviana (COB) and, partially, COSATU.

What all these affiliations have in common, apart from a long communist history, is that they are geographically and culturally far removed at a safe distance (approximately 7000 miles on average) from the Soviet bloc, generally unaware or unconcerned about what has happened to workers in seventy years in the USSR and in the forty years of Stalinism in Eastern and Central Europe.

In the case of South Africa, there is the added factor of isolation through forty years of censorship by the apartheid regime, which suppressed the entry of any left-wing material (this was before the Internet), and the added censorship of the SACP, which was able to enforce near total ideological hegemony over the South African Left except in the Western Cape.

Their physical, intellectual and emotional remoteness from really existing Stalinism clouds their judgment. They can easily identify with Porfirio Diaz, who ruled Mexico for thirty-five years in the late 19th and early 20th century, and who sighed: 'so far from God and so close to the United States', but they are incapable of imagining what the sighs of the people of, for example, Finland, Estonia, Poland or Romania might have been, let alone Georgia or the Ukraine, or Russia itself.

Their overriding concerns are, for the Latin Americans, anti-yanquism, and for the South Africans, anti-apartheid. The Indians have probably the most principled commitment to Stalinism, without relevance to local or regional issues, or other aspects of reality.

It was not difficult for the WFTU to service anti-yanquism or anti-apartheid. There are tons of resolutions, declarations and meetings on these issues. In order to create the legend of WFTU leadership, the reality had to be suppressed.

For example, on anti-yanquism, that the real threat that CIA operations represented to the labour movement in Latin America in the 1950s and 1960s was exposed and ultimately defeated by Trotskyists and independent radicals, without the WFTU or other Communist organisations having any part of it, and on the anti-apartheid struggle, that the heavy lifting was done by the social-democratic unions in the Nordic countries and the Dutch Trade Union Federation FNV, among others, in contrast to the WFTU which contributed little beyond reams of declarations.

But hold on: all this is about the past – hasn't the WFTU reinvented itself? Is it not now a free-standing, democratic, radical, anti-capitalist organization?

In his address to the COSATU congress of 2012 Mavrikos described the WFTU as an organisation 'open to all, as it has always been' a WFTU 'democratic, modern, class-oriented, to unite all workers on common goals'.¹⁰

In a leaflet published in 2011, the WFTU describes itself as a 'class-oriented trade union movement' which 'struggles against capitalism and imperialism for a society without exploitation of man by man'.¹¹ It claims 80 million members in 120 countries, which is impossible to verify since it does not publish a list of its affiliates and does not respond to inquiries about its membership, nor of course about its financial structure.¹²

The leaflet then lists 'basic principles' which include 'democratic functioning, elections for all bodies at all levels', to defend 'the right of every people and every working class to decide themselves about their present and their future', the international coordination of working class solidarity inside transnational corporations, the fight against 'careerism, elitism, bureaucracy' and corruption. Better yet: as a class-oriented trade union organisation, the WFTU 'reinforces criticism, self-criticism and comradely emulation among leaders and members'. Not only that: 'it struggles for trade union and democratic freedoms' and it is against 'state violence, authoritarianism and persecution of trade unionists'.

These are remarkable statements, inasmuch as most address specific failures of the WFTU in the past. Is there a 'new' WFTU, which, through self-criticism, has learnt something from the failures of its hapless predecessors?

What is true is that the WFTU, at its 15th Congress held in Havana in 2005, introduced significant changes: it elected a new general secretary (George Mavrikos) and in January 2006 moved its secretariat to Athens, from Prague, where it has been inactive for some fifteen years, with much of the activity conducted from Havana. Mavrikos is a leader in PAME, the Stalinist faction in the Greek Confederation of Labour (GSEE).

This fact in itself already indicates the limits of a possible 'renewal'. PAME is controlled by the Communist Party of Greece (KKE), which is, of all European Communist Parties, the most unreconstructed Stalinist. Because of its sectarianism, it was punished by the Greek Left electorate in the elections of June last year, polling 4.5 percent, far behind Syriza, the dominant party of the Left, with 26.9 percent, and even behind the largely discredited social-democratic PASOK (12.3 percent) and DIMAR (6.3 percent), a smaller socialist party which is also part of the current government coalition.

Unsurprisingly, the claim to be 'open to all' is voided by the practice of the organization. The attempt to reinvent the WFTU as a revolutionary democratic organization, with a capacity

to attract radical unions outside of the traditional sphere of Stalinist influence¹³ has not gone very far: its main recruit so far has been the Langile Abertzaleen Batzordeak (LAB), a radical nationalist Basque trade union confederation, which polled 17.1 percent of the elected works council members in the Basque Country in 2008, as against 40.3 percent for ELA/STV, the mainstream nationalist trade union federation, 20.1 percent for Comisiones Obreras (CC.OO.) and 13.1 percent for the UGT. Jesús María Gete Olarra from LAB was designated general secretary of the WFTU metal and mining Trade Union International at its re-founding congress in 2008, which was held in San Sebastian.

Neither is there much evidence of an effort to ‘unite all workers on common goals’ when it comes to the ITUC or to its affiliates. Speaking on various occasions in recent years, Mavrikos and other WFTU representatives have been consistently and aggressively polemical, attacking mostly European and North American ITUC affiliates, but also ‘opportunists’ everywhere else.

At the COSATU International Policy Conference in May 2012, its General Secretary, Zwelinzima Vavi, sounded a cautionary note about international affiliation.¹⁴ Quoting Lenin from ‘Left Wing Communism: An Infantile Disorder’, where Lenin affirms the necessity for revolutionaries to work even in ‘reactionary trade unions’ because one ‘must absolutely work wherever the masses are to be found’, Vavi warned: ‘It would be a fatal mistake to leave the ranks of the majority of workers and isolate ourselves purely on the basis of shared ideological foundations and common history’.

Vavi then went on to say: ‘We must warn against the dangers of conveyor belt union [sic] the line must be drawn in order to avoid a repeat of the Soviet experience, where trade unions were mere conveyor belts of their so-called revolutionary parties’.

And finally: ‘We work with militant unions, not yellow or sweetheart unions. Only through militant struggles can the working class liberate itself from all forms of oppression and exploitation. We do not believe that press statements or boardroom lobbying must replace militant action on the ground, because that substitutes workers from being the principal actors in the main theatre of struggle into becoming passive followers of their leaders, regardless of the direction pursued and interests being advanced’.

Mavrikos answered a few months later, in his address to the 11th COSATU congress, in September 2012.¹⁵ After inviting COSATU to follow its four affiliates into the WFTU to ‘find its way back home’, he went on the attack. First denouncing the capitalist class ‘with its agents in social-democracy and in the trade unions’ which has ‘managed to divide the workers, ...to impose reformist leaderships, to impose an opportunistic line and compromise with the class enemy and his governments’, Mavrikos explained at some length how workers in Europe and in the United States feel about their unions. Not to put too fine a point on it, ‘The level of rottenness of some trade unions in Europe and the USA is such, that the workers see no difference between the unions and the companies of legal counselling’.

Stressing the importance of international coordination of struggles, Mavrikos asked and answered a rhetorical question: ‘Can those sell-outs, the European trade union leaders, the spineless agents of the bourgeoisie in the trade union movement, the corrupted servants of the Ministries take upon their shoulders such a heavy duty? No way!’

Mavrikos could not conclude his speech without explaining what Lenin really meant: ‘There are some comrades who are using Lenin to hide their true aims. They distort and use some parts of his writing while they hide the rest. There is an argument based on what Lenin wrote in

1920 in the known article to the German communists about leftism. Their argument is that communists must fight within reactionary unions’.

They are of course wrong, Mavrikos says, because the context is different (that is a ‘dogmatic mistake’); secondly, Lenin also said that the masses had to be guided towards revolution and the ‘reactionary unions’ have nothing to do with revolution, and thirdly, and most importantly, ‘It was Lenin himself [who] invited all the unions around the world to abandon the yellow international organization of the day, the International of Amsterdam and join in masses the Red Trade Union International (RILU), who [sic] Lenin himself played a pioneer role in its foundation’.

Basically, Mavrikos is doing two things here: he is questioning the integrity of the COSATU General Secretary, by suggesting he is ‘hiding his true aims’; secondly, he is positioning the WFTU as an alternative to the ITUC, not in any perspective of cooperation, let alone unity, but in a perspective of destruction, following the example of Lenin and the Profintern – and we know how that turned out.

In November 2012 Mavrikos was in Copenhagen, addressing a small group of Danish trade unionists. The theme of his speech was ‘The Theories about the “Independence and Neutrality” of the Trade Unions’.¹⁶

In this speech Mavrikos mainly reserves his venom for the former WFTU affiliates who left to join the ITUC: ‘The degeneration of trade union leaderships, such as the one of CGT France or CGIL Italy, who were once class-oriented and rooted in the factories and the working places, is a result of such a retreat from the historical lessons of the class struggle’.

The ‘historical experience’ Mavrikos refers to in this speech is entirely imaginary and bears no relationship to what actually happened in history, and the CGT and CGIL are of course still ‘rooted in the factories and working places’, which is one reason why they left the WFTU.

Then Mavrikos goes on to denounce the ITUC and its affiliates for supporting the war against Gaddafi’s regime in Libya: ‘The leadership of ITUC, the trade union leaderships of CGT France, of CGIL Italy and others like the British TUC, the German DGB, trade unions from Netherlands, from Sweden, supported the imperialist war. Why? Their main goal was for the bourgeoisie in their own country to win a bigger share from the plundering of the oil, the natural gas and other wealth-producing resources of Libya’.

The main point of the speech, however, is the question whether a ‘class-oriented’ union can be neutral (or equidistant) between the WFTU and the ITUC. According to Mavrikos it cannot, because ‘The position and the actions of ITUC and its basic organizations at the national level prove that they have nothing to do with the real defense of working class interests, even the immediate defensive ones, let alone the long-term ones. So, no class-oriented trade union that respects its role and its mission, no true trade unionist who wants to remain part of his class, can be captured in such a fraudulent dilemma’.

Consequently, any form of unity or merger are also impossible: ‘The same mistake is done by some comrades who propose the unification of WFTU and ITUC! This is as if someone would propose the unification of a revolutionary communist party with a social-democratic one, or even with an ultra right-wing one. Like someone would try to unite oil with water’.

Finally: ‘The workers have to realize that WFTU and ITUC have two different historic roots, two different strategies, different objectives, different ideologies and theoretical bases. It is impossible to unite these two distinct lines, the one promoting the struggle against Capital and Imperialism and the one leading to subordination to the objectives of Capital and Imperialism’.

Here we have to agree entirely with Mavrikos, although for opposite reasons. We also believe that it is impossible to 'unite these two distinct lines' because the WFTU represents ineffectual political theater and never will represent anything else, whereas the ITUC is where the bulk of the worldwide organized working class lies, and therefore a potential for true class resistance, if it ever wakes up, which is a different story. Meanwhile, by all means let's not mix oil with water.

Of course some 'bureaucrats' may lose their heads and forge ahead towards unity. Let them be warned: any move towards unity would immediately provoke another split: 'However, if we do assume that at some point some bureaucratic leaderships would move forward with such a process of artificial welding, it is for sure that the next moment the process for a new international class-oriented organization would begin, because its existence is an objective necessity'.

We have here a new version of Third Period Stalinism, led by people detached from reality: you show them a blind alley, and they will rush into it.

The WFTU has been able to gain some traction, especially in South Africa, in representing itself as an International of the 'South' as opposed to the ITUC dominated by unions of the 'North'. In reality, globalization and deregulation has blurred that distinction: large parts of social relations and work processes which are typical for the 'South' are now found in the 'North', and enclaves of the 'North' are found in the geographical 'South'. Moreover, a great majority of unions of the 'South' are now in the ITUC. What holds the WFTU together, is no more than a common communist history and a commitment to Stalinism in its most primitive form.

In reality, the ITUC itself has greatly helped the WFTU to raise its profile by leaving an enormous empty political space on its Left. The merger between the ICFTU and the WCL was acquired by erasing the last vestiges of social-democratic politics that had survived in the ICFTU. Not much has remained of what were at one time progressive elements of WCL ideology either, leaving a culture of bureaucratic centralism and top-down politics which meshed seamlessly with similar tendencies in the ICFTU. The result is that the ITUC today is adrift in a bureaucratic bubble, with no recognizable politics at all.

The de-politization of the leading international trade union organization has deprived the workers of the world of a universal and common narrative about society: what it is, and how to change it – the democratic socialist narrative which still existed in the pre-World War II movement, and which today survives only in some Global Union Federations, and of course in many unions at national level.

Because the international trade union movement is now truly world-wide and spans a far greater range of societies and cultures than at any previous time in its history, the loss of a universal and common narrative is a critical problem: it weakens international class consciousness and abandons political consciousness to widely different perceptions of society, shaped by local or regional realities. The present labour movement resembles far too much the blind men in the parable trying to find out what an elephant is like and coming up with incompatible answers.

At the level of international confederations, we are now left with a sheep in sheep's clothing, and with a small hyena in wolf's clothing, too large for its size. It is not sure at this point that this form of international trade union organization is necessarily the most useful and effective.¹⁷ Workers all over the world, most of whom have never heard of the ITUC or the WFTU, and who couldn't care less, are organizing and fighting, in many instances creating their

own networks and international coordination. Workers will organize and fight because that is what workers do, and they make the road by walking the road to a new labour movement.

NOTES

1. Waterman, P. (2012) 'The Second Coming of the World Federation of Trade Unions: Slouching Towards Bethlehem?' Available at: <http://www.unionbook.org/profiles/blogs/peter-waterman-the-second-coming-of-the-wftu-updated>. (Accessed 16 January 2013).
2. Mabuza, K. 'Affiliates Put COSATU Under Pressure', *Sowetan*, 10 February 2012. Available at: <http://www.sowetanlive.co.za/news/2012/02/10/affiliates-put-cosat-under-pressure>. (Accessed 16 January 2013).
3. Speech Delivered by COSATU President Comrade Sdumo Dlamini to the Sixth Presidential Council of the World Federation of Trade Unions (WFTU), NUMSA Media Releases, 9 February 2012.
4. Address by Sharan Burrow, General Secretary of the International Trade Union Confederation, to the COSATU 11th National Congress, 18 September 2012. Available at: <http://www.cosatu.org.za/show.php?ID=6526>. (Accessed 16 January 2013).
5. Address by George Mavrikos, 'It's Time For COSATU To Come Back Home', COSATU 11th National Congress, 19 September 2012. Available at: <http://www.cosatu.org.za/docs/sp/2012/sp0918.pdf>. (Accessed 16 January 2013).
6. Masuku, B. (2012) 'ITUC and ILO: Spaces For Real Change or Illusions of a Dream Permanently Deferred', in: COSATU, *The Shopsteward* (August/September 2010). Available at: <http://www.cosatu.org.za/docs/shopsteward/2010/sept.pdf>. (Accessed 16 January 2013).
7. Kautsky, K. (1929) 'Nochmals die Gemeinsamkeit des sozialdemokratischen und des kommunistischen Endziels, Tribüne (Prag)', Vol. I, Nr. 11, März 1929. Quoted in: Salvadori, M. (1990) *Karl Kautsky and the Socialist Revolution 1880-1938*. Verso.
8. Tosstorff, R. (2004) *Profintern – Die Rote Gewerkschaftsinternationale 1920-1937*. Ferdinand Schöningh, Paderborn.
9. Wagner, J. (1938) 'The Lost International', in *One Big Union Monthly*, Nr. 5, May 1938. Quoted in Tosstorff, R. (2004) *Profintern – Die Rote Gewerkschaftsinternationale*, p. 704, note 33. Paderborn: Ferdinand Schöningh.
10. Address by George Mavrikos, 11th COSATU Congress: Speech of WFTU GS, WFTU web site: South Africa, 18 September 2012. Available at: <http://www.wftucentral.org/?p=5608&language=en>. (Accessed 16 January 2013).

11. Available at: http://www.wftucentral.org/wp-content/2011_12_what-is-the-wftu.pdf. (Accessed 16 January 2013).
12. See New Unionism: <http://newunionism.wordpress.com/201103/22/wftu>. (Accessed 16 January 2013).
13. As hoped by a tendency represented, among others, by Jean-Pierre Page, former member of the French CGT international department, now in opposition to the CGT leadership. See interview by Charles Hoareau in *Rouge Midi*, 4 March 2006. Available at: <http://www.rougemidi.org/spip.php?article421>. (Accessed 16 January 2013).
14. COSATU General Secretary, Zwelinzima Vavi's Keynote Address to the COSATU International Policy Conference. Available at: <http://www.cosatu.org.za/show.php?ID=6134>. (Accessed 16 January 2013).
15. As in note 10.
16. Speech of George Mavrikos, General Secretary of the WFTU, in Copenhagen, Denmark, 15 November 2012. Available at: <http://www.wftucentral.org/?p=5707&language=en>. (Accessed 16 January 2013).
17. 'The ITUC and WFTU are reminiscent of the two political-economic dinosaurs in the old Cold War, about whom the anti-nuclear demonstrators of the 1960s said, "Too much armour, too little brain. Now they are extinct". Whilst these two major union bodies are clearly far from extinct, we can expect little more from them than that they will continue to slouch toward a Bethlehem that remains largely irrelevant to and distant from the majority of union members and other working people worldwide' (Peter Waterman, 'The Second Coming of the World Federation of Trade Unions: Slouching Towards Bethlehem', see note 1).

Dan Gallin is Chair of the Global Labour Institute (www.global-labour.org). [e-mail: gli@iprolink.ch]