

Principles of Revolutionary Unionism

Principles of the International Workers Association, originally adopted at its founding congress in January, 1923.

- 1: The goal of revolutionary unionism is the reorganization of social life on the basis of libertarian communism, which can only be achieved by the revolutionary action of the working class itself. Only the economic organization of the proletariat, and not political parties, are capable of reaching this objective.
- 2: Revolutionary unionism aims at the abolition of class privilege by the establishing of economic communities and administrative organisms run by the workers in the fields and factories, forming a system of free councils without subordination to any State power or political party. Revolutionary unionism poses the economic reorganization of society as the alternative to the politics of states and parties. The goal of revolutionary unionism is not the conquest of political power but the abolition of all statism in the life of society. The disappearance of the class monopoly of private property in the means of production must also be accompanied by the disappearance of all forms of domination.
- 3: Revolutionary unionism combines the daily struggle for the economic, social and intellectual advancement of the working class within the limits of present-day society with the revolutionary goal of common action by all manual and intellectual workers, in all sectors of the economy, to create self-management of all production and distribution processes in the interests of the community.
- 4: Revolutionary unionism is opposed to centralist organization in which the needs of society are subordinated to the interests of a few, variety is replaced by uniformity and personal responsibility is replaced by unanimous discipline. It is for this reason that revolutionary unionism is based on federalism, a free organization which works from the base to the top by uniting all forces in the defense of common ideas and interests.
- 5: Revolutionary unionism rejects all parliamentary activity, and all delegation of power to legislative bodies. It holds that even the freest voting system cannot bring about the disappearance of the clear contradictions at the heart of present-day society.
- 6: Revolutionary unionism is internationalist, it rejects all arbitrarily created political and national frontiers and declares that what is called nationalism is the religion of the modern state, behind which is concealed the material interests of the ruling classes. Revolutionary unionism recognizes only the self-determination and free federation of all regions.
- 7: Revolutionary unionism fights against militarism and war and advocates the general strike to prevent war. In case of war, revolutionary unionism demands the boycotting of all war materiel, with the exception of a country where the workers are in the midst of a social revolution, in which case it is necessary to help them defend the revolution. During the revolution, workers' militias, controlled by the workers' unions, must be substituted for standing armies.
- 8: For revolutionary unionism, direct action is the means of struggle; for example, occupations, strikes, boycotts, sabotage, etc. Direct action finds its fullest expression in the general strike which may, at the same time, be the prelude to the social revolution.
- 9: While revolutionary unionism is opposed to all organized violence of the State, it realizes that there will be violent clashes during the decisive struggles between the capitalism of today and the free communism of tomorrow. Thus, it recognizes as valid that violence which can be used as a means of defense against the violence used by the ruling classes during the social revolution. As expropriation of the land and the means of production can only be carried out and brought to a successful conclusion by the direct intervention of the workers' revolutionary economic organizations, defense of the revolution must be in the hands of the workers' own economic organizations and is not the task of military or quasi-military bodies developing independently of these economic organizations.
- 10: Workers' revolutionary unionism is the only social force that can bring about the self-emancipation of the workers from capital and the State.



WSA WORKERS
SOLIDARITY
ALLIANCE