

PAME ALL WORKERS MILITANT FRONT

**The Functioning And Action Of The Trade Unions
Based On Our Positions For The Reconstruction
Of The Trade Union Movement**



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Dear colleagues,

This document is a brochure, published by PAME in Greece on April 2015. Its purpose is to help the debate about issues on the functioning of the unions, the role, the goals and actions of the union movement. About the destructive role of the forces of class collaboration in the trade union movement. Also, to highlight weaknesses and problems faced in the everyday action of the unions. To be a tool for young and older trade unionists. Of course, this small document does not cover all issues, neither does it analyze in detail. Furthermore, some issues are focused in the realities of Greek trade union legislation.

However, we believe it's important for all unions to contribute with their experience to the collective thinking of the international trade union movement and, thus, we publish this document in English.

February 2016

**In Honor of
The 17th World Trade Union Congress of WFTU
October 2016, Durban, South Africa.**



What is PAME

PAME is a Trade Union Front. It is open, democratic, unifying and it pursues to have among its members the most active, fighting forces of the trade union movement. It has got panhellenic characteristics and focuses on every working field and production branch, in the Public and Private Sector, with no exceptions.

PAME was founded on April 3rd 1999, through the Panhellenic Meeting, held at the Piece and Friendship Stadium, Athens, with the participation of 230 trade unions, 18 branch and regional trade union organizations and 2.500 elected union members.

The most active Greek trade unions are members of PAME. These are the unions that go on with the class struggle and fight for the abolition of the human exploitation by other humans.

PAME, from its foundation till this very day, has guarded its special character, as a whole, class Trade Union Front, which connects people who struggle, no matter where they start from, no matter where they hold their political affiliations or what they vote.

All these forces have made the agreement to follow the guideline to struggle against the Capital, against the European Union, against the Government. They have also made the agreement to be opponents to Imperialism and its wars.

PAME fights with no ambivalence for the Unification and Unity of the Working Class. It aims at the gathering and activating of more and more workers and young employees to the class-oriented, fighting path, to the path of conflict against capitalist forces, against the anti-peoples policies. It pursues common, coordinated struggle of workers in the private sector, the public sector and former Public Sector Enterprises. It pursues common struggle no matter if the workers are Greek or migrants. Only on this basis, the basis of class struggle, the basis of the fight to abolish the exploitation of man, can the Unity of the Working Class become stronger. The Unity, which employers'- government led unions talk about, is unity in submission, in acceptance of the strategies of the opponents of the Working Class; it is a caricature of unity.

PAME is based on the proletarian internationalism and solidarity principles. Nowadays, in the conditions of the temporary ruling of imperialism we live, the need to Coordinate and Work Together with movements in other countries is strong.

Capitalists' forces, Socialdemocracy and Opportunism are coordinated through the mechanisms of the Confederation of European Trade Unions (ETUC) and of ITUC. These organizations work for and with Capitalism.

Facing all these, PAME takes actively part in the attempts to rebuild the class-oriented trade union movement in Europe. We

have successfully held, with the cooperation of other union members and trade unions, European trade union meetings in Turkey, in Greece, in France, in Italy and elsewhere. We are going to go on with these efforts because we firmly believe that the situation in Europe affects negatively the whole world. The difficulties the trade union movement faces, do not lay only in fighting capitalists and governments. The union movement has got to fight also some leading groups in CGT France and CCOO Spain and their dirty role in all these.

Since 2000 PAME is a member of the World Federation of Trade Union (WFTU). In 2011 PAME hosted the 16th World Trade Union Congress of WFTU in Athens, with the participation of more than 800 unionists from more than 100 countries.



A. What are the Trade Unions – Their role and their mission

1. What are the Trade Unions

The trade unions are the biggest, broad, massive organizations of the working class. The first forms of organization of the working class were mutual funds, insurance funds, partnerships, etc., which were more self-help and support institutions, rather than struggle organizations. Trade unions appeared after time. The source of trade unionism dates back to the historical moment that pushed the workers to overcome their differences and joined their forces (initially they were narrow guilds) in order to confront more effectively the employers and carry out effective struggle so as to fulfill and ensure their labour interests.

The trade union movement, which was born with the appearance of capitalist production, is the organization of workers in their unions, trade unions, associations and General Confederations in order to demand together their rights. The first unions appeared in England in the 18th century and later in other countries of Europe and the other continents.

While in the beginning unions were appeared with limited goals and action afterwards they went on with all the stages of their development till now. Trade unionism started as a local phenomenon and later it expanded and merged into a national and international scale. Trade Unions and then the nationwide unions and associations played an important role with their struggle on major political and social changes.

There is no unified political view inside the Trade Union Movement. Two central lines are opposed from the first moment of its appearance and formation. On the one hand is the line of class oriented struggle and on the other, is the line of class collaboration. The line of class collaboration (in Greece usually expressed by trade unions controlled by the governments and the employers) during the last 100 years, it has changed masks, names and adapted itself to many forms. However, its content was and is unchanged.

2. The role and the mission of Trade Unions

The bourgeois class from the very beginning tried to restrict the trade unions' action and control their function within the limits of its own logic and policy, so as to be harmless to its dominance. Based on this, many arguments and theories have emerged on the role of trade unions, their orientation and their mission.

Trade unions must be massive, open and democratic, to constitute the center of multiform activities and simultaneously to educate militantly the new generation of the working class. The mission of every labour union is to assemble on its lines all the workers of the sector that has the responsibility, irrespective of color, race, nationality and political or religious beliefs. To defend the interests of its members against the employers and their class. To educate the workers in the spirit of the class oriented struggle and lead them in class struggles against the capitalists until the final victory of the proletariat. To educate them in the spirit of internationalist workers' solidarity.

The trade union, in order to achieve the activation of its members and all the workers of its sector, needs to convince them with its class oriented, unwavering stance that it fights for their interests. To be recognized through its fight against the bosses. The leadership of the Union must be in a close relation with the workers. To know and study their problems. To learn and confront without delay any problem that is born each day and each moment in every factory and work place.

To confront immediately the employers' behavior, the violations, the attack on workers' rights, the dismissals, the work conditions. The union must promptly touch all these issues, to organize and mobilize the workers. Through this way the union gains the workers' trust, it brings them together, becomes massive, dynamic and rallies in its lines the workers.



The educational work to the workers is a serious obligation of unions for the development of class consciousness and the knowing of their rights. Trade unions must give serious attention to women and young people. The Unions have to work on with the particular issues that concern the young and the women. Not only to list demands, but to implement these issues in the everyday work of the union. To work with the problems of the unemployed, to help them, to organize committees so that the unemployed can organize within the trade unions or in the neighborhoods. The unemployed have to be connected with the struggles of the workers. They must not lose contact of their sector or with the demands of the working class.

The demands and the struggle's targets change in different periods. In all cases, however, they must inspire the workers. They must give the perspective that the struggle has to have. That means that the struggle must not remain only on the economic level and on the restriction of exploitation, but it has to fight for its abolishment.

What Movement Do We Need Today

In conditions of economic crisis, we should not take for granted that there will be automatic and spontaneous rise of class struggle. The impact of the crisis has contradictory character on the working and popular consciousness.

The reconstruction of the movement will pass through long and harsh confrontations with the employers and their political parties, with the trade unions controlled by the governments and the employers, with various opportunistic groups that adapt and readjust constantly. They change colors and slogans without changing the point of their positions. The reconstruction of the movement will not be straight path. We will have outbreaks and wobbles, it will definitely be an upward trend but through difficulties.

We must arm ourselves with strength, patience and stability, class oriented steadfastness, uncompromising will and with confidence, we will pave the way for our goal. It requires solid and clear understanding of the basic question “what kind of movement we need” and simultaneously to secure every step that we take, to overtake and eliminate obstacles, to open new paths in the concentration of forces.

What characteristics are necessary, to the question “what movement we need”:

- Class oriented movement, organized and directed against the employers, their laws and their state
- Massive movement, organized in depth and with base the workplaces and the branches
- Movement liberated from the mechanisms and the people of the employers' and the governments

- Movement that is based and develops the social alliance
- Movement that not only fights for partial amendments but fights for all the needs of the popular and working family, so as to overthrow and abolish the exploitative relations
- Internationalist movement which fights for a unified goal in each country

Such a movement does not develop in a fertile ground, without obstacles. Many forces and factors interfere that don't want or don't believe in such a movement. Or they have a confusions and "petit bourgeois" swings, passing from impatience to frustration and compromise.

In the present conditions, of the deep capitalist crisis, the aggressiveness of the capital is based on deeply contradictory elements. While capitalism has been historically outdated, and the need for the socialization of the concentrated means of production, the central planning and the workers' control has matured, there is retreat of the revolutionary movement. So, the capitalist power acts to prevent the rise of class struggle.

Capitalists always try to block or mislead the rise of class struggle, also, in the economic level. Today's greater aggression -compared with the 2-3 postwar decades- is due to the change in the international correlation of forces and the crisis. In this direction, the system, along with its mechanisms of oppression and manipulation, it uses various tendencies that cause confusion. Tendencies, who are from opportunistic, to neo-fascist.

- They name anti-capitalist struggle various slogans for better management of capitalism
- They promote as a method of developing the movement, the united action of various tendencies and political groups, without perspective.
- They question the existence of the class movement or present it as dividing and they support the convergence of opposite ideas and positions.

Against such positions and practices it is necessary to have hard organizational work, in addition to increased alertness, persistent and systematic enlightenment of the working class. It is not acceptable, to talk about reconstruction, about a movement that fights and challenges the power of monopolies, and to have organizational flabbiness, amateurism and sloppiness in our action.

Intervention for the reconstruction of the class oriented movement means intensification of ideological – political intervention in the massive organizations of the working class so as to understand the need for collision -not only with whichever government- but with the class in power. To realize the necessity to change the class in power.



B. The controlled by governments and employers trade unionism and reformism in the trade union movement

Steady orientation towards massive organization forms of the working class is needed for the neutralization of misleading interventions within the working and popular masses. Especially, among the most inexperienced and impoverished, the young unemployed, the migrants and the students.

The so-called “movement of the indignants” and “the squares” was supported and promoted – if not planned – by the bourgeois mechanisms. Its goal was the manipulation and the prevention of radicalization, by controlling and directing parts of the working aristocracy and petit bourgeois. In this “movement” was also drawn a number workers, unemployed. In the lines of this “movement” rallied both the right and left opportunism, under reactionary slogans, slogans of the petit bourgeois, aiming to hit the class oriented movement. For a short time this “movement” rallied popular masses, especially at the beginning. Masses, which did not have the necessary political experience, which support solution through another type of management, which could supposedly stop the worsening of the situation and could give a solution to their problems. This was not highlighted. It was not a form of labour trade union movement or of another social group. This was promoted as a rallying of different social groups having as unifying characteristic the “indignation and protest” against the government.

The main issue is: which are the leading forces that influence the movement of the masses; Is it the working class that leads the masses, or are the forces of the petit bourgeois, who cultivate illusions that there is possibility for a pro-peoples solution without breaking the capitalist production relations, the capitalist organizations?

Here lies the importance of fighting to change the correlation of forces and also the preconditions for the rise of class struggle.

The role of trade unions and trade union movement is great and covers all sectors of economic, social and political life of a country. Because, whoever has the unions by his side, controls the main force and the key for the best possible action and success of the economic, political and revolutionary struggles. The capitalists know very well this reality, and that is why they have always been trying to influence the unions and the trade union movement, to limit and manipulate their role and their action, within the framework of the capitalists' policies, or else to neutralize them.



In the conditions of crisis are rising the displeasure and protest trend in petit bourgeois forces, in parts of the working class with higher incomes, in workers of public administration etc. So, the matter of the reconstruction of the class oriented movement is crucial, in order to direct the protest and indignation -that accumulate- and turn it towards a radical direction. Our work for the rise of class struggle, will be confronted not only with the level of maturity of the masses, but also with the interventions of the capitalists, their mechanisms, the bourgeois political parties, the reformists and opportunists in the trade union movement.

1. The controlled by governments and employers trade unionism

Few are those who dispute that the response of the working class, its struggles, were not and still are not proportional to the generalized offensive we received. An offensive that has been challenging and abolishing all the rights and conquests of the working class, mainly during the postwar period. The reasons of course are many. Those are the reactionism and increased aggressiveness of the system, the overthrow of socialism, the temporary defeat of the workers'-peoples' movement.

One of the main reasons, of the major factors, that the working class is delaying its organization and response, its counterattack to the forces of the capital and its political representatives, is the influence, the role and the action of the trade unionism controlled by governments and employers, as it is expressed for decades by

GSEE – ADEDY Confederations (members of ITUC-ETUC) and the forces of the bourgeois political parties within the trade union movement (liberals, socialdemocrats and opportunists)

Certain conditions, necessary for the working class to achieve the ability to defend and counterattack are:

- Highlighting the real causes that generate and reproduce the problems.
- Highlighting those responsible and opposing to the social and political forces, who promote and impose the anti-popular policies.
- Promoting and fighting for a framework of demands that correspond with today's, contemporary needs of the working class and the wealth produced.
- Developing action through an action plan with forms of struggle corresponding to today's needs and capabilities.
- Revealing the destructive influence of "social consensus" with the capital and its mechanisms. Showing the need to fight against them.

The trade unionism controlled by governments and employers, interferes specifically at these issues, offering valuable services to the forces of the capital and its political representatives, with very negative results for the working class.

Based on existing problems, the government-employers led unionism directs to submission, uses money, threatens and at the same time creates false hopes.

Essentially, the government-employers led unionism:

- Does not highlight the real causes that generate and reproduce the problems. That is, it does not acknowledge that capitalist reforms are not a temporary phenomenon of the capitalist economy but they are core changes resulting from internal contradictions of the capitalist system. Reforms that affect the basis (i.e. economy, production) as well as the superstructure (the institutions, the political system). Reforms that make capitalism more inhumane and reactionary.
- Does not accept that, irrespective who manages capitalism, was and will always be inhumane. Capitalism, year after year will become more reactionary, as a socio-political system. The trade unionism controlled by governments and employers neither wants nor can fight against the political forces that promote and impose the capitalist reforms, since it is an active part of them.
- Does not promote and fight for demands that can satisfy the contemporary needs of the working class, based on the wealth produced today. Because that would go against the profitability, competitiveness and productivity of the capitalist economy.
- Does not confront the offensive we receive with a unifying, escalating action plan. The trade unionism controlled by governments and employers does not use forms of struggle based on the experience of the workers that would take into account the intensity of the attack we suffer.

The government-employers led unionism intervenes specifically at these issues (highlighting the real causes that generate and reproduce the problems, the responsibilities of political forces that impose antiworkers' reforms, the promoting and fighting for an essential framework of demands, under a complete and unifying action plan of class struggle), resulting in negative consequences for the workers and giving valuable services to the forces of the capital and its political representatives.

There is important, everyday experience on how the government-employers led unionism intervenes in the workplaces. Under slogans and even struggles (that aim in defusing militancy) it purposely conceals the real causes of the problems. It does not promote and fight for demands based on the contemporary, real needs of the working class. It does not give reliable action plan. It actively works as a factor of deterioration of the workers' lives. With its positions, it worsens the life standards of the workers' families.

It forms its demands within the limits, allowed by the various types of capitalist management without challenging the "right" of the capitalists to profit from the exploitation of labor force, to own means of production that are a product of the accumulated human labor, of the stolen surplus. The government-employers led unionism is hostile towards the coordination of working class' parts and openly expresses hostility to the common action with other popular strata. It is terrified by the thought of escalation of the struggles. It creates obstacles to the organization in the branches. It preserves the division of workers based on different labor relations. It surrenders workers, unprotected at the hands of the employers.

Basically, we are talking about mechanisms of the capitalists within the lines of the workers', trade union movement. The isolation of the forces of trade unionis controlled by governments and employers, is basic precondition for the reconstruction of the trade union movement, for the strengthening of the social alliance.

For the Individuals' Associations (Organizational form of employers' trade unionism)

The individuals' associations were a form legislated by the Greek Governments the last years as a representation of workers, with the legal right to sign collective contract with the employer. They are not a form of organization but are mechanism to undermine the unions, they are tools of the employers, and they were created so as to sideline the unions. They are mechanisms of the employers in small and medium sizes corporations, used as substitutes of the Federations and the Unions in signing Collective Contracts in companies with up to 20 workers. The specific governmental and employers' tactic aims to undermine the role of the unions, their bargaining role, the collective organization and action of workers in branch level, as well as, as a class against the class of the capitalists.



An “Individuals’ Association” can be formed even from 5 workers in companies up to 20 workers and is planned for this form to expand to companies up to 50 workers. Till now, wherever “Individuals’ Association” were formed, they were formed with initiative by the employer and signed Contracts with great wage cuts and abolishment of workers’ rights.

C. More specifically about the work of the first level unions

The structure and the forms of organization of the trade union movement in Greece are in First Level: the base trade union, the company-based union, the regional union, the workers’ committee, the strike committee. In second level are the Labor Centers and the Federations.

How the unions are divided

Trade union is the union of at least 20 workers who work at the same branch of the economy or who work for the same employer. The first level unions are distinguished into: same profession unions, branch unions, company, regional, national unions and local branches.

On the same profession, are the unions which are organized based on the profession of the worker e.g. union of accountants, construction workers union.

Branch Unions are workers’ unions based on the branch of the economy, in which the workers’ company belongs to. Eg Food Industries Workers’ Union, Bank Employees’ Union.

Company Unions are workers' Unions based on the company or the Group, for which the workers work. Eg Vodafone Company Union, National Bank Union.

Regional are the unions organized based on the profession, or the branch in a specific city or region. Eg Metalworkers' Union of Athens

National Unions are organized on the basis of the profession or the branch of workers from all over Greece. Eg National Union of Mechanics

The local branches are not independent organizations, but organic parts of a union with local or regional range e.g. Piraeus Branch of the Metalworkers' Union of Athens



The article 7 par.1 of the law 1264/82 sets restrictions to the internal autonomy of the trade unions stating that a worker in order to be a member of a union must have completed a two-month period of employment in the specific workplace, and to have all the legal conditions requested in the statute of the union. The same article forbids multiple memberships in unions.

Each worker has the right to be a member at the most into two unions: one company based and one of the branches or a union of the same profession. So it is forbidden by the law 1264/82 the membership in 2 company based unions, or in 2 profession or branch based unions. Minors and immigrants, legally employed can be members of the trade unions.

If it is not defined otherwise by the unions' statute, membership in the union is canceled for the member who:

- Didn't participate in the last two elections for the administration, without any serious reason
- Stopped willingly to work at the company or the industry of his profession, for more than 6 months, unless this is due to his election at the Parliament or the Local Government

If the first level trade union participates in to a second level organization e.g. federation, it elects representatives which is how it is represented to the second level organization. The representatives

of all the first level organizations that participate to the second level are forming the General Assembly of the second level union. The statute of the second level union determines the percentage of delegates from the first level unions. The percentage has to be the same for all unions, so as to guarantee equal representation of all unions to the above organization.

The number of the representatives is found by dividing the number of the members that voted for the election of the representatives to the first level organization divided by the percentage that is defined by the statute of the union. If from the division comes up a fraction higher than the half of the number that is the measure, then one more representative is added. If on the contrary it comes up a fraction smaller from the half of the measure, then it is not represented to the organization.

What Kind Of Unions We Want

We need unions that are massive, strong, with presence in every big workplace. Unions that will rally and organize the workers, and will take care of “equipping” them for a stronger and unified front of resistance everywhere. A front against the big employers and the monopolies. Against the government and the capitalist organizations. From this rises the need for the unions to have “feet” everywhere and especially inside the big multinational and monopoly groups, with steady presence, through the formation of union committees, especially for the branch unions.

It is incompatible with the history and the values of the working class movement the delays in organizing the workers in a series of unions. Delays in creating union committees in the working places. The dysfunction or the rather small activity of many unions (e.g. rare Board meetings, having poor or typical discussions, some not at all, the General Assemblies to be called rarely, with only few members. Also many unions have to deal with financial problems, they don't gather the fees from many of their members, they don't interfere for problems at their workplaces, they don't have a presence of the Board at their offices and the workplaces, so that they will be able to inform and mobilize their members). Also, the very weak development of mobilizations in workplaces that have problems. These conditions are behind the needs and the modern duties of our movement and must be dealt with.

The need of reconstruction of the trade union movement has as its priority the duty of the massification of the unions with special orientation to the youth, the women, the immigrants. Secondly, the strengthening of the alliance of the working class with the self-employed and the poor farmers.



1. The Union's Board

The leadership, meaning the execution, the care and the directing of all issues of the trade union organization is exercised by the Union's Board. So the Board is the permanent executive body of the trade union that is handling all of its cases and represents it judicially and extra judicially (article 67). The Board of the trade union is established as it is defined by its statute. The duties of the President, the vice President, the Gen. Secretary or the Cashier, is not allowed to come to the same person. The service of the Board cannot be longer than 3 years.

The Board is under the control of the General Assembly which is the highest body of the trade union. The General Assembly has the right to cease the Board. The withdrawal of trust and the impeachment from the General Assembly means the cease or at least motion to the Board to resign. The ceasing can be for all the Board members or to some.

The Union's Board has the responsibility for the actions and the orientation of the union. The Board is elected through union elections which are held (depending on the union) every year, every two years or at the most every three years. The Board also has responsibility for the functioning and directing the union's committees or secretariats, which are formed within the union, such as strike committees, industry or company based committees, etc. Also, the Board is responsible for holding regular meetings of the General Assembly, which is the Union's highest body.

The Board's Meetings should on a regular, steady basis, under specific topics each week and all members to be informed about the meetings' agenda. The Board has to plan the division of responsibilities and duties, based on the Union's needs. Not give duties only to the Members of the leadership, but to more members of the union.

Under the responsibility of the Board, supporting committees are formed within the Board. Also union committees, strike committees etc. The Board and especially the President (or the GS) has responsibility and guidance of those committees. The Board has to take care that the committees meet regularly, their meetings and actions are with substance and that they contribute essentially to the work of the Board.

The Board Meetings need very good preparation. There should be more persistence on how to reinforce the discussion, the debate, the participation on the taking of one or another decision, on the choosing of one tactic instead of another, in prioritizing the issues, etc. This means that the preparation and scheduling of the agenda and the meeting has great importance.

Vitality to the life of the Union comes from the constant drawing of conclusions from the Union's action. It concretes the continuity and allows to directly monitoring the progress of the bonds that a union is making with the workers of its industry, enriches its experience on tactics and action, so as to intervene with specific measures to fulfill the goals of the union.

The Board must have a specific duty division, to give responsibility to all its members. Divisions that must take into account big workplaces, fight fronts, guidance of union and workers' committees, connection with the company-based unions etc.

It is necessary to have organized, special, continuous connection of the Board with the committees and the pioneer workers for the specific issues of each workplace, but mostly for generalizing the experience to the whole branch, for the politicization of the struggle to the level for power. Better steps have been made with committees that are charged and are guided continually by specific members of the Board.

In regular time periods there should be an evaluation of the work and the goals, an assessment of the action and the difficulties. The Board meeting with the participation of trade unionists from company-based unions, with the open participation of the members of the union helps the work of the union brings closer its members to the decision making and their involvement to them.

It's a responsibility of the Board the monitoring of the developments of its branch, the internal movement that exists, the layoffs, the changes in the working relations. The monitoring helps to the immediate solution of problems that appear, without us getting caught off guard from our class enemy or other forces.

Organization – Massification

Our bonds with the working class must be close. They must be based into solid ground and be constantly renewed. Today they are not those that are needed, those that the conditions require. It's not enough the casual communication from time of some union-ists with workers in the factories, or a tour that doesn't create bonds but just shows presence.

The creation of a group of people, who are at the vanguard or at least active inside the basic industries, factories and organizations is a precondition for our work to have results. The correlations do not change with a good campaign, with slogans or handing out an announcement.



A big part of the working class is unorganized, and even more unorganized are the forces that suffer because of the flexible working relation, with part-time or casual work. Here we have to overcome some well-established beliefs. The basic issue is the organization of the working class, the breaking of the guild-based unionism, the unity and struggle of all the workers of a place, (including e.g. of the casual workers) in the same union, independently of working relations. And this, no matter the difficulties, is duty of the class movement.

To strengthen the struggle for the organization of the working class based on their workplace, for the participation of the workers on the unions activity, for the essential democratic function of the unions. To enrich the forms of action.

To improve our work where the class forces are few. We should not accept the negative correlation but to take initiatives to change it. To have an open front against the pro-government unionism. To make sure that we'll constantly have new contacts from workplaces and the unions, to work with mapping and plan so our forces to grow. The first level union is the place where can truly change the correlation in the trade union movement.

Basic indicators for the work of a union are its bonds with the workers, the mapping of its branch, the union creating roots inside the big workplaces. The contact with the members of the union is not correct to grow stronger or to appear only during the union elections, big strikes, events, or actions in the workplaces.

The rallying of new forces with the union must be considered as primary duty. For the worker to be convinced join his union, he needs to feel that the union expresses him, that it will support him, that it is a force in his hands. The context of the actions of the unions needs to expand. To deal not only with the work issues, the wages, but also with all parts of the life of the worker, with Healthcare, Culture, education etc.

It is necessary to have permanent and steady work, systematic and constant information and enlightening, good knowledge of the developments on the branch and generally, personal contact with the worker. The applications that we take for new members have to be utilized. The new members of the union must be given responsibilities, to get help from the collective proceedings, to participate to each decision the union is taking.

Contact with the unions' members is not something typical. It's not one more duty, but an essential element of the internal life of a union. If you don't have contact with your members you create cracks to the bonds, the trust is shaken, the relationship has a more typical character, and it creates seeds for breaking the relationship with the union.

The Board has an obligation to take action to better the internal life of the union. The members have the right to learn about the activities of the union, to know its initiatives, to make suggestions,

to participate in the collective proceedings. At the same time the Board has to have a clear image for each member separately. To know the problems, to have knowledge for the unemployed that are members of the union; how are they surviving, what difficulties they are dealing with; to take action for protection and solidarity. That's how you deepen the bond, that's how you reinforce the collective – comradely character of the union.

2. The General Assembly of the union

The Assembly is the highest body of the trade union organization and decides for every matter that is not under the supervision of any other body, so it is by law, part of jurisdiction for the assembly. The assembly has an exclusive jurisdiction for some matters, e.g. changing the goals, modifying the union's statute and ceasing the trade union.

Finally the Assembly has the exclusive jurisdiction to monitor and review the bodies of the trade union, to cease the administration, if that is justified by an important cause. The General Assembly is called by the Union's Board that has been lawfully established. The union's statute defines the terms, under which the assembly is called, meets and decides. The union's statute usually predicts regular and exceptional general meetings and it defines the way of invitation, as well as the deadlines that must be healed for the invitation of the members before the date of the General Assembly.

The quorum percentage is calculated based on the number of the members that have paid their fees (article 8 par.2 law 1264) and have the right to vote. The union's statute can freely set the quorum percentage. For the quorum, are also counted the members that are present but they do not participate to the voting process. The quorum must exist not only at the beginning but during the Assembly too. So if there is no quorum during the Assembly or during the votes, decisions are not legal.

Of course the setting of the quorum is part of the internal function of the trade union organizations. So the union's statute sets freely the quorum, meaning the percentage of the members that must participate to the meeting so there can be discussion and voting. The General Assembly decides with voting, but never by voice. The decisions of the Assembly, if it is not set differently by the union's statute, are taken by the relative majority of the present members.



The Assembly of the union must be prepared with care. The members of the union have to know when it will be, to know the agenda, so as to be prepared to state their opinion, to contribute to the collective thinking.

The General Assemblies must not be prepared sloppily, without any context, but to take action for massive attendance. To use all means to contact with the members, tours and campaigns before the Assembly, to massive working places.

The GA should not be left in chance, to be held just to be held. It's not a typical procedure, an obligation. If we take measures so that the discussion in our meetings is lively, rich, if we encourage our members to speak, they can give a boost to our work, so that the collective decision to be implemented with discipline and with greater determination. Also, it can expand in to more workplaces. To call more often regular general assembly's to report to the union members. To be ready to accept criticism, to correct our mistakes and omissions.

The speed of the developments, the complexity and the number of our political duties, force us seek for fast and more effective ways of function and contact with the workers. In addition to the well tried way and irreplaceable form of the general assembly, it also helps to hold meetings in each workplace, the call open Board meetings.

To exchange the experience for the tendencies of the people and mostly for actions for fast and effective intervention. Another tried form that helps the union bodies to know the moods of the people are the gatherings – meetings with the workers during the fights and after. It also helps to unite the activity of all forces into the implementation of the planning and the realization of our goals.

3. Forms of Struggle

What can lead to dynamic forms of struggle is the wide and steady educational work and information in the workplaces. If, it is firmly established in our ranks, the perspective that the main purpose of the struggle is the rise of the working-class political experience, its organization, the massification of the struggle and its preparation to claim the power, then it will be easy to develop a wider agitation work that will escalate militant tendencies.

- To evaluate correctly the level of consciousness, prejudices, fears always aiming to raise the level of conscious struggle. The dedicated work in this direction along with good processing of demands, slogans and positions, with workers' participation in all these processes, can give effective, active forms of struggle as well as a variety of forms.
- The strategy and tactics of the opponents to be carefully studied starting with the employers and reaching their mechanisms. To study their class intransigence, their consistency, their maneuvers and to plan similar tactics to face them. To the extent this is achieved, we create conditions that can also provide a variety of forms of struggle.

The forms of struggle must reflect the level of willingness to clash, of, at least, the organized union forces.

If we monitor the developments correctly, we will have enrichment of the forms of struggle and their dynamism. We are not dogmatic on any form and we are preparing for all forms of struggle, to the most advanced.

About the “forms of struggle” the clash between the two lines escalates since the class line must utilize all forms of struggle, while the line of class collaboration tries to castrate them. Today the controlled by governments and employers trade unionism in reality cancels the forms of demanding through the so-called “Social Dialogue”. There are massive unions trapped in the line of “social dialogue” and not that of demanding, in various forms, eg protest to employers, work stoppage, strike, etc.



The class-oriented trade union movement must assess correctly each and every time (at the place and time) which is the most appropriate form of struggle and at which point. It must be able to switch, when it's necessary, the forms of struggle. To be able to judge which form promotes better the content of the mobilization. To be interested in the rallying of forces, the securing of reserves and the forces of solidarity. To know very well the general conditions of the specific company (where the struggle takes place). To work on the slogans of the struggle. To have prepared the strike committee and picket lines. To have foreseen the need of a strike fund. When we enter into a struggle, in our planning, we have to estimate its horizon, up to its ending. We have to be able to choose the moment for negotiations, the moment for escalating and advancing the conflict.

Forms

- Protest of the Board
- Motion with signatures
- Protest Action
- Rally - Demonstration
- Walk-offs
- Occupation
- Branch Strike
- General Strike
- Political Strike

About the strike

The strike, child of capitalism, is in many countries today constitutionally recognized, as a result of years of workers' struggles. It is a form of reaction of the workers against the employers and their state, of the conflict between the working class with the capital.

This form of struggle appears simultaneously, we would say, with the emergence of capitalist relations of production. The various forms of struggle of the oppressed in feudalism had nothing in common with the strike of the working class.

In Greece such a form of struggle, as recorded by various historians, appeared shortly after the Greek Revolution of 1821. In particular, in 1826 in the city of Nafplion took place the first strike of workers in Printing. It was a strike in embryonic form, mixed with many other elements, which reflected the condition of the working class of Greece at the time, which was just beginning to make its first steps. It was this class, which would later leave its mark on the major developments of the country, when it would form its trade unions and its political party. It's the same class, to which history has assigned huge tasks.



For a unionist that accepts the principle of class struggle, strike is not just an “abstention from work”. Many are those who try - and not by accident - to limit the context of the strike in the above-mentioned phrase. Even though, it is not possible to reveal what hides behind the factory, industrial, or “economic” strike through the daily activities, the fact remains that the worker starts -with his small experience- to understand more and more clearly that behind the employer, behind the group or groups of employers, lays their mechanism, the state of the Capital.

As, Lenin, the founder of the Soviet state underlined: “The strike teaches workers to understand where lays the power of the bosses and where the power of the workers, it teaches them to think not only about their own boss and not only about those close to them, but about all the bosses, about the whole class of the capitalists and the whole class of the workers. »

And followed, talking about the weapon of this struggle, he stressed: “The strikes are one of the means of struggle of the working class for its emancipation, but it is not the only one and if the workers do not pay attention to other means of struggle, then they will slow down the growth and the successes of the working class.”

The strike is not just an “abstention from work”, it is a great weapon of the working class in its struggle for social justice and prosperity. We must say that it takes skills to use this weapon, because in cases that it is not used properly, it could be turned against the working class and its interests.

4. Union Elections

All members of the Union are entitled to participate in its elections with the right “to vote and be voted”. Each union elects a) its board b) representatives for its above organization.

The elections in the unions, in the branches require specific monitoring. Elections are severe - strong confrontations and any disorganization or underestimation will be paid by a heavy price. You cannot give battles and expect a positive outcome with last minute preparations.



The outcome that we evaluate in union elections is the result of many factors. Among them we note the work towards the massification of the unions, the organization, the education and mobilization of workers. The continuous work to reveal all problems, the confrontation with the forces of class collaboration, the rallying of forces with the class oriented forces. The persistence on the correct, collective functioning of the unions, the upgrading of the General Assemblies. The organization of militant meetings on ongoing issues, the systematic information of the workers aiming to their activation. Each of these factors and specifically the effort to develop political-class consciousness values more, as the difficulties of the intervention of the other forces and the employers strengthens.

The elections of a union are an important battle. It is not limited only to the election period, but it is related with all the activity of the union, as the change in correlation of forces demands daily and undiminished action. It is executive responsibility of the Union's Board to monitor the developments in the branch, the rallying of the workers of the branch in the union and if the development of the struggles is connected with the organization of the workers. The election results are related with the total activity of the union.



5. Union committees

The connection between the union and its members and all workers of the sector is a necessary condition for the better fulfillment of the union's mission. Link between the Union's Board and its members can be the union committees. The union committee inside the workplace is the basic organizational unit of the union.

The impact on the lives of the working class by the capitalist crisis gives us new possibilities and they increase the need to organize workers in every workplace, in every branch. With planning and aiming, the creation of union committees, first of all in most of the major workplaces, is one of the main tasks of the union.

The union committees are the eyes and ears of the union in every workplace. We need to understand that the formation of union committees answers to the need of the organization of the working class and the creation of a class pole in these places. They help in rallying workers to daily action, the organized participation in the mobilizations. They take part more effectively in the developments, they confront with the positions of the government- employers led unionism, they organize struggles.

The union committee is a tool of union's struggle, a representative body of workers in the factory and in the workplace, elected by the workers and it is accountable to them. In a factory, office,

a workplace you can have workers and employees who work in the same place and do not belong to the same union, they are not organized, and who are the majority. They also do not have the same political views and backgrounds; they have different degree of consciousness and political maturity. Different concepts that start from their ideological and political positioning. But, initially, it is possible the unity on the basis of demands. On wages, on the struggle for collective contracts, against the extreme taxation, on the working conditions. The employers' attack and lack of accountability are confronted in a united way.

The Committee must become a lever for action from the base. That is why, what matters for us, is not just the creation of a Committee, but that all the necessary measures are taken, so that the



Committee to approach the class movement through its everyday activity. That the positions of PAME reach the basis and mobilize masses in this direction. As far as this is accomplished, the experience shows that the committees perform their roles with greater efficiency and stability in their action.

By creating them, the union Committees together with the Union's Board can take action on the problems that workers face in each workplace. For example interventions for health and safety issues, layoffs, for issues that are related with the personal and the family lives of our colleagues. Inviolable condition is the conflict with the employers' and governmental unionism that forms obstacles into the radicalization of workers. Similarly prerequisite condition of the development and unity of action is that the unions Committees are directly linked to the movement of the neighborhood that exists and grows through the People's Committees at the neighborhoods.

6. Knowledge of Trade Union Issues-Labor Law

Any union that does not follow the developments in working relations and labor law, loses its role. It is a basic problem. If in every development we have delays, this can undermine the trust of the workers towards the union.

We need to take measures regarding the union's knowledge of labor legislation. So that the union can fulfill its main function essentially. It is not enough for the board members just to be good speakers and make general political speeches and interventions,

but they must have knowledge of the basic trade union issues. They must monitor the developments and that they do not face situations based only on common experience and practice.

The developments and changes in the working conditions are such that the unions must not be left behind. Especially new trade unionists or newly founded unions, where objectively collective experience is missing, they should take measures.

To multiply union seminars, enriched with the new laws, the new developments. To provide stability and persistence in realizing such planning, and not to cancel it, light heartedly, because of minor difficulties, or because of the everyday developments.

To have contact with lawyers, to strengthen the assistance that the unions can take from scientists who have knowledge, who monitor the labor law and the changes in working relations. Board members and workers to get trained in this procedure. To meet with the Labour Inspectorate fully prepared and not based on common practice.

Knowledge of labor law will help us to overcome problems, difficulties in demands, in struggles growing in the workplaces for “what applies here” what is “legal”. Not neither to be exposed nor to expose the workers that we defend. PAME centrally can contribute to this effort.

7. Propaganda-Union Press

The union press is one of the main forms of the union communicating with the workers of the industry. The last period, with the increase in prices of postal services, many unions are unable to afford to send the union's newspaper to their members.

Such attempts of contacting with the members and the workers of the industry must not be left to chance or to give up on them.

- Assign young people to write articles in newspapers
- Provide information on the developments in the industry, to be a true union's newspaper. To inform, propagate, to be specific and contemporary.
- Develop initiatives in the Internet.



About internet, we are far behind. While there are increased possibilities for intervention and information, there is a delay or depreciation in this specific form. We must take into account that a large part of the youth has access to the internet, searching and looking for answers. Of course, in no case can the internet substitute the personal-direct contact, but it doesn't stop being a powerful way of information in real-time.

By assigning members of the union who have will and some relevant knowledge on simple functions of the internet, we can create a good infrastructure for information issues.

With no cost and effortlessly electronic newspapers, blogs and unions' sites can be made that will play the official role of propaganda of the union. Update the pages with the events of the union, its planning, its assemblies, articles and so on.

There could be a forum of questions and thoughts from employees, about discussion / questions / queries made over rights but even about work issues.

8. Specialization of work of the union

A) Women

The union has to process goals for the women. To find ways for women to overcome fears or apathy and to draw them in joining the union, in action, in the union's leadership and its committees.

It is a criterion of the level of class consciousness and class responsibility, the struggle for the life and the problems of the working women, the women of the working class. For their participation in the class struggle, in the class-oriented trade union movement. It is one of the main fronts against the policy of the monopolies and imperialism who want the woman a cheap worker, but also a means to make cheaper labor force, to channel fatalism, defeatism and fear in the ranks of the labor movement.

This direction is not well established within our forces, in the class trade union movement. The explanation of these weaknesses is that this issue has not been established to our orientation as one of the most special issues that judge and determine the progress and growth of the class struggle and consciousness.



It is needed to create special infrastructure in the class movement, so as to multiply the numbers of the informed working women, to deepen their consciousness about class related problems, to rally more women in the unions, to strengthen them, to raise the level of organization of women in every workplace and union, to rally them with PAME, aiming to change the correlation of forces, for another policy. This is very demanding work, which needs specific content and persistent plan about women, the youth of the industry, of the company. The demands are related with the situation in which working or unemployed women today live. On this basis, they are reluctant to participate in the organization of the struggle in the workplace, in the union, or even the women's club.

The steady and more complete orientation to the issues of women and youth will be decisive for the reconstruction of the labor and popular movement. Elements of this steady orientation is the better processing of our positions on issues such as apprenticeship, the problems of young couples, the retirement age limit for women, maternity protection, working conditions, etc. It is needed to overcome immediately the false perception that the promotion of our work, especially in women and the youth, is only a matter of some committees and not of the whole Union Board and of all the members of the unions.

B) Young Workers

The caring for the class awareness of young workers has to go through the life and the activities of the union. To strengthen in the consciousness of the young people, the flame of organized response of the workers in every workplace against the whole of the bourgeoisie and their power. We need diverse, educative activity of the unions that draws, especially the young workers, in participation, in action, and relates with all aspects of their lives: the health and safety conditions, especially for young women workers, for young couples and even events about the history of the labor movement of an industry, events against drugs, film screenings, theater performances, parties, football tournaments etc.

We need to restore the relationship of the young people with the unions, with the collective action, which has been fouled by the governmental and employers' unionism. Young workers perceive the union as something alien. We must restore trust in the union organization, which goes through the van guard stance of militant workers in the workplace, transferring information – organizing the struggle in their workplace, with their irreconcilable struggle against the employers, their mechanisms, against the sold out unionists and the argument of “lesser evil”.

To increase the level of organization of young people in every workplace, the union needs specific and persistent plan involving the young people of the industry, the business, the school. To take into account the complexity of this work, the conditions

of defeat in which grew and are now working, today's youth. To take into account the influence of the new contracts of one day-work on the consciousness of the youth, the starvation-wages, the difficulties that face the young workers who bring up a young child, the apprenticeship contracts, the employment programs for short-fixed time, the permanent wandering of young people from unemployment to "black-labor". At the same time, blackmails that take place within the workplace, the lack of class experience affect the consciousness of the young. Based on all these, they are reluctant to participate in the organization of the struggle in the workplace, in the union.

We must strengthen the planned intervention inside the technical schools. To make a list of professions, students. To plan not as one time a campaign action but to understand in practice how the intervention in schools is an investment for the future, for the emergence of tomorrow's industrial workers, for the participation of tomorrow's shift in the massive struggles. The State intervenes in various ways in the minds of young children. A number of school principals and teachers in the apprenticeship and training schools give such "lessons of obedience." They cultivate in the students the mentality of "you are students, not workers, and therefore you have nothing to do with the unions", "if you are obedient to the demands of your bosses, they may hire you after your practice", "you should be the ones to pay the employer because you are being educated and you are a cost for him, so do not demand wages."

Essentially the function of the youth's committees for some unions means shifting the responsibility to guide the working youth, towards them. First, it must be clarified that: The youth's committee is not an organization within a union. In unions, where there is a reason to form such committee, it should take such initiatives, that will help the Union Board to broaden its work to the youth (and not to replace the responsibility of the board). At the same time, in unions where the overwhelming majority of their industry is young people, there is no need to set up committees. Committees must be close also to the Labor Centers.

The formation of youth committee does not solve the problem of orientation, if it does not become a matter of the whole Board, if there is no orientation in the industry's youth, if it is not a subject for discussion at the general assemblies. The establishment of a youth committee without these terms means transferring of the responsibility and is doomed to failure. We have noticed several times that there is a lack in the content in the youth committees or the content of their activities does not embrace the problems and concerns of the working youth.

It is required a courageous election of young workers as members in the Union Boards. To trust the militant young workers who are fighting in their workplace, who confront their employers. Do not delay the assignment of duties to young workers, using their inexperience as an excuse. It's in the inside of the fire of class struggle where young workers are tested.

To take measures of creations and support of youth committees whose main task will be the assistance and evaluation of the Board. The committees respectively to help the discussion itself in the Board, to enrich the experience. The union must take initiatives for the working youth. To issue specific announcements, along with the general, if young people work or students do internships in a workplace. Nothing that has to do with problems of the working youth should leave the union untouched. To take initiatives in culture and sports that interests especially the young people.



C) Migrants

The reorganization of the labor movement will be judged by the rallying of migrants in the unions, in the class struggle. The migrants are part of the working class of our country. Each organization should take measures to develop action on the part of migrants especially in these conditions that the poison of racism grows.

Migrants are an important part of the working class. The strengthening of the class unity of Greek and migrant workers is an important indicator of the effectiveness of the struggle. Through unity and common struggle we will strengthen the fight against imperialism, against exploiters, against capital and its political parties. Unemployment, black wages and racism -that has been artfully planted by the state and the fascist organization Golden Dawn- the crude violence, the hunting, the persecutions, the humiliations and the brutal exploitation are part of the everyday life of every immigrant.



This action must be combined with call for joining the unions. With migrants' committees, especially in industries where a large part of them is concentrated. With the participation of migrants in the elections, as candidates, with their election to the Boards and in the factory committees, with assigning duties to the most militant. By developing initiatives, manifestations and meetings. To translate the announcements in their language, to multiply the initiatives related to the help they need today in education, in health, in the contact with the Greek language. To have readily solidarity reflexes and to denounce the employer terrorism in their workplaces, since they are the first prey to exploitation, to have protective reflexes for fascist attacks.

9. Fronts Of Struggle (Culture-Sports-Leisure)

It is particularly important to understand, from the oldest to the newest union, that the working family's needs are not limited to fighting for collective contracts, against dismissals, labor relations. The unions' action cannot be limited within the four walls of a workplace. Obviously, the hierarchy will not start from the creative use of leisure time, when, for example, a branch is declining and many families are literally starving, but, on the other hand, the right to have access in culture, in sports especially in a world which suffers, is not to be devaluated. The gap left by the unions in the total needs of the working family will be covered by the opponent, the employers will take measures, and they will sponsor sporting and cultural events, excursions, activities.

In the history of the labor movement both in our country and at the international level, we see an intense activity and initiatives around sports and culture. Of particular importance is the historical example of EPON (Anti-fascist, youth resistance National Union), which in difficult conditions turned the situation, spreading to all areas sports activities, while giving cultural breath by creating everywhere choirs, theater groups etc. All the above, together with strong publishing activity were encouraging the initiatives and strengthening the people and the youth. The EPON played a leading role to create hundreds of sports teams across the country, in all sports. Athletics took shape reaching even the most remote village, team sports were developed on the basis of fair play. The experience of EPON is not a sweet memory, but a guide.

The culture and sports, the right to leisure time can be sides of strengthening of the unions, massification and promotion. With campaigns of action, with cultural and sporting weeks or weekends, by presenting cultural events with music, theater, film screenings and debates. To promote without hesitation the right of the worker to be entertained, to have access to culture, to have free time to use it creatively, to develop judgment and thinking to improve his life, against the subculture, the cheap products and substitutes launched by the cosmopolitism of the capital.

The effort with workers' football tournaments should exemplify, it should be the starting point to strengthen the involvement of unions in every front, to take initiatives that go beyond the trivial and the usual. We are not going to fool the workers. It is proved in practice that activities that we underestimate or consider as inferior, can embrace the people, to rally, to strengthen the fight. The one-dimensional orientation of a union does not help in its massification. Modern needs, the problems that young couples and young people are facing, require more comprehensive intervention, which touches all aspects of life of workers.

1. About the cultural intervention in unions

We're back to initiatives that have to do with cultural intervention in unions. It is considered as the most minor issue that often does not even exist as an initiative on paper. We need to take steps in the difficult but necessary, field of culture.

Art and culture are equipment; they are a way of thinking, way of life. The right to cultural creation breaking the connection culture = profit that overwhelms us nowadays, but mainly through the promotion of amateur creative activities within the trade unions, those are rallying axes. Mistakenly we usually estimate that such aspects do not touch the working family, the youth.

PAME, centrally, but also through the first level unions and the workers' will, has founded a theater group, which in the last years, with care, has held theatrical performances. Through this effort rise responsibilities and opportunities for developing other respective activities by the first level unions.

Within the Union's Board there may be a member assigned with this work. Also, to create a culture-sport committee, to start initiatives, to inform all the members of the union, to ask for help and participation in this effort. In this direction it can use existing committees within the unions, eg unemployed, youth committees, etc.

We must intensify:

- Our struggle to ensure the educational and material conditions for the free and unhindered access of the people in arts and culture.
- The struggle for the formation of infrastructures and programs that develop the aesthetic culture of the new generation, linking culture and art with all-round development and education, which gives the freedom of mind, available for action and will to overthrow the system that wants to lobotomize our children.

2. Drugs

Unions, Federations, and Labour Centres rallied with PAME must and can strengthen their struggle for the organization of young workers, to multiply initiatives and activities, bringing widely to young workers the firm proposal of fight against any kind of substitute.

The struggle within the unions is a fight to prevent, away from substitution programs which do not address the problem, but, on the contrary, they maintain it. The central initiatives of the Youth Secretariat of PAME should be supported by the unions, not by the participation of a delegation or some members of the Board, but to open the discussion in their industry.



It is not outdated for a union to publish an announcement, to hand in the workplaces. The union must have such activities, not to restrict its activity only on labor issues, to combine aspects concerning the working family and young workers. Many children, who are in therapeutic communities and rehabilitation, are workers, they are aware of PAME based on its central initiatives. It is an essential issue that PAME raises this matter in the unions, so they take their own initiatives with manifestations etc.

10. The finances of the Union

The financial independence of a union in conditions that continually get more difficult is a key problem that must be addressed. The action of the union must not be stopped because of lack of funds.

First and foremost the fees of the members of the union must be collected on a monthly, a six-monthly or yearly basis. We should not feel “ashamed” to call for the fees, but unions fearlessly should remind that the financial support of the union is an obligation and also to explain the financial situation of the union through detailed reports during the general assemblies.

The union should take parallel measures for reinforcing the union. With aid boxes outside workplaces when the union gives announcements, with events, parties, lottery, and support from our co-workers.

All of the above require the bonding with members of the union, who understand the union, its action and its continuity as their own responsibility.

To this end, an important role should be played by the finance committee of each trade union, to monitor the financial work and the fund of each union. It should not be perceived as a decorative committee.

11. To organize our work for the unemployed

The work with the unemployed is a specific work that requires specialization. Knowing only the data on unemployment or the list of demands of PAME and special demands that exist is not enough. It is necessary to train people in constant monitoring of everyday news, programs for the unemployed, internship schools and recruitment of new employees from them, and also on how the unemployed are thinking and facing unemployment.

Solidarity in the neighborhood, where you can meet more easily the unemployed, at meeting places and homes, should be strengthened. However, this does not mean that there is no responsibility and constant orientation of the unions. This is not allowed, because of the chaotic situation that we face with unemployment today, the unions not to take initiatives. It is not allowed not to have activity for the unemployed, the consideration of this as a second responsibility or to consider ineffective any actions for the unemployed that will not have immediate results.

An initiative will be judged successful or not in action and not in advance. There will be activities that might not proceed. But this should not result in resignation but in multiplying our efforts to reach more efficiently the unemployed.

The orientation in the neighborhood does not mean that the unions will refrain from contacting and organizing the unemployed. The industry branches will give feedback to the neighborhoods and vice versa. Each union has a duty to monitor developments in the area its responsibility, to maintain contact with its members. The union is not discharged of its responsibility to organize the whole working class of its sector, taking into account of the opening and closing of factories, the working relations and the unemployment in the industry.

There is need for:

- An assigned member of the Board to monitor the work with the unemployed in the sector.
- A constant monitoring in the members registry, in the industry
- To be utilized as an irreplaceable way of working with the unemployed the planned meetings.
- There must be persistence in our intervention, not to give up at the first difficulty because efforts so far do not succeed. There are misunderstandings in some workers, who either believe that the union will find them work or that it is powerless to help, to go to the forefront demanding immediate solutions for the unemployed.

Today, also special issue - where a lot of consideration is needed- is the issue of short time employment of the young people, which substitutes unemployment. How, during this short time of employment, will we create bonds between the workers and the union? Bonds that will continue after employment has ended, eg through union activities in culture, sports and of course through the everyday struggles

The work with the unemployed reveals all the weaknesses of the unions, in contacting their members. If each Union Board does not work with the its members, as a beginning, every effort made and will not have results, or not be continued, will make it even harder to contact them in the future, it will cultivate disappointment.

12. Class Solidarity

One of the crucial issues of organization and efficiency of the trade union movement is erasing the differences within the ranks of workers, breaking the individual interests, the guild perceptions. The genuine class solidarity is the counterweight to plans of employers and of their political personnel and their effort to break the unity of the working class, to put obstacles into working class cohesion and develop “social automation” (that is to cause one part of the society to act “automatically” against another part which is organizing its struggles).

One of the main elements of rallying and organization of our class is the development of class solidarity, away from the logic of charity and volunteerism, promoted by the bourgeoisie for managing poverty.

Solidarity is not a typical case. It's not just an announcement of support in a struggle –which is, often, not even done- it is not wishful thinking and vague slogans. Solidarity has its basis in the class unity of the workers in the industry and generally, in the social alliance that needs to be developed on the basis of social problems and interests against monopolies.

The unions should have open radars for anything that concerns the working family, to intervene immediately, not waiting for central announcements or initiatives. They should have direct reflexes to support in struggles developed and are hit by government, employers, justice department and repressive mechanisms. They should take measures to inform the sector on such matters and not to remain only in a press release. Solidarity is not solidarity of one Board to another, among themselves.

The unions should have mapped and constantly updated overview of the situation of their members. Thus links are established with employees. They should be aware of how many are unemployed, what problems they face, how many children they have, if they go to school, if they have electricity in their homes, or whether it's been cut etc

For example, the power cut in homes of unemployed must find immediate and dynamic response to solve such problems and not for propaganda purposes. This action should not be left at the level of the Board, but to be used as an opportunity to rally with the union or the neighborhood committee. Union members must join this battle. The collectivity should be enhanced and colleagues should be assigned with responsibilities.

Press Releases, announcements should be given that will help in the development of solidarity, struggles support, support of workers and unemployed people who are suffering. With immediate relief demands, through questionnaires or signature collection, with activities and escalation eg events in working class neighborhoods, meetings, festivities, trips, and actions inside workplaces, in workers' houses, in popular neighborhoods.



13. Company and Branch Based Trade Unions

The organization in a Branch Based Trade Union is a step forward in the workers' consciousness compared to the organization in a company based union. The foundation of a series of Branch Based Trade Unions and their massification, deescalates the guild perceptions, it is a leap in the consciousness of a worker on the basis of unity in the branch and in the common action against the major employers of the sector.

On this basis there is the need to be ready and more daring in forms of organization where a number of categories of workers are not covered by trade unions or there is fast movement from job to job.

The planning of our action should be focused on the branch level, utilizing secondarily the territorial - geographical element (eg. Industrial zones of coexistence of many sectors) but without devaluating the company based union (eg high concentration of the working class in large production units, commerce groups). In conditions of high monopolization of the economy, large-scale companies that usually spread their activities in different sectors should not get out from our orientation. It is a matter of unity for the workers of a large

scale company to have a common front against the employer, irrespectively of the diversity of sectors they belong to. Workers should struggle together against the attack of employers, against the dismissals and they should develop solidarity.

On this basis, the forces of PAME and mainly the Branch Based Trade Unions should be oriented to the contact with the industrial and company based unions while having a good point of view of what the situation is. There should be no waiver in front of the difficulties, the negative correlation of forces that can be found, and the orientation of several company based unions, who are in support of the employers' interests. There are positive examples showing that it is possible to open paths of contact with workers or even to influence on trade unionists and union boards, by expanding our action this way. There are also positive examples of class oriented company based unions, which were founded through the action of branch and industrial unions' committees.

We should not leave them in peace. We should not think that the battle in company based unions does not concern us. We can move ahead of the developments. We can influence workers, we can reveal the corruption and that many of them work with utmost secrecy and unprecedented violations in trade union procedures in order to exclude us and alter the correlation of forces. We should open front against company based union boards which are tools in the hands of employers and they present false and compromised unionists.

D. Affiliation with PAME

PAME is not an effort exhausted to the current needs of the trade union movement. It is birth of the conditions of class struggle, of the correlation of forces in the trade union movement. PAME is a result of rallying the trade unions' need to react against the corrupt class features of the trade unionism controlled by governments and employers. PAME comes from the need to rally and prepare the workers' forces, to fight with continuity and determination against imperialism, against the regime of the monopolies. Therefore, achieving unified perception about the role and the character of PAME is an essential condition for the correct orientation of our work, of the measures to be taken to build a strong class pole in the trade union movement.



PAME is not a trade-union tendency. It is a union pole. It has a movement character and sociopolitical goals. It is a front of class unions, Federations, Labor Centers, trade unionists, workers' committees, who fight coordinated, nationwide, in terms of mass movement, under a framework of demands that reflect the interests of the working class and confronts the strategy of capital, the capitalist reforms, the overall anti-people's policy imposed by the European Union and the governments of the capital.

PAME is the most advanced form of trade union organization not only because it brings together private and public sector workers, unemployed, pensioners, etc. But also because the objectives of PAME are advanced. PAME is rallying forces. PAME is not waiting for the GSEE and ADEDY (Confederations of Private and Public Sector, members of ITUC) to act. PAME does not wait for what will one or the other trade union organization is going to do, in order to intervene on the problems of the workers. It does not submit to the negative correlation of forces, but everyday tries to develop multiform struggles.

Unions should not be "hidden" behind the action of PAME, they should not standardize their action and their function must not be dried out. PAME should be the rallying of the vibrant action of the unions. Through this effort, PAME succeeds in performing successfully coordinated fights and nationwide strikes. This is a

great achievement for all the workers and it is necessary to be strengthened, in order for the class movement to fight from a position of strength against the anti-people's policy and the strategy of capital. By promoting its own demands, its own position of the way of development of economy and society in accordance with the best interests of the workers and with the aim of abolishing the exploitation of man by man.

It is wrong to work without consulting the unions for an action or activity of PAME. It is not enough if a majority of a Union Board agrees with PAME in order for the union to become part of our ranks. We need renewing of the trust, through the discussion and the promotion of our action to the workers. It should not be the rule the central initiatives not to have the full confirmation of the Union's General Assembly of the workers, without the participation of the workers.





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- Against poverty and wars generated by capitalist barbarism



World Federation Of Trade Unions



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