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Robert Applegarth, [*On the Resistance Societies*]²⁷

1. In the present age of competition, industrialists who embark upon risky undertakings and senseless financial speculation in order to bid a lower sum than their rivals, in many cases stirring the workers of one country against those of another, have made resistance societies an absolute necessity in each country for the effective protection of workers, and a federation among all nationalities one of the conditions for their existence.

2. Since the interests of labour are the same all over the world, and since Congress represents the interests of almost all nations, it recommends to societies that have not yet established themselves as resistance societies to do so without delay, in every country and every branch of industry, whether the workers in them are men or women.

3. Congress seriously urges societies in all nations to form themselves into federations that send one another monthly reports with information on wages, working hours, and the general conditions of workers in their country. [...]

6. Although the present system of competition should give way to cooperation for production, it is evident – to judge from past experience – that the resistance society is the first and best form of organization to which workers have resorted for their protection and should continue to resort as long as the present reign of competition continues, and that this organization is incontestably the best way of introducing knowledge and the spirit of order and discipline, which are inseparable conditions to ensure the success of cooperation in production.

²⁷ This text reproduces part of a resolution approved during the afternoon session of 11 September 1869, at the Basel Congress. The presenter was Robert Applegarth [1834–1924], a carpenter and union leader, as well as a member of the GC in 1865, and from 1868 until 1872. The full version is in PI, II: 114–15.

7. Congress recommends that, in their future programme, resistance societies should include a demand on the state for a system of compulsory secular education; this should precede any great social or political reform, being the only guarantee that such reforms will be permanent and beneficial.

[...] There is no point in discussing the need for resistance societies, since these exist only because of their indispensable necessity. He has years of experience and, in his view, trades union will remain a necessity so long as the relations between labour and capital remain what they are today. The coming generation should be educated in such a way that it can live in a higher social organization. If we were to design the workers' education with a view to productive cooperation, they would no longer feel the necessity of resistance societies.