

Discussion on the Report of Comrade Losovsky.

Moscow, 18th August.

Comrade Mirzah (India)

Comrades, In India there is a great revival of the revolutionary movement. This movement has its economic basis, and has grown into a mighty strike wave. The million masses of the oppressed proletariat have taken part in these strikes, which have already become expressly political in character. The inevitable defeats have not discouraged the workers. In spite of the sabotage and treachery of the national reformists, the revolutionary workers of India are marching forward on the path of revolutionary class struggle.

The Indian textile workers union has set an example to the other workers of India. The workers reply to police terrorist methods by the organisation of Red self-defence corps, which can be used for purposes of attack. All this shows that the working class of India is sweeping away the remnants of slavery. The bourgeois press of India does not refer by one word to the workers' struggle, but we know very well that millions of workers are taking part, by means of strikes and demonstrations, under Red banners, in the class struggle.

We have committed many errors, and these have mainly been due to the generally unfavourable social-political position in India for our struggle. The revolutionary movement is frequently under the guidance of petty bourgeois elements, who betray the workers at the decisive moment. In India there is no Communist Party to lead the revolutionary labour movement. And many of our errors are due to our being insufficiently aided by the international labour movement, especially by the R.I.L.U. Had the R.I.L.U. devoted serious attention to us earlier, we might perhaps have avoided many errors. The R.I.L.U. and the revolutionary trade union movement in the capitalist countries must help us.

The English trade unionists support the Indian national reformists. We need the active aid of our comrades in the imperialist countries. The Indian workers need a revolutionary press and proper guidance by experienced revolutionary workers, who have already emerged successfully from their struggles. (Stormy applause.)

Moscow 19th August.

Comrade Sadi (Syria):

stated: The presence of new representatives of the proletariat of the colonial and oppressed countries is characteristic of the V. International Congress of the R.I.L.U. Its leading influence on the struggle of the workers in the colonies is a mighty success for the R.I.L.U. A new force enters the proletarian arena: The Arabs of Egypt, Palestine, Algeria, Morocco, Syria, and Iraq, are joining the revolutionary movement. The sole organisation creating a firm foundation for the revolutionary trade union movement in the Arabian Orient is the R.I.L.U. The Arabian proletariat is chiefly agrarian. The workers' question is therefore closely bound up with the agrarian question. The agrarian crisis affects both fellaheen and workers. The national Arabian bourgeoisie seeks to win over the peasantry by demagogic means. The Wafd government expends millions in trying to pacify the middle and big peasantry. Many comrades underestimate the influence of Amsterdam in the Arabian Orient. It would be a grave error to overlook the fact that imperialist Amsterdam and the Arabian bourgeoisie may form a bloc against the revolutionary Arabian movement.

The inattention of the English and French comrades towards the Arabian proletariat must cease with this Congress. We hope that the R.I.L.U. will help us in the energetic struggle for the liberation of the Arabian working masses, and of the Jewish, Armenian, and other minorities, and will aid us in the founding of an Arabian Secretariat for communism.

The representative from Greece

described the situation and the radicalisation of the Greek proletariat. The workers are losing faith in the reformist leaders, and are joining the revolutionary trade unions. Under the leadership of these last the great strike at Lazrio was won in 1929, greatly increasing the importance of the RILU,

Comrade Bulat (Soviet Russia)

designated the successes of the revolutionary trade movement during the last 2½ years as the result of the struggle against Right opportunism and "Left" sectarianism. The trade union movement of the capitalist countries must gain by the multifarious experiences won by the Soviet Russian trade union movement.

Comrade Dunkel (Switzerland)

criticised the opportunist errors of the Communist Party and the revolutionary trade union opposition in Switzerland, with their harmful theory of the uniqueness of Swiss social democracy. The result of this has been that the revolutionary trade union opposition has not been in a position to head the growing activity of the masses. The change of trend now beginning must be consolidated.

Comrade Horner (Miners' L.P.C.):

The revolutionary trade union opposition has the opportunity at the moment of gaining the majority of the miners, for an especially energetic employers' offensive against the miners is setting in at the present time. Work in this direction is inadequate. The coming mining struggles will undoubtedly be international in character. They must be carefully prepared and carried through.

Comrade Weissmann (U.S.A.):

The American workers are standing ready to fight under the leadership of the revolutionary trade unions. But we ourselves are still insufficiently prepared. The success on 6th March came as a surprise even to us. The proper development of our work has been hindered by opportunist errors, which must be determinedly combated in the future.

Comrade Roja (Mexico):

Mexico is now in the midst of a severe crisis. Out of a population of 15 millions there are 600 000 unemployed, and this reduces the standard of living of the whole working class. Under such circumstances the radicalisation of the workers of Mexico is comprehensible, and is going forward in opposition to the traitorous activities of the social Fascists and their allies the anarchists.

A representative of Chinese Youth stated that in the Chinese light industry 64 per cent of all workers are juveniles. The low wages and long working hours are arousing the revolutionary spirit. In many strikes the young workers have been the driving power. Youth is the coming army. Therefore the greatest attention must be devoted to work amongst the youth of the colonial and semi-colonial countries.

Comrade Voss (Norway):

Norway is striding rapidly forward to Fascism. A peasants' march on Oslo, on the pattern of the other Fascist countries, is already being spoken of. This Fascisation in Norway is closely bound up with the crisis arising from the reduced wages and worsened standard of living. The growing radicalisation of the working masses finds expression in numerous strikes, in which a revision of the tariff agreements in the direction of a rise in wages is demanded.

A Japanese woman delegate

stated: The Japanese women workers are organised but weakly. Scarcely ten thousands women are organised in the Right trade unions. This facilitates the extreme exploitation of the Japanese women by the employers. Their wages are frightfully low, and they live under miserable conditions in the factory buildings, under prison regime. Up to the present the international revolutionary trade union movement has done too little towards reaching and organising these women. International reformism is endeavouring to strike root in Japan.

Comrade Galbreight (New Zealand):

The world crisis has reached New Zealand. The bourgeoisie seek a way of escape in an offensive against the working class. New Zealand's main product is wool. Therefore the main attacks are upon the sheep-shearers' wages. New Zealand is the first country in which a complicated legislation on arbitration has been introduced in the interests of the bourgeoisie. The reformist trade unions are one with the bourgeois State. A strike becomes an illegal action against the State. It is our task to fight the arbitration system, and to organise the unemployed, and to strengthen our organisation.

Comrade Marenmarsch (Nigeria):

The home of the Negro is Africa, but there are Negroes in every part of the world. Comrade Losovsky referred to the organisation of the Negro workers as an urgent question. It is a difficult question, and one hitherto accorded too little attention by the revolutionary trade unions. Only unity can help us. The Negro Congress in London was prohibited by MacDonald. The white workers made no protest. This just suits the capitalists, who wish for disunity between white and black. But here in this hall we see the representatives of all countries, all nations, all races, white, black, yellow, and others.

Comrade Navodny (Austria)

declared himself in agreement with Comrade Losovsky's theses and report. The speakers stated that though a social-democratic workman, he was elected as delegate to the V. R. I. L. U. Congress. The trade union bureaucrats threatened him with expulsion should he go to Moscow. The social-democrats and reformists, by their policy of strike suppression and fawning on the bourgeoisie, have smoothed the path of Fascism into the works and factories. The trade union opposition has not yet succeeded in gaining the leadership, but its influence is growing.

A Chinese woman delegate,

who had worked in a silk factory from nine years of age, described the wretched conditions suffered by the Chinese working women. The Chinese woman is a slave and a chattel, of her employers and of her relations. Her miserable situation has, however, now roused her to join the workers of China in active participation in the economic and political strikes and demonstrations. Especially after 30th May 1929, when the revolutionary movement began to rise again in China, the Chinese women have shown the greatest heroism.

Comrade Sharkey (Australia):

Australia too has been seized by the world crisis, and we have 300,000 unemployed. In Australia we have a "Labour Government" which carries on an offensive against the standard of living of the workers. Rationalisation in the interests of the capitalists is ruthlessly introduced by the government. The Australian trade unions work hand in hand with the government. The Minority Movement is still somewhat weak in the Australian trade unions, but its activities are not without effect.

Moscow, 20th August.

At the evening session on 19th August the following speakers took part in the discussion:

Comrade Gallinat:

The struggles in Mansfeld and in the Ruhr district are a striking proof of the rightness of the method of leading the struggle and organising fighting committees on the basis of a broad united front from below. It is of the outmost importance that the work of such fighting committees be well prepared beforehand. In Mansfeld, where this was done, the committee was well able to cope with its task. In Duisburg, where the preparations were inadequate, these fighting committees were mostly stillborn.

Comrade Allan (Great Britain),

the representative of the independent revolutionary miners' trade union of Scotland, stated that the result of the capitalist rationalisation and the offensive against the standard of living

of the workers is the ever increasing discontent of the miners. We must place ourselves at the head of the discontented, and organise the repulse of the capitalist advance. To accomplish this we must transfer our chief efforts to the mines and iron-works. We must win one mine after another, one works after another. We must combat as false the under-estimation of the struggle of the separate undertakings and even departments. Some of our comrades are of the opinion that we have only to devote attention to great mass actions. This is entirely wrong. We must learn to conduct every strike, even the smallest. Only by taking into account the needs and interests of the smallest workshops can we gain the confidence of the workers. We must fight the social Fascists in the works and factories.

Comrade Urso (Paraguay)

pointed out that the first labour organisation formed in Paraguay was a relief fund founded in 1896. This developed later into the trade union. We are fighting for improved conditions of life, and the day is not far distant when Paraguay will send its proletariat to join the ranks of the international revolutionary proletariat. We have always been isolated from the international movement, hence our errors. The position of the workers in Paraguay is extremely difficult. The peasants are subject to feudal exploitation. The workers in the tea plantations are slaves, and the wages of all workers do not suffice for the most elementary needs. We appeal to the international proletariat to aid us in our struggle.

Comrade Little (U.S.A.),

speaking on behalf of the revolutionary youth of his country described the effect of the great economic crisis upon the young people. The working youth of the United States join the adults in the struggle against the capitalist offensive. Youth goes even further, and organise strikes when the adults will not.

Comrade Germanov (W.I.R.):

The W.I.R. is an organisation which has set itself the aim of coming to the aid of every suffering worker. The W.I.R. helps the workers during the labour struggles, it aids the unemployed, etc. I may say that I have never seen so much want and misery as at present, nor such fighting determination and heroism on the part of the proletariat. The only party and the only trade unions helping these heroic proletarian efforts are the Communist Party and the revolutionary trade unions. The speaker appealed for support for the W.I.R., which helps the workers on every front of their struggle against their foes.

Moscow, 20th August 1930.

A Corean delegate:

In Corean Japanese imperialism rules; it has seized upon every key position, and squeezes enormous profits out of the Corean proletariat. Hence the economic crisis in Japan has affected Corean. In the towns of Soeul and Pejan alone 1500 undertakings are temporarily or permanently closed down. The number of unemployed exceeds 200,000. More and more workers emigrate. In every branch of industry the working day is lengthened and the wages reduced. There is a steady increase of suicide among the Corean workers.

The position of the working women and children is especially wretched, for these are ruthlessly exploited. An extensive strike movement has commenced. Since the general strike in Gensano and the heroic textile workers strike at Fusan there have been 50 other strikes. The Corean Labour Federation is, however, not yet able to take over the leadership of this movement, for it is not built up on the industrial principle, and does not combine sufficient proletarian elements. The leading role is played by radical petty bourgeois intellectuals, who have recently in many cases gone over to the side of the reformists. The Federation is ready for anything, and is only anxious to ensure its legal existence. Therefore it does not venture to come into conflict with the authorities. It does not even combat the "workers" unions formed by the police, though these still hold a firm position among the Corean workers. All these deficiencies must be energetically combated. The

Corean Federation will only become a capable mass fighting organ if the R. I. L. U. and its Sections aid the Corean trade union movement.

A delegate from Indochina :

In Indochina the revolutionary movement is growing, and is leading to bloody strike struggles between the workers and the colonial powers. The latest events in Indochina, the brutal repression of the movement by French imperialism, the shooting down of many Indo Chinese revolutionists, are still fresh in our memories.

The revolutionary trade union movement of Indo China is still very weak. We do not yet control this movement and can boast of no success. And yet we count ourselves to the great community of the fighting revolutionary proletariat, and will join the revolutionary struggle being carried on in every part of the world. We shall our utmost to stride forward to the world revolution under the banner of Lenin.

An Indonesian representative :

The present Congress is a proof that the revolutionary movement of the proletariat is really international. The delegates to our Congress are the real representative of the broad masses of the oppressed and exploited workers.

An important question is the extremely inadequate connection between the revolutionary trade union movement in the European and colonial countries. The revolutionary trade union movement has developed more broadly in the colonial and semi-colonial countries than in many countries of Europe. Means and ways must be found to bring about closer contact between the European and colonial revolutionary trade union movements. The question of the revolutionary trade union opposition is of leading importance. Wherever possible, we must go forward from the revolutionary opposition to the creation of independent Red unions.
