

Discussion on the Report of Comrade Losovsky.

(Continued.)

Comrade Lis (Leningrad):

The Soviet proletariat has issued its fighting slogan: The Five-Year Plan in four years! You must take the power into your hands countries, and form workers' and peasants' councils. In doing this you must profit by the experience gained by the Russian workers in their struggle against Tzarism. You must study this experience and apply the results to your work. Your most important work is the winning over of the masses.

On behalf of the **International Red Aid**, the woman comrade **Stassova** greeted the Congress:

The III. Congress of the R. I. L. U. devoted special attention to the I. R. A. in a special resolution pointing out that the I. R. A. is one of the most important weapons of the revolutionary labour movement. The IV. Congress of the R. I. L. U. passed a resolution putting even greater stress on the importance of the I. R. A. for the labour movement, and recommended all its sections to ensure the closest contact with the organisations of the I. R. A.

The I. R. A. came into being in November 1922 on the initiative of the Society of the old Bolsheviks. The I. R. A. possesses 52 organisations, 27 of which are legal and 25 illegal. In the capitalist countries there are 29 Sections, 17 legal and 12 illegal; in the colonial countries 22 Sections, 9 legal and 13 illegal. These sections count 8,450,766 members—6,053,299 individual and 2,397,467 collective members. Of the non-individual members 4,841,688 fall to the Soviet Union, 1,211,616 to the other countries. Collective members are the trade unions, parties, co-operatives, sport organisations, freethinkers societies, etc.

During the last five years, from 1925 to 1930, 619,979 champions of the cause of the proletariat have been murdered, 228,861 injured, 555,819 arrested. 50,711 executed, and 70,577 sentenced to various punishments. To this vast army of the victims of capitalist terror we must add the many political refugees. Between 1923 and 1930 the I. R. A. expended 25,970,130 marks in aid of political prisoners and their relations, for legal help, for children's homes, and for the relief of political emigres. The I. R. A. organised the defence in the great political trials of Sacco and Vanzetti, Rakosi, Szanto, Vadi, in the trial of the Meerut prisoners, in the proceedings against the C. C. of the C. P. of Italy, the trial of the "52" in Bulgaria, of the Gastonia prisoners, the members of the White Russian Hromada in Poland, etc. etc.

Comrade Stassova called upon all delegates to spread the influence of the I. R. A. to the utmost of their power, and to aid it to consolidate its organisations all over the world.

Comrade Emmerich (Germany):

In Germany the Brandler group made a sharp attack upon the decisions of the IV. Congress. Their attack was especially violent upon the theses on the Fascisation of the reformist trade unions. But precisely these theses have been fully confirmed in the period since the IV. Congress. The liquidators so anxious to liquidate us have liquidated themselves. They are now a perfectly bankrupt group of generals without soldiers.

What are the hampering factors in our revolutionary trade union work in Germany? The following are the essential ones: In the first place there are many workers, who see the Fascisation and anti-labour policy of the reformist trade union apparatus, and conclude that it is of no use to continue to work in the reformist organisations. In the second place, our revolutionary fractional work has an inadequate political content. In the third place, our ranks are permeated by trade union legalism. In the fourth place we have the "Left" sectarian deviations. And fifthly we must admit an insufficient organisational system of reaching all adherents of the revolutionary trade union opposition in the works and factories. A really firmly established leadership of the revolutionary trade union opposition is lacking.

Comrade Emmerich brought forward a number of facts showing that the work of the RILU. in the reformist unions has been inadequate. We shall have to combat with Leninist severity, on the basis of the resolutions of the V. Congress, all deviations of an opportunist and sectarian nature. Despite all faults and shortcomings, we can, however, state that during the past years we have had much success, both in political and organisational regards. The balance drawn of the competition between the revolutionary trade union opposition and the Central Council of the Russian Trade Unions proves this. We fulfilled the competition to 75 per cent. We are not yet satisfied with the result, and shall work energetically for the attainment and outstripping of the goal set. Amsterdam is a rampart of counter-revolution. In all probability the decisive battle between Amsterdam and the RILU. will be fought in Germany. We are arming to defeat both reformism and capitalism. We will and must conquer all the foes of the proletariat, and we shall conquer them.

Comrade Dahlem (Germany):

The policy of the German bourgeoisie, aiming at thrusting onto the workers the burdens of the crisis and the Young plan, encounters the growing resistance of the working class. The latest strike conflicts in Germany have been political in character, and bear witness to the rightness of the slogan "class against class". The revolutionary united front from

below is forming against the united bloc of the employers, the government, the social Fascists, and the Fascists.

In Germany we must develop the revolutionary trade union opposition with the greatest energy and firmness, aided by the experience gained in these conflicts, and on the basis of oppositional groups in the works and factories. We must admit that our inner trade union work stagnates, mostly as result of sectarian theories and deviations, whose representative in Germany has been Comrade Merker. The trade union opposition must correct these errors.

Great possibilities for successful work exist in the trade unions. This has again been proved by the Mansfeld strike. The resolution on Comrade Losovsky's report states that the slogan "Join the trade unions" must be abandoned. As a matter of fact such a slogan has not existed among us in actual practice for more than two and a half years. Were such a formulation to be retained in the resolution, it might awaken the impression — especially in view of the strong anti-trade union tendencies among many of the workers — that they need no longer be members of the reformist trade unions. We should rather issue such positive slogans as: "Workers, join the ranks of the revolutionary trade union opposition!"

Comrade Dahlem further welcomed Comrade Anzelovitch's speech (Soviet Union), which pointed out that under Lenin's leadership the Bolsheviks worked in the Subatov police trade unions, in order to win over the masses of the workers. The experience gained by the trade unions of the Soviet Union with regard to work in the, reactionary trade unions must be made use of by the other sections of the RILU., in order that these may learn to do efficient work in the reactionary trade unions.

In conclusion Comrade Dahlem stressed the necessity of the internationalisation of the work of the RILU. The greater the internationalism in our ranks, the more speedy the victory of the working class.

Comrade Agrews (England):

dealt with the question of winning the masses. The speaker pointed out the necessity of a clearly defined line, easily made comprehensible to the workers in plain words. Work among the masses must deal with the concrete questions of the day. In Great Britain, for instance, a speech has been published, by the Home Secretary, Clynes, in which this "labour minister" preaches capitalist rationalisation and the re-establishment of capitalism at the expense of the workers. For the textile workers this is an especially urgent question, and we must build up our agitational, organisational, and enlightening work in this branch of industry. At the same time it is necessary to strengthen relations with the international labour movement. The workers of Lancashire must know, for instance, how the Indian and Chinese workers live and work, and how they struggle against the yoke of British capitalism. This will give them a clear idea of the tasks and methods of their struggle.

Comrade Jensen (Denmark):

Denmark is a country in which reformism holds powerful positions. The strong influence of the reformists is partly due to the inadequate work of the revolutionary trade union opposition. The workers are being forced into the struggle by the pressure of capitalist rationalisation and capitalist offensive. The opportunists at the head of the revolutionary trade union movement sabotaged the line laid down by the IV. RILU. Congress. The decisions of the IV. Congress and of the Strassburg Conference were not explained to the workers.

A delegate from the Philippines

described the wretched conditions of living suffered by the workers and peasants of the Philippine Islands. Out of 2 million workers 400,000 are out of work. Last year's struggles among the dock labourers and tobacco workers showed that the working masses are approaching our programme.

Comrade Gaivest (Argentine):

spoke on the influence of the revolutionary trade unions in the Argentine republic. The revolutionary wood workers' union

came into being as a result of a strike carried through by the revolutionary elements against the will of the reformist leaders of the old union. Under the leadership of the RILU., the Argentine revolutionary trade union movement will attain further successes.

Comrade Avdoyeva (Soviet Union)

spoke on the part played by working women in the economic struggles of the proletariat. The recent conflicts in Great Britain, France, Denmark, Germany, etc., have proved that women can fight heroically. The revolutionary trade union organisations do not yet lead the activities of the masses of the working women to a sufficient extent. The working women of all countries must hear of the achievements of the women of the Soviet Union. Three million women are members of the trade unions of the Soviet Union. In the Soviet Union there are many women in responsible positions. Trade union activities cannot be designated as satisfactory unless including energetic work among the women. Hence this question must be taken up in all countries.

A representative from the United States

reported on the revolutionary trade union movement in the Southern States. A great achievement is the united front of white and coloured workers in the economic struggles of the South. In view of the fresh attack of capital on the working class, great conflicts are impending. The revolutionary trade union movement in the Southern States must prepare carefully for these conflicts.

A representative of the Chinese seamen,

enthusiastically greeted, stated: We know that in the Soviet Union the rationalisation is bringing about a reduction of the costs of production of the most important articles of consumption, the position of the working class is improving, wages are rising, working hours are being shortened, and social insurance extended. In the capitalist countries, especially in the colonies and semi-colonies, the results of capitalist rationalisation are very different. The wages of the Chinese seamen have fallen by 18 per cent, the working hours have been increased to 12 or 14, the intensity of labour increased. The rising prices press the real wages ever lower. The price of rice has risen by 80 per cent, 40 per cent of the Chinese seamen are out of work, and in China there is no unemployed or sick insurance. The seamen are carrying on an energetic struggle against the existing regime. In China numerous meetings have been held under the slogan of the defence of the Soviet Union. When the events on the Chinese Eastern Railway began, a demonstration took place in Hongkong on the initiative of the seamen, participated in by the workers of other branches of industry. At one of these meetings the seamen expressed the desire to volunteer for the Red Army. We are all strengthening the struggle against reformism and the Kuomintang. The Council of the Red Unions of China comprises a number of local groups in Shanghai, Hongkong, Canton, Singapore, Tientsin, and other important ports.

A representative of the Negro workers, Comrade Bell,

stated that decided battle must be given to white chauvinism in the ranks of the revolutionary trade union movement, and the Negro workers admitted to the revolutionary unions, in order that these may fight side by side with their white brothers in the victorious struggle against capitalism.

Comrade Devaux (France)

reported on the strike in Belfort, and related how she, as non-party and unorganised working woman, had become convinced during this strike that her place, and the place of all working women fighting against capital, is in the ranks of the revolutionary unions.

Moscow, 21st August 1930.

An Indian worker,

heartily received, brought warm greetings from the workers of India to the V. Congress and the workers of the Soviet Union. He stated that whilst the

American workers demonstrated their sympathy for the Indian workers, the comrades of the Minority movement have helped them more by words than deeds. We must carry on a concrete struggle, for if we overthrow imperialism in India, we thereby help to transform Great Britain into a Soviet country. The V. Congress of the RILU must awaken an echo not only in the Soviet Union, but all over the world. The overthrow of imperialism in India is a struggle for the overthrow of imperialism all over the globe.

A Latvian delegate

reported on the bourgeois Terror raging in Latvia. In 1928 the government disbanded 19 revolutionary associations. We have however, gathered these together again, and are keeping up our courage. We are threatened by a Fascist coup like that in Finland. We are preparing the counter offensive, and hope for the help of the world proletariat.

Comrade Wedrow (Canada):

The workers in Canada have very hard lives, especially the working women. I have seen how the women workers in the Soviet Union live. Whilst in Canada wages are being reduced by 10 per cent, in the Soviet Union they are rising steadily, and unemployment has almost vanished. I have now become fully convinced that there is no other way for us but to fight for the final victory of the workers under the leadership of the RILU.

Comrade Chalut (France)

delegate sent by the metal workers of the Paris district and the workers of the Citroen Factory, described the organisational weaknesses of his union, which does not always express the interests of the workers or win over the workers. The workers frequently act independently. In the struggle against the new insurance law the right demands have not always been advanced, or the meaning of the wage deductions made clear. The workers are awakening again. On 1st August, in spite of the weakness of the union, most of the Citroen factory workers stopped work and demonstrated in the streets.

Comrade Sverma (Czechoslovakia)

discussed the question of the lack of progress of the Red unions in Czechoslovakia. He attributed this to the Ghent system, which sows dissension between the organised and the unorganised workers. Unemployed benefit and high prices bonus are paid only to the organised. Had we been able to utilise the radicalisation of the masses, and understood how to organise the unemployed in a common struggle with the workers, we should have overcome the difficulties. The glass workers' and textile workers' strikes were insufficiently prepared, and were isolated. Mass work in the works and factories must be more energetic.

Comrade Auer (Germany)

spoke on the extent and the significance of the monopoly of the reformist trade unions in the conclusion of wage and working hours agreements. The monopoly of the reformists has been brought about by the deceptive ideology which puts faith in tariffs, and which discredits any strike not sanctioned by the reformists. We call upon the proletariat to defend its sole possession, its labour, for itself, and to elect its own fighting leaders. Only in the Soviet Union does the proletariat enjoy to the full the values which it creates.

A representative of the Japanese youth

described the frightful exploitation and low wages of the Japanese factory workers, two thirds of whom are juvenile workers. The Left unions do not accord sufficient attention to work among the youth. The young workers are actively revolutionary. The reformist leaders prevent in every possible way the demonstrations and struggles of the young workers. The revolutionary workers' union has undertaken the organisation of a youth section, but

very unskillfully. The special demands of the youth have not been taken into account. The Youth Secretariat of the R. I. L. U. last two years have been distinguished by strike struggles, must devote greater attention to the East. Only then will it be possible to win over the masses of the young workers for the revolutionary united front.

A representative from Persia

stated that Persia is considered an economically and politically backward country. In Persia there are about 500,000 workers, of whom 182,000 are employed in the carpet industry, 45,000 in the naphtha industry, etc. The last two years have been distinguished by strike struggles. In 1929 the workers of the oilfields went on strike. The arrest of the strikers was replied to by the workers by a mighty protest demonstration attended by nearly 40,000 persons. The management was forced to make certain concessions. The next strike in the oil district affected 20,000 persons, and could only be suppressed by military force. In the same years the railmen went on strike in Masanderan. The Red trade unions played a leading role in this strike, and therefore reaction attacked them. The Red unions were prohibited, and forced to work illegally. In spite of the difficulties of illegality, the Red unions continue to lead the labour movement. In the future we must maintain closer contact with the R. I. L. U., and work under its guidance.

Comrade Lapoume (France):

The danger of an imperialist war against the Soviet Union was never so great as at present: the many "peace" conferences, etc. only serve to bring about a better united front of the imperialists against the Soviet Union. France plays a very active part in this anti-Soviet campaign. It is an open secret that the Fascising of Rumania is the work of French imperialism. Under pressure from France, and with its financial aid, Poland has built a new harbour. Czechoslovakia is preparing to supply the countries on the frontiers of the Soviet Union with war material. Thus French imperialism seeks to push forward its outposts to the borders of the Soviet Union. At home, too, the French imperialists seek to influence public opinion by slanders against the Soviet Union. The Unitary Trade Unions have not yet devoted adequate attention to the struggle against the war danger and the attack on the Soviet Union. Anti-military work is one of our most important tasks.

Comrade Tunnel (Sweden):

The whole front of the bourgeoisie maintained that Swedish capitalism was stabilised, and possessed enough power to resist the world economic crisis. Yet the crisis has overtaken it. In Sweden there are hundreds of thousands of unemployed, mostly young people, receiving no support. The reformist trade union bureaucrats are still fairly strong, and supported by the bourgeoisie. The Finnish revolutionary refugees were not permitted to enter Sweden, but the Swedish bourgeoisie welcomed with open arms the Amsterdam representatives attending the Stockholm Congress. The speaker referred further to capitalist rationalisation and its effects, and described the struggle of the revolutionary opposition against the renegades. The revolutionary trade union opposition in Sweden must be built up in the midst of struggle against the reformist trade union bureaucrats, and the opportunist Right and "Left" deviations.

A delegate from Rumania

stated that the steadily intensifying crisis, whose results are thrust upon the working class by the ruling class, is radicalising the masses in Rumania. Spontaneous strikes are becoming frequent, even among the peasantry. The opportunist leaders of the Unitary Trade Unions have committed many and grave errors. The delegation of the Unitary Trade Unions of Rumania approves the report and theses submitted by Comrade Losovsky. The delegation is fully convinced that the Unitary Trade Unions of Rumania, with the help of the R. I. L. U., will be successful in transforming their organisations into mass organisations of the working class.