

Discussion on the Report of Comrade Losovsky.

Comrade Grandel (France)

dealt with the deficient activities of the CGTU. The realisation of the united front from below in actual practice is frequently unclear even to the leading comrades of the CGTU, to say nothing of the sub-organisations. This question has been tackled too theoretically. The speaker drew attention to a number of errors which have been committed in this direction during the recent strikes. There has been too little work of enlightenment among the masses, and that often too late, after a strike was over. There exists even a certain tendency to underestimate the fighting committees. The trade unionists must be definitely instructed as to the right methods of forming fighting committees. We must go to the masses, and carry out the right line of the R.I.L.U. in actual practice. It has frequently occurred that the leading comrades have not known how to carry out the line of the R.I.L.U., therefore the question of properly trained cadres is of paramount importance for the C.G.T.U. The speaker expressed his conviction that the C.G.T.U., with the aid of the R.I.L.U. and of its own active elements, will be able, by energetic effort, to make good the errors committed.

Comrade Walsh (Great Britain)

pointed out the lack of efficiency of the Minority Movement. In the textile workers strike numerous errors were made. In many cases the importance of strike committees was under-estimated. We have, however, learnt much from these struggles. It has been another grave error that we have not carried on the work of enlightenment energetically enough in the reformist unions. We can, however, report some success. In Bradford our work was carried on during the strike by a small group of active functionaries, but in a very short time great success was attained. We have shown the workers that we are capable of leading the struggles successfully. It is a great advance in itself that the workers of Great Britain have seen that they can fight without and against the reformist unions.

Comrade Sen Katayama,

greeted with tumultuous applause, resumed the discussion at the evening session. In his speech he dealt with the weaknesses and faults of the revolutionary trade union movement in Japan. In 1926 the trade unions of a left tendency were disbanded by order of the government and the Communist Party prohibited. Since this time the Left trade unions have

not yet adequately reorganised their activities. They have many weak points, especially the following: Lack of a firm basis in the works and factories, slight influence possessed by the unions, inability to prepare for labour struggles, and lack of international solidarity. It must, however, be recorded in favour of these unions that they have overcome the Right and "Left" deviations, and are now able to lead the struggles of the working class. The most important task of the Pacific Secretariat, and especially of the Japanese unions, is the struggle against the war danger in the Pacific Ocean. Here war against the Soviet Union is being prepared, here the imperialists are most energetic in their armaments for intervention in China. In order to prevent this war, we must greatly intensify our activities in the undertakings of heavy industry, especially among the metal, chemical, and transport workers. For this purpose we must concentrate all our forces on the winning over of the majority of the working class.

Comrade Smollansky (U. S. S. R.):

The V. Congress of the R. I. L. U. will take its place in the history of the labour movement, as a turning point and transition from agitation and propaganda in the revolutionary trade union movement to the organisation of revolutionary struggles. But it does not suffice to issue the slogan of organisation, directives must be given for the organisation of the struggle for the winning of the masses. The speaker considered that the present discussion has dealt too much with past events, and too little with the prospects of our movement in the future. Nothing has been said of the tactics to be adopted after the return home from the V. Congress. We must admit that at the present time the revolutionary movement lags behind the possibilities created by the crisis. The upsurge of the revolutionary movement and the new strike wave sweeping across many countries, point out our path. The labour struggles of the moment are distinguished by affecting the branches of industry now suffering from the crisis, and by the advance of the workers from defence to attack. The strikes are generally spontaneous, and we do not take over the leadership till the struggle has begun. Often the action of the workers has taken us by surprise, and we have but seldom prepared it.

We are still very weak in the reformist trade unions. This neglect has serious consequences. Were our influence in the reformist trade unions greater, and could we win over the elements following the reformists, our struggle would be

much more successful. Some comrades under-estimate the great importance of work in the reformist unions. They consider it necessary to found independent unions everywhere and at once, as if the creation of new unions gave us the possibility, automatically, of influencing the masses. This standpoint is organisation fetishism, and must be resolutely combated.

A representative of the Italian trade unions

emphasised that in the theses submitted, but little attention is given to work among the rural proletariat, though this plays an important role in the revolutionary movement of today. In Italy our chief tasks are: The organisation of the masses, extended partial demands, politising of the struggles, united front in the works and factories struggle against the Fascists.

A representative of the trade unions of Cuba

stated that there is a strong revolutionary spirit among the workers of Cuba. There has been a powerful strike wave of late, despite employers' terrorist methods.

Comrade Szanto (R.L.L.U.)

criticised the weaknesses of the revolutionary trade union movement in the Balkans. In Bulgaria the slogan hitherto used has been: "compel the bureaucrats"; one consequence of this has been the throttling of the tobacco workers strike. In Rumania the revolutionary unions are too passive and lag behind the radicalised masses. The same applies to Yugoslavia. In Greece our comrades have committed the error of not raising the partial demands of the workers to a higher stage.

Comrade Orr (Australia)

relates the success of the leadership of the Minority movement in the great mining strike of 1929 to 1930.

Comrade Perez (Uruguay)

stated that the chief fault of the revolutionary unions of his country was their failure to devote sufficient attention to the daily interests of the workers.

Comrade Slaattelid (Norway):

The revolutionary trade union opposition has had much success of late in the chemical industry. For the coming war this industry is of paramount importance.

On 21st August the discussion was continued.

Comrade Germanette (R.L.L.U.)

stressed the importance of the emigrant question. There are about 22 million emigrants in the different countries, and it is the duty of the RILU to devote attention to their enlightenment.

A Polish delegate

described the position of the workers in Poland. There are 300,000 unemployed. The textile industry, the most important in Poland, is on the verge of ruin. The only factories which develop are war materials factories. The revolutionary trade union opposition must mobilise the masses against imperialist war danger.

Comrade Winestone (U.S.A.)

dealt with the unemployed question in America. There are 7 million. The white and coloured workers fight together under our banner. Comrade Kirkisch (USSR.) stigmatised the traitorous role of the Amsterdam International and called upon all revolutionary trade union organisations to profit by the experience gained by Russian Bolshevism in the conflicts with Tsarism. Comrade Canot (Columbia) stressed the importance of the organisation of the rural proletariat. The representative of the Chinese trade unions described the activities of the Red trade unions in Soviet China. These unions have over 64,000 members, extremely active in economic struggles, and aiding the Red Army in the defence of the Soviet districts. A Japanese delegate criticised the ultra-left leaders in the revolutionary trade union central of Japan (Hiogikai), whose policy is fatal to the Japanese proletariat. An opposition has, however, already been organised.

Comrade Watkins (England)

spoke on the danger of an imperialist attack on the Soviet Union. Comrade Qualk (Germany) advanced a number of practical suggestions for organisational work in the trade union opposition in Germany.

The representatives of the Stalingrad Tractor Works and of the Union of the Blind in the SU. gave addresses of welcome.

Comrade Deyey (USSR.)

greeted the Congress on behalf of the 15,000 workers distinguished by the Order of the Red Banner. Comrade Paud (Switzerland), greeted the Congress in the name of the revolutionary workers of French Switzerland.

Comrade Pavlov (YCL)

criticised the "Left", errors of revolutionary youth in the different countries. Comrade Fernandes (Cuba) spoke on behalf of the Negroes of the Latin American States. Comrade Yusefovitch (R.L.L.U.) insisted on the necessity of the systematic organisation of the turn towards the independent leadership of the economic struggles. Comrade Gandibleu (Belgium) criticised the weaknesses of the trade union opposition in his country. The Bulgarian delegate reported on the activities of the revolutionary unions in Bulgaria.

A representative of the

Italian youth

described the frightful exploitation of the young workers in Italy. In spite of all repression, the working youth of Italy is becoming the shock troop of the fighting Italian proletariat. Comrade van den Boom (Belgian) related the many tricks and artifices employed by the Belgian social Fascists against the radicalisation of the masses. Comrade Vitkovsky (R.L.L.U.) spoke on the internationalisation of economic struggles. Comrade Ratnursen (Iceland) described the situation of Icelandic industry. The Left wing of the trade union movement has just sprung into being, but has already had much success. A Negro delegate greeted the Congress on behalf of the Negro delegation, and reported on the results of the first Negro Workers' Congress. In conclusion the speaker proclaimed that the Negro workers all over the world would combat the attacks of the imperialists on the Soviet Union.

At the session held on 22nd August,

Comrade Heckert

addressed his concluding words to the Congress. The world economic crisis is spreading. It is necessary to transfer the greater part of our trade union work to the works and factories. The sole power fighting for the interests of the working class is the Communist Party and the trade union opposition led by the RILU.

Comrade Losovsky,

in his concluding speech, pointed out the extraordinary unanimity of the Congress in all political and organisational questions.

The Tasks of the Revolutionary Trade Union Movement in the Colonies.

At the session on 23rd August, the Chinese delegate

Comrade Huanping

reported in detail on the tasks of the revolutionary trade union movement in the colonial and semi-colonial countries. The world economic crisis has exercised an enormous influence here. The increased exploitation of the colonial workers has caused the rise of revolutionary trends among both workers and peasants. The upsurge of the labour movement is expressed in numerous political and economic struggles in India, Indo-China, and other countries.

In the discussion on Comrade Huanping's report.

Comrade Heller (R.I.L.U.)

described in detail the present stage of the revolutionary struggle in India. The English trade unions, with the aid of the reformist unions in India, seek to gain influence over the

workers of India. This lends the Labour Government a certain support in its efforts against the revolutionary struggle of the Indian proletariat. This must be counteracted by all-round support given to the Indian revolutionary trade union movement, whose influence may be observed in the recent strike period.

An Egyptian delegate

emphasised that the foes of the Egyptian proletariat are English imperialism and the national bourgeoisie. The workers are beginning to see through the treachery of the trade union bureaucrats, and the soil is prepared for our work.

On 24th August the discussion on the tasks of the revolutionary trade union movement in the colonial and semi-colonial was continued.

Comrade Tom Man (England)

stated that England has a population of 40 millions, whilst its ruling class is only 2 millions. This small stratum holds over 450 million workers in slavery in India, Africa, Canada, and Australia. In every Chinese port English warships lie ready, helping to exploit millions of Chinese workers. We must join the workers of the whole world in the determined and insistent struggle against British and every other imperialism.

An Indonesian delegate

pointed out the fact that the proletarian masses in the East Indies, in Indo-China, and in the Malay archipelago, are already awakening, and have taken up both political and economic struggles.

After addresses from the delegates from Corea, the United States, and Mongolia,

a Representative of the Pacific Secretariat

spoke. He stressed that the Amsterdam International is evidently determined to go to work energetically in the colonies. Therefore the mobilisation of the masses in the colonial and semi-colonial countries against the Amsterdammers must be one of our main tasks.

The Delegate from Palestine

stated that at the present time Palestine is the object of the predatory policy of English imperialism and of Zionism. The expropriation of the peasants and the impoverishment of the whole working population make rapid strides forward. In Palestine a workers' fraction has now been founded, affiliated to the R. I. L. U., having for object the combination of the struggle of the Arabian and Jewish workers against the English imperialists and against the Jewish and Arabian capitalists.

A representative

of the French Colonies in Algeria and Indo-China

reported on a number of strikes and risings aroused by the brutal exploitation. In Indo-China, for instance, the pitmen in the coal mines are compelled to work for 14 hours daily, and are subject to corporal punishment. The young trade union movement in Indo-China is inadequately supported by the revolutionary trade unions of France. The European comrades must be induced to lend more aid to the trade union movement in the colonial countries. The speaker considered that one of the essential faults of the proletarian struggle in the colonies is superficial propaganda work, and the inability of the trade union organisations to mobilise the workers for the struggle for their daily demands.

Comrade Adams (U. S. A.)

declared that the strengthening of the revolutionary trade union movement in the colonies calls urgently for a number of organisational measures, the furtherance of international education, and the creation of a revolutionary press.

Against the Trotskyist Attempts at Disruption in the International Revolutionary Trade Union Movement.

A special declaration made by the French and Chinese delegates at the V. Congress of the R. I. L. U. states that the

Trotskyists are playing the part of disorganisers of the revolutionary trade union movement in all countries, cloaking beneath their "Left" phrases their actual support of the bourgeoisie and its social Fascist agents. Many comrades fail to recognise the danger of the disruptive work of the Trotskyists. Trotskyism must be combated in France, China, and all countries where it has adherents in revolutionary organisations.

Close of the Congress.

Moscow, 31st August 1930.

The final session was opened by the report of the Credentials Commission, given by Comrade Germanetto:

The dry statistics of the Credentials Commission bear witness to the tremendous development of the international revolutionary trade union movement. 538 delegates took part in the V. Congress of the RILU: 299 with deciding and 239 with advisory votes. 60 countries were represented at the Congress, among these the Soviet Union with 141 delegates (60 with deciding votes), Germany with 41, France with 45, England with 29, Czechoslovakia with 26, the United States with 36, China with 24, Poland with 20, Italy with 11, Japan with 10, etc. Even such distant countries as South Africa, Australia, Brazil, Guatemala, Egypt, Ireland, Indochina, Corea, Mexico, Mongolia, New Zealand, Palestine, Peru, Paraguay, Persia, Salvador, Uruguay, Philippines, Chili, Ecuador, etc. were represented by delegates. One delegate was sent by East Africa, Bolivia, Gambia, Honduras, Cuba, Panama, Formosa, Luxemburg, etc.

At the VI. Congress there were only 421 delegates from 49 countries. At the I. Congress 41 countries were represented.

469 of the delegates are workers. 61 were at one time members of the Social Democratic Party. 235 have suffered under the repressive measures of reaction.

A comparison of the social composition of the V. RILU Congress with that of the last Congress of the Amsterdam International in Stockholm is interesting. Of the 130 delegates at the Stockholm Congress, representing 23 countries, not one represented a colony or a semi-colonial country, nor was there one representative from Latin America. The delegates were not elected; it was simply a meeting of the functionaries of the different national reformist trade union organisations. As compared with this, 464 delegates to the RILU Congress were elected in the works and factories, 38 delegates were elected by trade union organisations, and only 36 delegates were representatives of central trade union organisations.

The report of the credentials commission was passed amidst the applause of the Congress.

The resolution on the tasks of the revolutionary trade union movement, as also the resolutions on the reports of the Colonial Commission for organisational questions, the Chinese and Czechoslovakian Commissions, the Commission for the Negro question, and Commission for social insurance and Red Aid, were passed unanimously. The resolution on the admission of the Italian Federation of Labour into the R. I. L. U. was also adopted unanimously.

Greeted by enthusiastic ovations, a delegation of Bulgarian women tobacco workers presented the Congress with a red flag. The list of candidates for the new Central Council of 90 members, proposed on behalf of the Polish, German, and French delegations, was passed unanimously. Further, an International Women's Committee was elected, an International Youth Committee, and an International Negro Committee.

After Comrade Losovsky had delivered his concluding speech, the delegates proceeded into the street, singing the "International", in order to meet a great mass demonstration of the Moscow workers in honour of the V. RILU Congress. A platform was made of several motor lorries in front of the trade union buildings, from which the Congress delegates could speak. The members of the Congress Presidium, among them Comrades Losovsky, Tom Man, Heckert, and others took their places on the balcony of the trade union building. The whole square was decorated with red placards. The march past of working men and women, employees, students, scholars, and pioneers, across the whole breadth of the square lasted more than two hours.