Opening of the Congress of the R. I. L. U.

Moscow, 16th August 1930.

The V. Congress of the RILU. was opened in the great hall of the trade union buildings, in the presence of the representatives of 55 countries. The General Secretary of the RILU., Comrade Losovsky, held the opening speech, stating inter alia:

Today the RILU. meets under difficult international conditions. Ten years ago, when the Foundation stone of the RILU. was laid, the capitalist world was just passing from a period of artifical post-war prosperity into one of severest economic crisis. For a whole decade capitalism has been endeavouring to overcome this crisis, and has mobilised every force for this purpose, including social democracy. But when we draw the balance of the last decade, we see the capitalist world still shaken by the convulsions of the economic crisis. All the strivings of the bourgeoisie and of social democracy, all their talk about organised capitalism and American prosperity, have been in vain. The prognosis advanced by us ten years ago has proved right. Capitalism has developed on a downward curve, as proved by the extremely severe economic crisis of the moment. When the RILU. came into being, international reformism occupied a fairly powerful position in the working class of the capitalist countries. At that time the Amsterdam International counted 20 million members. And what do we see today? International reformism is forced to admit a considerably thinning of its ranks.

At that time the International of the reformists, according to their official figures, had 24 million members; now there are only 13 million left, and of these a considerable part are adherents of the RILU. — the revolutionary trade union oppositions in the reformists unions. During this time the RILU., in spite of the loss of the Italian and Spanish Labour Federations, has swelled to a powerful world organisation. The growth and strengthening of the RILU. has been accompanied in this decade by the advancement of the first country of the proletarian dictatorship, the Soviet Union, in which the RILU. first came into being. In the course of these ten years the SU. has proved to the whole world what the proletariat is capable of accomplishing when it develops its creative energy and creative power. It has accomplished this at a time when social democ-

cracy has possessed governmental power in many countries of Europe, but has led the working class to disastrous defeat, and thereby prepared the way for the Fascist dictatorship. In the course of these years international reformism has supported capitalism, whilst we have destroyed it.

Our movement still possesses many defects and weaknesses, and these we shall subject to searching self-criticism at our Congress. With the aid of self-criticism we can forge a powerful weapon with which to combat capitalism. The central question at this Congress is indubitably the organisation of the economic struggles of the proletariat. This question was already raised at the IV. Congress of the RILU., at the time when we issued the slogan of the independent Leadership of the economic struggles.

Our International is really international. Every worker and peasant, wherever he may take up the struggle — whether in China, India, or in the Philippines — and whatever the colour of his skin, is our ally and our brother, and we shall fight with him and for his interests. (Enthusiastic applause.)

After Comrade Losowsky's opening speech, a Presidium of 41 persons and a Secretariat of 10 were elected.

The V. Congress of the RILU. was greeted by Comrade Kuusinen as representative of the ECCI., Comrade Clares for Latin America, Comrade Gardi from the Pacific Secretariat, and Comrade Nossov on behalf of the Moscow trade unions. The Congress was further greeted by various workers delegations of the Soviet Union.