

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

By A. Losovsky.

The following is from an article written by Comrade Losovsky, and published in the Moscow press, on the occasion of the opening of the V. Congress of the R. I. L. U. Ed.

The Profintern Congress is a Congress of self-criticism and action. It is to be opened at an extremely complicated and critical time. Events are maturing in the world's economic and in the world's politics which will set the Comintern and the Profintern, and their sections, extremely difficult fighting tasks in the immediate future. The economic crisis continues to advance with irresistible force; fresh millions of unemployed will be thrown upon the streets. The struggle for markets is assuming increasingly relentless forms, armaments are growing, a fresh and mighty wave of revolution is rising in the most important colonies (China and India), the working class of the capitalist countries is passing forward to the counter offensive, and in the very weakest links of the capitalist organism (Poland and Roumania) the economic crisis is changing into a political crisis — the strongest ramparts are being shaken — all over the world. At the same time the Soviet Union continues its victorious advance, despite all prophecies to the contrary, and awakens the envy and hate of the whole capitalist social-Fascist world.

Under such circumstances it will be the task of the Profintern Congress to bring the subjective factor as far as possible to the level of the favourable objective conditions. We are no Amsterdam International, and therefore we state things as they are. In July of this year the assembled Amsterdamers contrived simply to pass over the economic crisis, the unemployment, the armament fever, and the colonial revolution. The lackeys of capital assembled in Stockholm did not venture to state the truth. Capitalism today has so little resemblance to organised capitalism, and the present crisis is such a glaring contradiction of all promises and prognoses, that it is better to preserve silence on the subject. The Amsterdamer Congress ignored the most important questions, and concentrated its attention on the question of the headquarters of its International Committee. And here the imperialist contradictions in the Amsterdam International became apparent, the antagonisms among the victors and the vanquished of the great war. We shall have no imperialist differences; we shall not quarrel over the headquarters of our International — we are ready for these to be in Berlin, Paris, London, or New York. At our Congress we shall discuss and struggle for the maintenance of a correct policy in the mass movement, for the tactics of the united front from below, for better means and methods of winning over the majority of the working class, for the independent leadership of the economic struggles. Every question of interest to the delegates will be debated at our Congress; we have nothing to hide. We do not suffer from the Amsterdam self-satisfaction and narrow-mindedness, and shall submit the Profintern and its sections to severe self-criticism. We shall examine into every strike and every campaign, and fearlessly expose our weak points — this is why the Congress meets, to draw the balance of the past and to form a correct estimate of the present, in order that the fighting methods for the future may be laid down. If this is not customary in the Amsterdam International, so much the worse for it.

Our Congress will have no connection with the League of Nations and its international bureau, and will therefore say everything with regard to the war danger, the revolutions in the colonial countries, and the attempts being made by the capitalist countries to surround the Soviet Union. Our Congress will not play hide and seek; it will state openly exactly what it thinks on the "labour governments" and their criminal role in throttling the economic and political struggles of the proletariat.

Nor will the Profintern Congress resemble the Amsterdam Congress in its composition. At Stockholm a part of Europe

was represented, at our Congress every continent, every country and race. Delegates have already arrived from Australia, China, Japan, the Philippines, Corea, Indo-China, India, Egypt, England, the United States, Argentina, Brazil, Uruguay, Paraguay, Chili, Peru, Ecuador, Mexico, Guatemala, Honduras, Salvador, Cuba, New Zealand, South Africa, Nigeria, Cameroon, Gambia usw. When we add the delegates of all the countries of Europe, it will be seen that this time it is a real international, not a European trust for the defence of capitalism, for combating the rising revolution. It is clear to every delegate, from whatever quarter of the globe he may come, that the working class is faced with ruthless class struggles; and from this standpoint we shall discuss and deal with every question.

Closer to the masses by means of the united front from below, combat against Right opportunism and "Left" sectarianism, actual leadership of the economic mass struggles of the proletariat, aid for the weakest groups of the world proletariat, closer contact of the colonial slaves with the working class of the capitalist countries and with the proletariat of the Soviet Union—these are the tasks of the V. Congress of the RILU. The ten years of struggle and experience behind the Profintern are the guarantee that the Congress will fulfil these tasks, and will be the real leader pointing out the way in the winning over of the majority of the working class, the overthrow of capital, and the establishment of the dictatorship of the proletariat.

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 artificial 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 reformist 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-