

## STRUGGLE AGAINST WHITE CHAUVINISM:

One of the questions which was sharply raised during the discussions of the Fifth Congress of the RILU was the necessity of struggling against white chauvinism. The Negro delegates from Africa, the United States and Latin America all pointed out that white chauvinism was one of the greatest obstacles which stood in the way of winning the Negro workers for the revolutionary movement; and because of this, it is absolutely necessary that we carry on relentless struggle to eradicate this bourgeois ideology from the ranks of the white workers.

The importance of this phase of our revolutionary work was also fittingly pointed out by Comrade Losovsky, the Secretary of the R.I.L.U., in the course of his speech on the discussion in the main report to the Congress:

### Excerpt From Comrade Losovsky's Speech.

A very big problem at this Congress has been presented by the representatives of the Negro colonies and Negro workers of the world. Comrade Ford, in his joint report and other speakers as well, have told us that they are entitled to look with suspicion even upon the revolutionary trade union organisation, when it comes to the racial problem. I must state that, most unfortunately, comrade Ford is perfectly right. I could give you the latest sample of what it means, just fresh from the United States, a sample that is simply astounding for the revolutionary labour movement. In his last letter to us comrade Schmieles, president of the Trade Union Unity League tell us that during the Chicago unemployed workers convention all the delegates had their dinners in a cooperative Lithuanian restaurant, which is run by Lithuanians belonging to the TUUL. Yet, the people running this cooperative were strongly against the Negro delegates having dinner in their restaurant, the excuse being given that this would be likely to drive away customers. So what these "comrades" suggested was; "We will let the Negroes have the money, and they can go and eat wherever they want to". I hold that an incident like this is simply a crying disgrace and a blot upon the revolutionary labour movement (cheers). And members of revolutionary trade unions, or communists, or that type --- if there happen to be communists among them --- should be thrown out neck and crop. There is no place for them inside the TUUL. (Continued and loud applause).

Comrades, a single fact like this is sufficient, however, to back up the justifiable suspicions of our Negro comrades. But I want to ask you what sort of action our organisations take when they come up against facts of this kind. To write to Moscow means very little. What I am interested in is what was done, what has been done, in the United States to stigmatise white chauvinists of this kind? What have you done? After all, the struggle against white chauvinism is not a matter of our meeting together in congress once in two and a half years, passing resolutions unanimously, and then allowing you to take up a perfectly cold-blooded attitude to facts like these. That isn't fighting white chauvinism, that is masking condoning white chauvinism (cheers). The struggle against white chauvinism must mean that every member of our organisation who has shown himself to be a white chauvinist must be branded for what he is at meetings of the workers (cheers). What you have to do is to brandmark this sort of racial chauvinism, which is the plainest indication of bourgeois mentality in the heart of the working class that you can get. And these people have to be stigmatised both at meetings of the workers, in the press, and if necessary by means of a special campaign of open-air meetings on the subject.

I can quote you an incident of much the same kind which occurred at the Stalingrad Tractor Works, of which you are already aware. At that place an American worker struck a Negro workers. If the Soviet workers had looked upon this incident in the way people do too often in the United States they would have waited till the next Trade Union Congress which is due to meet in a year's time, and would there have passed a special resolution. But that is not the way the Soviet workers go about it; they did not wait till their Congress was due to meet (cheers). When this incident

became known in the press, in all the factories of cities like Moscow, Leningrad, Charkov and others and plants in places as wide apart as the Urals, and the Far East the workers met and passed protest resolutions. They elected special delegates which they sent to Stalingrad in the capacity of public prosecutors against the hooligan in question (cheers). That is what you call fighting white chauvinism, this is what is meant by really mobilising the workers, and rapping every rowdy over the knuckles who takes it into his head to show his racial "superiority" over Negro workers. I think our comrades from South Africa, the USA, Latin America, and the Antilles could learn something from the Soviet workers (applause) in this line also --- I don't happen to be speaking of other lines of work at the moment --- and realise the way to go about it, to take action rapidly, in organised fashion, and with a real punch behind it, for the purpose of at once putting our foot down upon every sign of deviation from class policy; then you have the strength of the Soviet working class.

Tremendous political importance attaches to the question of organizing the Negro workers. It is only out-and-out bureaucrats who cannot realise this, and only people cherishing nothing but bourgeois prejudices, who cannot see that the twelve million Negroes in the United States represent a huge potential revolutionary force of the immediate future. Only people understanding nothing of the class struggle or of the revolutionary movement can fail to realise that the revolt of the Black Continent against imperialism is only beginning, and that our job is to make use of this huge amount of combustible material, to make allies for ourselves of these vast masses seething with hatred against their oppressors, to draw them closer to ourselves, and to assist them with the vast amount of experience we have accumulated. We have to make fighting allies in the battles lying immediately ahead of these immense numbers of colonial slaves, these huge reservoirs of human materials, which the bourgeoisie and the corrupted workers look down upon from the heights of their white grandeur. That is our job! (cheers).

The RILU and its affiliated Sections must do everything they can to help in the further unification of the Negro workers to utilise and develop the labours of the conference which was held in Hamburg, and to transform the International Trade Union Committee of Negro Workers into an organisation with backing among the masses throughout the whole Black Continent, in the United States, in Latin America, and in the West Indies.

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