The World Crisis, Economic Struggles and the Tasks of the Revolutionary Trade Union Movement.

Report of Comrade Losovsky.

(Conclusion.)

VI. Tactical Conclusions.

Comrades, I shall now turn to the tactical conclusions we can draw from the analysis of the international situation, from our assessment of the correlation of forces between the classes and in the working class itself and from an appreciation of the position of our own organisations.

What are the tasks of the revolutionary trade union movement? Its historical mission is to prepare the working class for the overthrow of capitalism and to set up the Dictatorship of the proletariat.

I do not think we need revise the decisions of the Strassburg Conference or the decisions of the Sixth Session of the R. I. L. U. Central Council. We should endorse them and go further.

What are the practical tasks confronting us to-day. The tasks facing the international revolutionary trade union movement can be divided into three groups.

Under the first group we have all the questions relating to the organisation of the mass economic struggle. The second group includes the questions of strengthening and consolidating the revolutionary trade union movement, while under the third group we have the question of coordinating the economic struggle on an international scale. Only if all these problems are correctly solved will the ground be prepared for a counter-attack on the part of the working class. Only if we have a well-knit, strong and united organisation, only if we unite all our forces, and only by linking up good policy with good organisation shall we be able to make our counter-offensive really effective.

What are the concrete questions now on the order of the day? I shall try to formulate these questions as briefly as possible.

1. The Struggle for the Everyday Needs of the Workers. All our organisations must concentrate on catering for the everyday needs of the workers, must take up everything that concerns and agitates the workers, everything that affects the proletarian masses. This is no „neufralism", not a renunciation of politics, but only the skilful application of a real revolutionary policy to the concrete conditions. Questions of wages, hours, social-insurance, housing conditions, the position of the women workers and the young workers, the position of the emigrants, the questions of colonial labour and the thousand and one questions of labour-conditions in the factories are all matters which in their aggregate affect the everyday lives of the workers and which must be given first attention by our organisations.

We have seen time and again after a strike, won under our leaderhip how several unions went over to the reformists, we saw this occur in Belgium and in several of the Latin-American countries. It shows us that the workers judged things approximately this way: for a strike they, that is we, are the best people going, but as soon as the strike is over we had better return to the reforemists!

Let me say, comrades, at once, this is our fault. We apparently have not yet shown the workers that we are really able always to defend their everyday interests, and that every worker can always find a reply to all the questions interesting him in our organisations.

2. Don't Lag Behind, But Lead the Masses. We must struggle relentlessly from now on against any of our organisations lagging behind the pace at which the labour movement is progressing. This struggle must be developed in such a way as to get the cooperation of all the active forces of our organisations and all the active elements in the working class.

If we are really the foremost section of the international revolutionary trade union movement, we have no other alternative but to lead the movement. If we lag behind, how can we claim to be the foremost section? We could claim anything but this. Then, it seems clear that we must not drag along painfully behind the masses, but lead the mass movement, ascertain the mood of the workers, give expression to their feelings and to their dissatisfaction by formulating concrete, clear and simple demands, which can be readily understood and easily grasped by every working man and woman. Only it we do this shall we be abreast of events, only in this way shall we be able to really carry out the decisions we have all adopted time and again on giving a lead to the mass economic struggles.

3. The Building of Serious Leading Organs Elected by the Bulk of the Workers. There are comrades who ask: "If we begin to elect any leading organs, then we risk the danger of reformists being elected, and the reformists will betray the strike." True enough the reformists will undermine every strike. But do you think if we create a strike committee artificially, that we shall thereby improve the position of the strike? Not at all. Let the workers elect the strike committees they want. If we are in the minority, it is up to us to warn the workers that the policy of the reformist majority means retreat and defeat, but let this organ be really elected by all the workers, and in the process of the struggle, in the process of the class collisions, as the contradictions become more and more intensified, the workers will support that section of the strike committee which really express their militancy, which really embody all their demands and give a revolutionary lead to the struggle.

4. Most Serious Attention Must Be Given to the Organisation of the Unemployed. It is time we got a move on. We must finish once for all with bureaucratism and every attempt to cover up our inactivity with apologetic statements. Millions of unemployed are now walking the streets. Wherever the unemployed are to be found, there we must concentrate, there must be our organisations and our best forces. It is the millions of unemployed workers who are now bearing the brunt of the economic crisis. We must give expression to their dissatisfaction, we must organise this titanic force, for if we fail to do this, there will be fascist demagogues, who will eagerly make use of this discontent, will utilise the militant energy of the unemployed and use it against us. The organisation of the unemployed must be given first attention by the whole of the revolutionary trade union movement. We must organise the unemployed wherever they are concentrated, taking all steps to prevent the unemployed workers being isolated from those in employment. A firm alliance must be set up between the workers in employment and those out of work. If this is done the unemployed will no longer prove a dangerous factor in the struggle of the workers in employment, and only in this way will the unemployed together with the employed workers struggle for their common interests.

5. We Must Now Give Serious Consideration to the Wage Movements and Collective Agreements. In the revolutionary trade union movement there are two deviations on this question: some say: "It is our business to further our revolutionary propaganda, let the reformists attend to the wage agreements!" Others say: "Since the wages aggreement is simply a written statement of the existing correlation of forces, and since we can terminate the wage agreement at a favourable opportunity, we need not pay any attention to it; when the time is ripe we shall strike all the same. Let those who are interested in the subject take up the wages agreements." Both these points of view are absolutely wrong. As a rule the tariff agreements involve hundreds of thousands of workers. The wage movements should always be utilised to unmask the manoeuvres of the reformists in negotiating col-

lective agreements with the employers behind the backs of the workers. All the wage-campaigns, especially in countries like Great Britain and Germany, where extremely large sections of the working class are always involved, should be utilised to put forward our point of view in order to offset the views of the trade union bureaucracy. Accordingly, in those countries where we have revolutionary trade unions organised, we must get our unions to conclude short-term collective agreements, and this should be achieved not by talk, but by organising the masses and a stubborn fight. In those countries where there are no independent organisations, where there is only a minority movement or a trade union oppostion organised, we should set up **special wage committees** in the factories, whose work should be coordinated on a district scale and throughout the given industry, these committees to conclude wage agreements with the employers without the sanction of the reformist organisations. When, for example, the centralised unions of Germany or Britain, by means of some underhand manoeuvres, lower the living standards of the workers, we should urge the adoption of **Decentralised Wage Agreements,** to be concluded by the Wage Committees in the given districts, for the given group of enterprises, or for the whole industry. There must be no wage agreements behind the backs of the workers. We must conduct all our agitation, propaganda and organisational work so that all wage agreements concluded, without the knowledge of the workers will not be recognised by the workers, and only in this way will we get into direct touch with those sections of the workers who have not yet been drawn into the movement, that is with all those workers whose interests are affected by the given collective agreement. We must utilise the collective agreements campaign to strengthen our forces, to extend our influence, to build up wage committees, subsequently to coordinate the work of these wage committees, thus countering the reformist unions with our own organisations.

6. The Struggle Against Fascism Penetrating the Enterprises. The fascists have already got a footing in many enterprises, in Austria, Germany and several other countries. They are organising their own groups, their own nuclei, their own strongholds, and they have already started to build up their own trade unions. Many active workers, disillusioned by social-democratic policy are turning to the fascists. There are also workers, revolutionary in outlook, but little class-conscious who looking for some immediate action to be taken, join the fascist movement. Extremely serious attention must be given to this development, and we must systematically and unremittingly fight fascist demagogy, all the fascist methods of duping the workers, and come out against all the organisations the fascists are building up in the factories. In those cases where the fascists have managed to line up a section of the workers in their factory organisations, we should try to convince these workers: we must point to the results of fascist policy, and show them where fascism is leading the working class. We must start real organisational work to get all the backward workers to participate directly in the struggle against the employers, to get them to take up their proper place in the fight against the bourgeois State and all its institutions.

7. We Must Link Up the Struggle Against Fascism With Our Drive Against Social-Fascism. In fact, our fight against socialdemocracy, against the reformist unions and their leadership must be pushed forward more concretely than in the past. It will hardly do to keep on from morning till night branding them as social-fascists and fascists: we must point to concrete examples of the activities of the social democratic organisations and the reformist trade union bureaucracy to bring home to each worker exactly what the policy of social-fascism means. We should make less use in future of generalisations, and press forward our agitation and propaganda in a more concrete fashion. The best method of struggling against social-fascism is to build up the united front from below with the Workers still under social-fascist influence, to guarantee joint action in the struggle to improve the living standards of the working class. Today, when we see the economic crisis everywhere, when the social-facists are coming to terms with the employers regarding wage-cuts, and other conditions, today is the time when we must unmask their manoeuvres and break down social-fascist influence among the workers.

A very important place in our future activities must be to expose the "left" gestures of social-democracy and the reformist trade union bureaucracy, and unmask the specific role, the Left Amsterdamers are playing today, concealing and hiding as they are the crimes of the social-fascists.

8. We Must Really Get Down to the Organisation of Workers' Defence Corps and Pickets, for the continued intensification of the struggle will tend to bring the strikers more and more into collision with the fascist and social-fascist thugs. We should line up in the workers' defence corps not only R. I. L. U. adherents but all the workers who can and want to take part in the struggle, who want to defend the strikers, workers' headquarters, workers' homes, who want to fight against the raids of the police and the fascist and social-fascist bands. It is extremely important to get also the social-democratic workers, the Catholic workers and others to join the workers' defence corps, so that these corps will reflect all the views, the moods and the sentiment obtaining among the strikers. The backward sections of the workers must themselves experience and see how the bourgeois State, fascism and social-fascism smash the strike movement in order to lower the living standards of the working class, in order to bind the. workers hand and foot and leave them to the tender mercies of the employers. We have already got some experience in the organisation of workers' defence corps, but it is still very inadequate. So far we have done all too little in this sphere.

9. The Best Method of Winning Over the Masses Is the United Front From Below. In order to carry out effectively the concrete tasks I have referred to here, we must skilfully organise the United front from below. We have been talking about the united front for many years now, and we have adopted resolutions on this score one after the other, but it is a fact that in this sphere we continually meet either with a compromise on a question of principle—the right deviation—or we hear a lot of "left" phraseology like the statement that we cannot build up the united front with the social-democratic workers.

The **United front** is not a single act or statement. It is a method of working, a method of running our activities, a method that we must constantly apply, before strikes, during strikes and after strikes. The united front is a method of drawing the still backward workers into the struggle for the vital demands of the working class, a method to get new sections of the workers to take up their proper place in the class struggle. Therefore it would certainly be a mistake to regard the united front tactics as a casual form of struggle, to be used off-hand as occasion demands.

The united front is no compromise with the reformists on a question of principle, for the organisation of the united front from below presupposes an unrelenting struggle against social-democracy, reformism, the trade union bureaucracy and against all traitors to the working class. One cannot be contrasted with the other. The united front means that we must push forward the struggle against all the right tendencies, against any attempts to compromise with the reformist leaders.

10. The Consolidation of the Independent Revolutionary Unions, of which there is now a very considerable number, **Must become our Most Important Task.** Apart from the USSR. we have independent revolutionary unions in France, Czechoslovakia, Yugoslavia, Bulgaria, Rumania, Greece, Spain, Latvia, Finland, Estonia, China, Japan, the Philippines, Korea, Singapore, USA., Cuba, Mexico, Guatemala, Honduras, Brazil, Colombia, Chile, Ecuador, Peru, Uruguay, Paraguay, and so on.

In those countries where there are no general trade union centres, we have various individual revolutionary unions organised, the United Mine Workers of Scotland, the various unions in Portugal, several unions in Germany, and so on.

The consolidation and strengthening of the revolutionary unions certainly means that we are consolidating our forces both politically and organisationally, for we are bringing our ideology and our tactics in this way right down among the rank and file. Our unions are still weakly organised, and serious attention should be given in future to the recruiting of new members. In the countries I just enumerated there are millions upon millions of workers unorganised. In the USA. 90 per cent of the workers are unorganised. Take Latin America, where you have many millions of workers absolutely unorganised. Here you have the agricultural workers employed on the coffee, sugar, rubber and other plantations, who have

hardly been touched by our propaganda and agitation. In all these countries the numerical strength of the unions is extremely small, and our organisations are unable to get in touch with the masses and recruit these hundreds of thousands and millions of workers into our organisations. We have all observed the considerable fluctuation, the ebb and flow of the membership in our organisations. We have not yet learned how to keep the workers who come over to us in our organisation.

We must drastically overhaul the whole of our net-work of branches (locals) on the basis of the factories. We must utterly condemn any sign of defeatism and all those elements who, in face of the difficulties under which the revolutionary unions exist and function, are ready to retreat all along the line and liquidate these unions.

In all the countries I just mentioned we have reformist, Catholic, reactionary and many other kinds of organisations existing side by side with our own revolutionary unions. Our comrades do not pay any attention to the existence of parallel unions, although the importance of working in these organisations cannot be stressed too much. We must organise our own supporters in these organisations, and get the workers en masse to transfer to our trade union. We must do everything we can, in those countries where we have revolutionary trade union centres, to liquidate the other organisations, getting all the members of the reactionary unions to join our revolutionary organisations.

In several of the countries, where you have revolutionary trade unions organised and functioning, you will find all kinds of mutual aid societies, and other associations, with memberships running into millions. In France, for example, the membership of the mutual aid societies is placed at more than five millions, while some comrades claim that there are even seven million workers in these associations. I should like to know whether our RILU. supporters who are members of these associations and mix with the millions of workers in these mutual aid societies are doing anything at all?

We must really come to grips with the question of reconstructing our revolutionary unions, of verifying the concrete work that the leading and local organs are conducting and engage in practical day-to-day activities among the workers, wherever the masses are to be reached.

11. Strengthening the Illegal Revolutionary Unions. If our forces have proved too weak to keep on the surface, and the bourgeoisie with the social-democracy have managed to outlaw our organisations, this should not be a reasson by any means for pessimism, for a general panic, or a reason to suggest liquidation. We must strengthen our illegal organisations, develop their activities and take all steps ncessary to ensure their permanent contact wtih the masses. Of course, you cannot organise hundreds of thousands or millions of workers in illegal organisations. Such are the objective conditions that the membership of the illegal unions is bound to be small, but this does not mean that they cannot be mass organisations. The mass character of an illegal organisation is not measured by the size of its mebership, but by the contacts it has with the rank and file in the factories, by the degree of influence and organisation it has in the enterprises and how it leads and guides the workers' struggles. The illegal unions, which must develop their activities, must also give very special attention to the economic struggle, set up strike committees, promote the most active elements among the workers to leading positions in the movement, and utilise every legal and illegal loophole to further their work. In those countries where terror is rampant, you will find all kinds of labour societies. If such are non-existant, then we must form them, and they should include all kinds of societies, from sport clubs to cultural and educational organisations.

12. Serious Activities Must be Developed in the Reactionary Unions. The fundamental idea underlying our revolutionary tactics is to work every where wherever the workers are to be found. In some countries you will find millions of workers still organised in the reactionary unions, take Germany, for example, or Great Britain. We must say that during the last twelve or eighten months there has been a definite weakening of our work in the reactionary unions. We have lost a number of positions in these organisations in Germany and Great Britain, which was due not only to the persecution and intimidation of the reformists, who expelled militant workers, but also to our insufficient activity, our inability **to hold on tightly to any position we might have gained.** Miners' delegates are now being elected in Germany for the miners conference, and it is quite possible that the revolutionary trade union Opposition will not get a single delegate elected. Practically all our positions in the Berlin district metal workers, organisation have been lost. This is a serious danger to our RILU. supporters in these countries. There are millions of workers organised in the unions of Germany and Great Britain, and undoubtedly when we lose positions in these unions, wherever it may be, it means a victory for the reformists.

There are comrades who, instead of struggling and working in these organisations, are preoccupied with metaphysics, and say: either you work to build up the revolutionary opposition, or you work in the reactionary unions. We must work both in the reactionary unions and at the building up of the revolutionary opposition. These activities complement each other and form one whole; any division of this work can only lead to the weakening of our positions. We must unhesitatingly condemn the theory which lays it down that you must work among the unorganised because it is very hard to do anything in the unions. This is a poor philosophy indeed, comrades. If there are millions of workers in the reactionary unions, then all our RILU. supporters must work among them, and not set activities among the organised workers over against work among the unorganised. They must take all measures with a view to coordinating on efficient lines all our activities among the organised and unorganised workers no matter where they are, for a concentrated struggle against the reformist trade unions bureaucracy and social-fascism.

13. We Must Seriously Organise The Trade Union Opposition in These Countries Where There Are No Independent Revolutionary Unions. Take the National Minority Movement of Great Britain. I said already that the Minority Movement was a top-heavy movement, without any local organs, without a network of branches and without any real footing in the shops. How can you carry out any policy, apart from a policy on paper, if you have no footing in the factories. The trade unions opposition in Germany is organised far better and on a more extensive scale than in Britain. It has already entrenched itself in many important positions. There is no doubt it has made excellent progress since the Fourth RILU. Congress. But, comrades, more has to be done here than has been done in the past. Quite recently our German comrades adopted the very correct decision to organise Opposition groups in the factories. I would certainly like to ask our German comrades, what they think the functions of these opposition groups in the factories should be? Does it mean an occasional meeting over some important event, or will these groups function regularly as the factory nuclei of the trade unions opposition that will gather the workers together to discuss questions that vitally affect the interests of the workers? The only justification for the organisation of trade union Opposition groups in the shops will be if they become local Opposition nuclei, carrying on activities all the time, and if they will not merely confine themselves to outlining policies on paper and passing resolutions but will really get down to the everyday work of examining, discussing, and deciding the questions uppermost in the lives of the workers, and pursue a real revolutionary policy in the trade-union mass movements.

We should remember that it is only in the process of work that we shall be able to increase our support in the factories. There is no other way of extending our influence or recruiting new members to strengthen our organisations. In building up the trade union Opposition it is extremely important to reinforce all our local organsiations. We must say that even the Opposition of Germany, which is better organised, is still top-heavy in many respects, having only committees organised in many localities. The Opposition here, as it were, is not yet organised properly from the bottom up. A controversy was once started as to where we should begin, from the top or from the bottom? I think we should begin from both ends, but of course the chief thing is to have a basis, to have the organisation firmly rooted in the factories, the districts and throughout the given industry. After we have put in some serious preparatory work, we should keep track of

and register all our Opposition members and take steps to build up a solid financial foundation by introducing periodical and non-periodical payment of membership dues, etc.

We have yomrades who claim that we must frist of all build up the trade union opposition and olny afterwards will it be possible to lead the strike movment. This is a mistake, comrades. The Opposition must be built up in the process of the struggles, in the heat and stress of the fight, for otherwise the Opposition will never be built up, and will simply remain on paper. It must be said that our German comrades have certainly made considerable headway in this direction. Just look, for example, at the very remarkable strike that took place in Henningsdorf, the Mansfeld strike which lasted eight weeks, and the many other strikes led by the trade union opposition. We should remember that we had to face the reformist organisations, and if the trade union organisation retained its leadership of the movement for many weeks on end, this is certainly a big stride forward. I am of the opinion that the experience of our German comrades should serve as an exemple for our comrades in Great Britain and the other countries, where there are no independent revolutionary trade unions.

14. We Must Organise The Unorganised Workers, who comprise the bulk of the working class in the capitalist and colonial countries. If we take the labour movement throughout the world, we see that, in relation to the whole international proletariat, the percentage of organised is very small. But in the old capitalist countries we find that the percentage organised in some of the industries is very high. Look at the printers in Germany, Britain and elsewhere, or the workers in some of the other industries, where the percentage organised is as high as 90 per cent., in some industries being even higher. But in general we see that the great mass of the proletariat is for the most part unorganised.

What has been the outstanding development of the last two and a half years? The thing that strikes one is the remarkable activity of the unorganised workers, the militancy shown by the backward strata of the workers, the women workers and the young workers. This increased activity is, of course, not due to any psychological motives, but to those changes that took place in the production process during the last few years. Rationalisation has led to the increased employment of new sections of the working class—the unskilled workers, unorganised for the most part. Thanks to the increasingly large number of these workers employed in industry, the part they are playing in the class struggle has grown also. The revolutionary unions must definitely come out in defence of the interests of these unorganised workers. In the eyes of people like the trade union bureaucrats of the Amsterdam school, an unorganised worker is the same as a scab. But it is up to us to defend the interests of this great mass of unskilled and lowpaid workers with every means in our power. Wherever our revolutionary unions are functioning, we must line up the unorganised in our ranks. In those countries, like Britain or Australia, for example, where there are no revolutionary unions, we must draw the unorganised workers into the reformists unions, it is true, but in order to strengthen and build up the Minority Movement.

In those countries where you have a strong well-knit trade union Opposition, like in Germany, for instance, the slogan: "Join the reformist unions" is obviously no longer applicable. Instead of urging the workers to join the reformist unions, we must appeal to the unorganised workers to "Join the revolutionary trade union Opposition". This question has been solved in a concrete and practical way by our German comrades, who during the last two years have no longer been urging the slogan of "Join the reformist Unions". This move can only meet with our whole hearted support, and we can only endorse the measures adopted by our German comrades.

But if we do not tell the unorganised workers in a country like Germany to "join the reformist unions", we must make a resolute fight against attempts to interpret our point of view as meaning that we are urging the workers to leave the reformist organisations Nothing of the sort. They must remain in the unions, organise themselves, organise their own groups and organisations on a sound basis in order to put through our policy

15. We Must Re-Educate The Old Cadres and Train New ones. What is the weak side of the revolutionary unions? How do you explain the break down of the struggles during the last two-and-a half years? We must say quite candidly, that the question of our cadres is altogether unsatisfactory. How were the contingents of active workers, or rather, how are they built up in the revolutionary trade union movement? In many parts of the world a section of the leading cadres came over from the social democratic movement. In other cases they came from the Anarchists or the Anarcho-Syndicalists. Many of the leading elements have been through a revolutionary school. They really have a serious understanding of the revolutionary tactics of the trade union movement, and are making a real effort to apply them But we still have all kinds of socialdemocratic and anarchist survivals in our ranks, and it is now high time that we begin to take serious thought of new contingents of active workers for our movement.

You know that in the reformist trade unions the question of cadres of leading workers is solved very simply. Anyone who has not reached the age of 50 can only become a leader if he has managed to betray and disrupt several big strikes, and particularly if he has made a name for himself as a downright traitor to working-class interests. In Czechoslovakia there was an entire group, headed by Hais who was inculcating these traditions in our movement. We had these Hais senior and Hais junior, in fact, a whole dynasty of union officials.

We must draw on the working class for new forces. We must find these forces in the movements that are now developing in every part of the world. It is during the strike that you see the elements with initiative coming to the top, and it is precisely from these elements that we must draw our new cadres of active workers, and draw the young workers into the leading organs.

16. The Conditions for Building up New Unions. During the last two years the reformists have been pushing forward their discruptive policy to the utmost, fighting the revolutionary workers tooth and nail.

The revolutionary workers' movement comes out under the banner of trade union unity. What kind of unity? **On the basis of the Class Struggle!** We stand for unity in the struggle against the employers and the bourgeois State.

In view of the reformist policy of expelling individual workers and disaffiliating entire organisations, with their continual scabbing, we are now faced with the question of setting up new unions where they never existed before. There are two wrong view-points on this matter in the R.I.L.U. and in our organisations. Some comrades, who are alarmed when you even mention the words "New Union", say: "Under no circumstances must there be any new unions". This shows simply how eaten up they are with trade-union legalism, which is simply a recognition that the reformist unions are with us for all time, and that they are better than the revolutionary unions.

But some of us make the mistake of supporting the opposite extreme. There are comrades who think that new organisations are necessary and can be built up everywhere, no matter what the conditions may be. This is absolutely wrong, no matter how you regard it. If reformist policy makes it impossible for the revolutionary wing in the labour movement to work among the masses and if a refusal to organise new unions means a violation of our principles we, of course, will stand for the formation of new unions. We know that unity is not an end in itself, but only a means to an end: If we can promote working-class interests by splitting the trade unions organisations, we could hardly call ourselves revolutionaries if we failed to do so. Hence, we must definitely condemn any attempt both to organise new unions wholesale, irrespective of the conditions, as well as to deny wholesale the necessity of building up new unions if warranted by the objective conditions.

Now what should the conditions be to justify the organisation of new unions in those countries where such do not exist so far? If the reformists make it impossible for the revolutionary wing of the labour movement to continue their activities among the masses, if the reformists continue to expel entire groups of revolutionary workers and thus try to isolate them from the masses, and if the bulk of the workers in the given industry or the given union are for the organisation of a new union, and want to have no further business with the reformist trade union machine, then we must start the organisation of a new union. The danger here lies in the fact that

unless we are very careful, we may end up by having isolated the more class-conscious section of the workers from the masses, that is, end up by lining up in the union only the class conscious workers, leaving the rest of the workers under reformist guidance and leadership. This contingency should always be borne in mind. The question of establishing a new union must therefore be carefully weighed up in each separate case. We must reckon with the objective conditions, gauge the correlation of forces and estimate the strenght of the enemy and our own forces. We should remember that the activity of the masses will be increased, and the workers drawn into the new organisation, only it there is a serious movement on foot and the workers at large are seriously roused.

17. **Activities in the Factories.** I have already said that our network of local organisations was extremely weak, that the activities of the factory committees where they exist were weak, this applying also to our union sections, trade union groups, factory delegates, and so on. The whole of the apparatus in the localities is, as I have said, functioning very weakly. We have trade unions whose roots are still not in the workshops. In order to strengthen our organisations, and to get a real footing among the masses, we must first and foremost push forward our work in the factories. Here you will find both organised and unorganised workers. We shall be able to cope with reaction only if we entrench ourselves firmly in each enterprise. In its programme of action, the First R. I. L. U. Congress stated—and you will find this also in the Programme of actions adopted by the Third Congress of the Communist International—"we must transform every mill and every factory into a stronghold of the revolution."

Work in the factories means that we have to organise factory Committees wherever they have not been organised so far, to arrange for the election of shop delegates, to make preparations for struggles and to make a careful choice of our cadres. If we are working in an enterprise, we should have a pretty good idea before the strike of where we can find the most militant, active, and class-conscious elements that could head the movement. All this should be prepared well beforehand, and we should know what we are about.

18. **Coordinating Strike Movements on an International Scale and International Solidarity.** The class struggle to-day is spreading beyond national boundaries. Vast employers' international trusts and cartels, amalgamations and agreements between the capitalists of one and the same industry, raise for us the question of coordinating strikes on an international scale and organising international working-class solidarity. We must say quite frankly that things are lagging far behind with us, so far as concerns the coordination of the strikes that break out in different parts of the world. Unlike Amsterdam, we can of course point to some accomplishments in this direction, but that is little consolation. Of course, we all claim to be internationalists, but I should like to see the internationalsm we speak about in our resolutions really put into practice, to see the workers in particular industries helping their fellow workers abroad in some tangible fashion when they come out on strike. There are 150 000 workers out on strike at this moment in France. Has the German Opposition collected considerable funds as a sign of their solidarity to help these men? What have our British comrades done? Or take a different case, what did our comrades in France and other countries do when the workers came out in Mansfeld, Germany? They did not do very much. Can we allow things to go on this way? Can we look on quietly when serious strikes break out in France, Germany and elsewhere, and the workers in the neighbouring countries merely express their solidarity in a number of resolutions? Can we look on and do nothing? From now on there must be a definite change in this sphere. Some comrades say: "We should have commenced collections, had we been notified by the R. I. L. U." Is it possible, comrades, that you yourselves cannot realise that we can only really express our solidarity by taking some concrete action? Must you wait until notified by the R. I. L. U. that you should support such and such a strike?

As regards coordinating the struggles on an international scale, coordinating the movements in the various countries, we would stress the importance of organising special Industrial Committees in neighbouring countries, as well as special brotherhoods, Frontier Committees, joint demonstrations, and so on. Something already has been done in this field, but nevertheless much more will have to be done, if we are going to put international working class solidarity, which is the corner stone of the Red International of Labour Unions, really into practice.

19. **International Industrial Federations.** Especially important in the work of coordinating the struggles throughout the world are the International Committees for Propaganda and Action, which embrace the workers in the various industries. Now, how do things stand with these committees? I must say quite openly that the present situation still leaves much to be desired. Apart from a few of the committees who are really carrying on effective international work—I refer here to the metal workers, the transport workers, miners and chemical workers—the rest are doing very little in this direction. Who is to blame? Well, I must say that we are all to blame—both the R. I. L. U. and the R. I. L. U. Sections. The impression has gained ground in some countries that the I. C. P. A. is a sort of fifth wheel to our coach, which could be dispensed with. And so not serious contact is maintained, no effort is made to set up connections, while nothing real is being done to unite all the metal workers, all the miners, and so on. But it is a fact that the question of the I. C. P. A. is becoming more and more important with the intensification of class contradictions. And as time continues the role of the I. C. P. A.'s will become still more important. To embrace the workers in the various industries so that the I. C. P. A.'s shall really represent not only the workers in the respective industries in Europe alone, but also in the East, Latin America, and so on, is now extremely vital. Unless we solidly unite all the workers in the metal industry, in the mining and transport trades, etc., we shall be unable to set up that essential number of strongholds and contacts necessary to lead great mass movements involving millions upon millions of worker, movements that have their repercussion over the whole world. We must really start the reorganisation of the I. C. P. A. The Fourth R. I. L. U. Congress adopted a decision to transform the I. C. P. A.'s into international centres of leadership. The Sixth Session of the R. I. L. U. Central Council went even further in this connection. It is high time that activities were pushed forward. The conditions are ripe. Every effort must be made in the R. I. L. U. and in all its affiliated organisations, in all the countries, to create the conditions that would warrant the transformation of each I. C. P. A. into a real militant Industrial International. (Applause).

20. **Concrete Steps Must Be Taken to Aid the Struggle of the Colonial Peoples.** A wave of intensified class struggles is sweeping over the colonial countries today. At the opening Session of this Congress we adopted a message of greetings to the workers of India, and to the workers and Red Army of China. But we must give real help to the workers in the colonial countries, assist their struggle against imperialism in some concrete and tangible way (continued applause). I want to know have the workers of the U. S. A., Britain, Japan and France done everything. Little enough has been done. I want to know, have our French organisations done everything in their power to suppert the workers of Indo-China? Little was done, very little, to say the least. And were I to enumerate all the colonies one after the other, and what had the R. I. L. U. Sections in the ruling countries done, there would not be a very big balance to the good. Can we condone the present inaction? In no circumstances. The workers in the ruling countries, who do not realise how important is the colonial struggle for their own emancipation do not realise their own interests. The R. I. L. U. Sections must bring home to the masses how closely connected is the struggle being waged by the workers and peasants in the colonies with the movement for emancipation of the working class in the chief capitalist countries. The immediate future will see a further intensification of the revolutionary struggles in the colonies. The revolutionary wave is rising in China. The revolution is beginning in India. The working class in every part of the world must therefore render real and serious support to these hundreds of millions of people who are struggling against world imperialism. The most important task of the whole international revolutionary trade union movement today is to support the struggle for emancipation of the colonies. The slogan of independence for

the colonies must now be one of the chief watchwords of the Red International of Labour unions and its Sections (Applause). But to help this movement in practice we must now establish closer contact between the workers in the colonies and the ruling country. The workers of India regard every Englishman as an imperialist. We must show them that the supporters of the R. I. L. U. are the enemies of imperialism! (Applause).

You, the workers in the ruling countries, must vindicate the honour of the working class of your country, by struggling against imperialism and for the independence of the colonies.

21. Against Imperialist Wars! Defend the U. S. S. R.! The general analysis of the present situation shows quite clearly comrades, that the new war danger is looming up large on the horizon. The clash of interests between the capitalist States is becoming sharper and sharper. The capitalist world is making a tremendous effort today to strangle the U. S. S. R. The new war is steadily drawing nearer and nearer. Now, what have we done to struggle against the war menace? Very little, all too little. I recall when we, the Delegation of the Soviet Central Council of Trade Unions, went to attend the International Peace Congress in the Hague in 1922, a Congress that was convened by the Amsterdam International, how Lenin gave us the following instructions, and literally said that we must fight against the general impression that to struggle against war was not a very difficult thing in itself. Many comrades believe that a few resolutions will do the trick. Well, it won't. When the war draws near, then we shall begin to see the reformist inner man of many of the present "left-wing" leaders of the trade union organisations. But when the war begins, it will be too late to make up for the ground lost in the meantime in fighting against war.

We must struggle now and all the time against the new war menace, explaining to the masses its class meaning. The fight against the new war danger must be continued every day and each day, so to guarantee that when the war begins the masses will be ready to fight against it. Let me give you an example. A year ago there was a danger of war between Bolivia and Paraguay. At the suggestion of Paraguay unions, the Latin American Confederation of Labour convened a special Anti-War Conference. It was duly held, and a resolution was drawn up. I should like to know what our Paraguay comrades did to carry out this resolution? What did our comrades in Bolivia do to fulfil its provisions? We don't know of any case when a war was prevented by means of an anti-war conference alone. Such a conference will only prove effective if it leads to concrete action to a fulfilment of its decisions, and if all the energy of the struggle is directed towards carrying out these decisions. Otherwise, when the war begins, you will be caught unawares and overwhelmed by the fast development of military operations.

The International working class movement must also struggle to defend Soviet Russia, the land of the proletarian dictatorship, against the imperialist attack. The working class in every part of the world are now giving central attention to the defence of our Socialist construction. And it depends on the way we carry on our activities every day, on the way we organise the masses, on our work among the workers at large, whether or not the imperialists will be able to realise their designs. You are a section of the revolutionary force that is struggling against World Reaction. In the USSR., the international revolutionary workers' movement has a territorial base, and it is the defence of this base, the defence of our socialist construction that is the chief and foremost duty of the working class throughout the world (Applause). By defending Soviet Russia, the working class throughout the world is defending itself! (Applause.)

Comrades, I have outlined 21 conditions necessary for the organisation of a counter-attack against the bourgeoisie. Let us try and fulfil these conditions, which outline in concrete terms the concentrated experience gained by the world labour movement. Let us apply in practice that which has grown up, and is growing up to meet the needs of our struggle, and you will see how much stronger we shall be when we come to the next Congress, and how much the influence of the R. I. L. U. and its sections will have grown during the next few years.

VII. Conclusion.

At this Congress we are summing up the results, not only of the work of the last two and a half years, but of the work carried out by the R. I. L. U. ever since it was founded ten years ago.

The Red International of Labour Unions was first formed as an agitational and propaganda centre. At that time it had no sections whatever in the overwhelming majority of the countries. Today we represent a big and real world power. The stronger we become, the more right have the workers to make demands of us. The greater our influence grows, the greater is the responsibility of the R. I. L. U. and its various sections. Only if we draw the correct conclusions in practice from the resolutions adopted here, only if we combine our political line with good organisation, and only if we get a footing right down among the masses, only then shall we be in a position to carry out the task that history has imposed upon us.

All the R. I. L. U. Congresses, from the First Congress to the present gathering, have had as their watchword: "To the workshop ,to the factory, to the masses!" We have struggled for ten years under this slogan; it is under this slogan that Communism will triumph throughout the world! (Loud and continued applause, delegates rise and give comrade Losovsky an enthusiastic ovation.)

THE LABOUR MOVEMENT

Final Betrayal of the French Textile Workers Strike.

By P. F. (Paris).

In order rightly to understand the present strike situation in North France it is necessary to bear in mind that the reformist leaders pursued a twofold aim. They wanted to liquidate the strike as quickly as possible, and for this purpose to find a solution which permitted them to betray the workers without being compelled to call upon them to return to work, just as in Lille, where the strike was broken off on a vague promise of the employers. Their action in Lille, however, in spite of the caution employed, had unfavourable effects for them, so that they could not simply repeat this manoeuvre. That is the explanation of the present events and the completion of the betrayal which is being prepared together with Laval and in the interest of the employers.

Laval and a number of other textile employers have come forward with a new proposal which has undoubtedly been worked out together with the reformists. According to this proposal there shall be no wage increase and only a slight increase of the so-called "loyalty premium", against which the workers have fought so bitterly. In order to support the proposal the rumor was spread that the 10,000 workers of the combing departments had put it forward. Here the reformists stepped in, took up the proposal and presented it as extremely favourable and a moral victory for the workers. As the proposal had been put forward by a group of employers the reformists even dared to talk of a breach in the front of the employers as the result of the strike.

The fact, however, is that the proposal is favourable to everybody, to the employers, to the government and to the reformists, except the workers. In order to throttle the strike the reformists have caused the proposal to be adopted by the trade union officials although it includes none of the demands of the workers. It means a demagogic betrayal of the strikers. How the strikers will take this piece of treachery is not yet clear. In any case the workers have realised the necessity of a revolutionary struggle against the bourgeoisie and against the reformist leaders who are the most loyal supporters of the bourgeoisie. The task of the French Communist Party will be to strengthen itself organisationally as the result of this great wage movement and to work in the factories to see that the lessons of the present defeat are utilised to lead the proletariat to the future victory over the bourgeoisie and the reformist leaders.

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