

**In the R. I. L. U.**

# **The VIII. Session of the Central Council of the Red International of Labour Unions.**

**Concluding Speech by Comrade Losovsky.**

Comrade **Losovsky**, having remarked upon, in his concluding speech, the number of new and most important events in world politics, which took place only during the last week, passed on to a review of the most important problems which have been raised in the discussion at the Plenum of the Council and to a summary of the valuable experience which the delegates have brought forward in their speeches at the session of the Central Council.

First of all in regard to the lessons and peculiarities of economic struggles in the present phase. Spontaneity still dominates in the economic struggle. The independent leadership of the struggle is only carried out in individual countries and very seldom. Our sections in a number of countries are still badly connected with the factories, are but little interested in facts, which, from their point of view, are small, but which, often deeply agitate the working mass. The programmes of demands are frequently worked out without any knowledge of the real needs of the workers. We badly prepare for strikes and badly resist the attacks of the reformists and do not choose the moment for our movements. We still under-

rate and even do not understand the importance of partial struggles, abandoning it in the name of the general strike, a position which is wrong and harmful, since it is only from the experience of partial struggles that wider movements develop. With this, particular attention must be devoted, when preparing strikes, to those categories of workers, who play a decisive part in the given industry.

The experiences of the strike struggles are witness of the tremendous activity of women even in countries of white terror and fascism. In **Italy**, for instance, 80% of the strikes were strikes of women workers. And yet, we still underrate the role of the women in the strike movement up to the present. The same must be said of the youth: its role in the strike struggles is growing, but we have quite insufficiently developed our work among the youth.

It is not our point of view that every strike, regardless of its occasion, place and time, is a blessing. We must always know at the declaration of a strike—why, on what basis and in the name of which demands the strike was declared. May a minority declare a strike? This is possible in those cases

and in countries of white terror, when the minority is sufficiently sensitive to the interests of the masses quite clearly to catch the mood of the majority.

One of the most important problems of the revolutionary T.U. movement is the question of combining the legal and illegal possibility of work of our trade union sections and groups in the factories. These trade union sections are under the constant surveillance of the employers, socialdemocrats and the spies. It is necessary so to combine the legal and illegal work of our body of militants, so as to save it from destruction.

The fear of strikes predominates with us in the domain of the strike struggle. We must fight against this with all energy.

Experience has shown how closely the economic struggle is intertwined with the political, and this problem is now sharper than ever before. This is proved by the experience of the strike struggle in China, Poland, Bulgaria, Czechoslovakia, where as a result of the shooting of workers' demonstrations a number of political strikes broke out, which compelled the social-democratic Minister to renounce his own decree.

The general conclusion from the economic struggle for the past 15 months is as follows: there have been mistakes, there have been shortcomings, but all the same what great heroism and self-sacrifice have been displayed by the working men and working women and the proletarian youth in China, Poland, Hungary, Rumania, U.S.A., and in other countries in the battles with the class enemy! It remains for us to develop a still more energetic campaign against the reformists, who are trying to deflect the masses from their urgent interests and from the struggle for their interests. In connection with this the work within the reformist unions still remains of the greatest importance, and we go there so as to wrest the workers from the clutches of the strikebreaking apparatus. Although we have spoken of this work at all the Congresses and Plenums, we must, however, remind our comrades of this again and again. The work within the reformist trade unions must not be isolated from the whole system of our work in the masses. To work within the union, outside the union, to form strong R.T.U.O.'s and unite within them both the organised and the unorganised, to lead independently the economic struggles, so as to remove from the field of the class struggle the reformist trade union centres and their organisations,—this is the purpose for which we work within the reformist unions. This work must be strengthened. In breaking the reformist apparatus and in weakening its local organisations, we must, in countries with a split trade union movement, transfer the workers into our unions.

Under what conditions shall we form new unions? These unions may be formed both during and before strikes provided there is a mass movement. Everything depends upon the peculiarities of a given concrete situation in a given country. The chief task, as was clearly formulated also at the XIth Plenum of the E.C.C.I., is in the strengthening of the independent revolutionary T.U. movement at the expense of the reformist and in the process of the mass movement of the proletariat; the R.T.U.O. and the independent revolutionary trade unions must be transformed into real mass organisations, capable in practice to prepare and to head the economic struggles of the proletariat. But our sections do not yet understand the whole importance of the development of the independent revolutionary trade union movement. It is true that in this domain, for instance in Germany, we have considerable achievements but these are not yet sufficient.

The work in the colonies. This problem we look upon as a part of the general problem with which we are faced. We must doubly intensify the struggle against social imperialism, the odious nature of which has displayed itself with special clearness in connection with the events in Manchuria. The revolutionary T.U. movement must devote particular attention to rendering real assistance to the labour movement in the colonies and to explaining the closest dependence of the fate of the workers in the imperialist countries upon the fate of the workers in colonial countries.

The question of the struggle against fascism, which was touched upon in the discussion, deserves serious attention. We must, to our regret, state there are as yet not a few workers within the fascist unions. The winning of the workers in the fascist organisations is of great importance. Thanks to ener-

getic work we are succeeding in this, as yet only partly, in Germany. For this there is also the soil in Italy, where during strikes, the workers from the fascist unions and the Fascist Party are even in the vanguard of the strike struggle. It is necessary therefore for us, energetically to penetrate into the fascist unions and there to carry on our work.

Dwelling specially upon the position in France and England, Comrade Losovsky said:

The recent VIth Congress of the C.G.T.U. was, on the whole, a positive stage in the development and gathering of our forces in France. Its service consists particularly in this, that it smashed the minoritarians. But there was no serious self-criticism at the Congress and a number of the most important problems (the economic struggle, organisational questions), was considered by it with extreme haste. Untrue positions are still taken up on a number of the most important problems. Thus, a number of alarming phenomena are to be observed in the unemployed movement, where we meet with such inadmissible formulations, as the one that the improvement in the conditions of the unemployed is a matter for the unemployed themselves. In the domain of the united front, it may be noted that the formation of unity committees proceeds spontaneously. The question of the formation of rank-and-file organs in the factories has not yet been solved. It is necessary to devote great attention to the problem of foreign labour in France.

Comrade Losovsky subjected the condition in the **Minority Movement in Great Britain** to a detailed analysis. Comrade Losovsky decisively rejected the declaration of the British delegate Comrade Pollitt, that the R.I.L.U. not only did not accord assistance to the Minority Movement, but did not assist the work of the latter within the reformist trade unions. Comrade Losovsky reminded the Plenum that the 5th Congress, besides a general resolution on this question, adopted also a special resolution for Great Britain, which comprehensively dealt with conditions and the problems of the Minority Movement and the necessity of working within the trade unions. But the trouble was that the M.M. not only did not fulfil this resolution but did not even publish it during the course of 4 months; and when finally, after insistent demands, the resolution was at last published, this was done so unsuccessfully (in parts and during a long period), that the very resolution could pass unnoticed for the working masses.

In conclusion Comrade Losovsky spoke of the important role which could be played in the economic struggles by such auxiliary organisations as the Sport International, the Workers' International Relief, M.O.P.R. (Red Aid), and others. Comrade Losovsky spoke also of such organisations as the International Workers Theatre and the International Association of Proletarian Writers, the collaboration of which in the struggle of the working class may be of a great importance.

The speaker concluded by an appeal for the exact fulfilment of the decisions of the R.I.L.U. and the testament of Lenin for the international labour movement. Under the banners of Communism and Leninism the sections of the R.I.L.U. will win in their struggle the final victory over the class enemy of the International Proletariat.

## Capitalism in the Land of Plenty.

New York, 27th December 1931.

The capitalists of the United States are engaged in destroying tremendous quantities of goods, and particularly foodstuffs, milk, vegetables and fruit, in order to keep up prices. The big milk combines are pouring hundreds of thousands of gallons of milk into the rivers rather than sell it at lower prices or give it to the unemployed. A little while ago a milk combine in Oakland poured no less than one hundred thousand gallons into the river. At Ketchikan, Alaska a salmon tinning firm destroyed 40,000 salmon in order to maintain prices for tinned salmon. In Los Angeles (California) vegetable firms have destroyed 120 waggons of cabbages sooner than sell them at low prices or give them away. Enormous quantities of peaches, apples and other fruit are being left to rot on the trees. In one district alone 30,000 chicks were deliberately burned by poultry farmers in order to maintain poultry prices.