

Tasks of the Pan-Pacific Trade Union Congress.

By H a j a m a.

When the Pan-Pacific Trade Union Congress opens in Vladivostok on August 15, the representatives of 15,000,000 organised workers in the Pacific countries will have gathered to discuss all the vital matters affecting the labour movement in the Pacific.

All T. U. organisations affiliated to the Pan-Pacific Trade Union Secretariat (P. P. T. U. S.), namely, the Australian Council of Trade Unions, the All-China Federation of Labour, the Japanese Council of Hyogikai Unions, the Korean Labour Federation, Indonesian Trade Union Federation, Philippine Labour Congress, Peasant Federation of the Philippines, the South C. C. T. U., British Minority Movement, Unitary Federation of Labour of France and the Trade Union Educational League of the U. S. A., will all take part in the work of this international gathering. The Congress will also be attended by representatives from the Revolutionary Unions of India which, only recently organised, have not yet been able to affiliate to the P. P. T. U. S.

The Pan-Pacific Trade Union Congress will have to deal up several important problems. It will have to sum up the results of the two years' work of the Pan Pacific Secretariat, draw up concrete instructions regarding the tasks and methods to be followed by the revolutionary unions in the various countries and discuss several issues affecting the labour movement in all the Pacific countries.

There is no doubt at all that at this gathering chief attention will be given to the struggle against the new war danger. The Pacific is the storm-centre to-day. Here as nowhere else the interests of the great imperialist powers — the U. S. A., England and Japan — clash. Japanese and American rivalry, and especially the growing competition between American and British Imperialism in China may bring about a military collision at any moment, which may well prove the starting point for a new world wide imperialist war. Hence, one of the most important tasks confronting the present Pan-Pacific Congress is to focus the attention of the broad working masses on the question of the new war danger, and, in this connection, the necessity of defending Soviet Russia against the imperialist powers.

Another vital issue is the question of the role of the trade unions in the emancipatory movement in the colonies. This Congress must carefully scrutinise the experience of the Chinese Revolution, so that in the coming struggles to emancipate the colonies from the oppression and exploitation of imperialism, the working class may from the very outset take up a fitting place in the leadership of the emancipatory movement. This gathering must give special attention to the role the working class and the trade unions must play in India, which now stands on the eve of a tremendous development of the national-revolutionary movement.

A programme of demands for the workers in the Pacific countries will have to be drawn up at this Congress. The position of the workers in Japan, China, India, Indonesia and other Eastern countries recalls to-day the position of the workers at the beginning of the Nineteenth Century in England. For in these countries we see the same miserable wage obtaining, a 14—16 hour day, inhuman exploitation of female and child labour, indescribable housing conditions, no labour pro-

active measures or social insurance for that matter. The mobilisation of the workers around a definite programme of demands should prove a powerful factor in furthering the struggle of the workers of the Pacific to improve their conditions.

In the various countries on the Asiatic littoral of the Pacific the revolutionary T.U. movement is fighting against great odds to-day.

In **China** the trade unions have to contend against a white error regime and must conduct their activities illegally. Combining fascist and reformist methods, the Kuomintang is now making a bid to get control of the labour movement in China. There are large numbers of workers lined up in the reformist unions organised under the patronage of the Kuomintang organisation. The revolutionary militant elements in the Chinese labour movement must not only strengthen the revolutionary illegal organisations, but work actively inside the reformist unions to expose the corrupt leaders and urge the masses to take up the revolutionary class struggle.

Alarmed at the growth of the revolutionary T.U. movement, the **Japanese** Government disbanded the Hyogikai Left Wing Centre a year ago. The Left Wing unions not only have to fight the Government, the bourgeoisie and the fascists, but also a strongly entrenched reformist movement. The marked leftward drift on the part of the Japanese working masses is now strengthening the hands of the Left Wing movement. The Pan-Pacific Congress must now aid the Left Wing unions of Japan to reinforce their influence over the masses organisationally.

In **India** the labour movement is now forging ahead. We see that in localities where two years ago the reformists were in complete control, where not a single Left Wing organisation was to be seen, large mass revolutionary T.U. organisations, some having scores of thousands of members ("Girni Kamgar", the Bombay Textile Workers' Union having 65,000 members) have now been organised. The leadership of the large strikes of the Indian workers is passing out of the hands of the reformists and being taken over by revolutionary leaders. Government repressions have been unable to stay the militant and widespread movement of the Indian workers. The Pan-Pacific Congress must link up the revolutionary wing of the Indian movement with the P.P.T.U.S. and help it to build up a strong revolutionary T.U. movement in India.

It is clear that reformists throughout the world, as evinced by the Amsterdam International and the International Labour Office and the reformists of the Far East, are seriously alarmed at the activities of the Pan-Pacific Secretariat. The sympathy the P.P.T.U.S. enjoys among the broad masses of revolutionary workers of the Pacific has prompted the reformists, especially those in Japan, headed by Bunzi Suzuki, the now famous Japanese Gompers, to counter the P.P.T.U.S. by establishing their own reformist T.U. centre in the Pacific. For several years past Suzuki has been full of the idea of creating just such a centre, finding support in the Amsterdam International and especially in the International Labour Office with which the Japanese reformists maintain close contact. However, the Revolution in China frustrated these plans. But since the defeat of the Chinese Revolution, they were broached again. At the last Geneva Conference of the International Labour Office, the Japanese reformists arranged with the representatives of the Indian reformists unions to convene a Pan-Asiatic Conference of Reformists Unions in April, 1929. The Kuomintang unions were also invited to attend.

But, the Pan-Asiatic Conference will not be meeting this year. The serious decline of reformist influence in the Indian T.U. movement coupled with the rapid growth of P.P.T.U.S. adherents in this country and the difficulties the Kuomintang is experiencing with the new civil war in China, compelled the reformists in the Pacific to put off their Pan-Asiatic Conference until next year. The fact that the reformists have been forced to postpone their conference whereas the Pan-Pacific Trade Union Congress, convened by the P.P.T.U.S., is to be held on time, shows, as nothing else could, how the reformists have lost out in the Far East, how the P.P.T.U.S. has retained its hold on the positions it won, despite the persecution and repressions of the capitalist Governments, the bourgeoisie, the fascists and the reformists!