influence could hardly be overestimated. All the strikes in 1929 were notable for the fine militancy shown by the workers, for the way the unorganized workers and women workers were drawn into the fight. Left Wing leadership was strengthened. Rank and file workers took active part in the representative strike committees that led the strikes; and the economic struggles from defensive movements frequently turned into counter-attacks against the whole capitalist system. Political demands were launched and street fighting took place between the strikers and police, etc.

It is a fact, however, that the class struggles did not find due reflection in the work and the decisions of the Tenth Session of the Trade Union Congress. The lessons from these struggles were not noted. The Congress, having ousted the reformists and cleared the decks for action, did not take advantage of the present session to prepare the ground for a proper lead for the impending struggles in India.

The Left Wing must now take serious steps to make careful preparations and to coordinate the strikes better than in the past, drawing all unorganized workers into the strike movements, and getting the workers themselves to take part in the work of the leading organs. From now on the Left Wing must give an independent lead to the economic struggles of the Indian proletariat.

The remarkable development of the economic struggle in India which is increasingly turning into a political struggle now raises the question of a General Strike. At the present time, when all sections of the Indian bourgeoisie have betrayed the national-emancipation movement, it is only a general strike of the working class that can raise the anti-imperialist struggle on a higher political plane.

Such a strike will deal a smashing blow at the whole capitalist regime in India. The Left Wing must now give serious attention to the question of a general strike. Careful preparations must be made and a suitable moment chosen for its declaration. But we must not permit the reformists or any of the wavering elements to have any hand in its leadership.

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The Indian Railway Strike

By Chattopadhyaya

(Workers everywhere, especially those of imperialist countries, are urged to send their messages of solidarity to the Great Indian Peninsular Railwaymen's Union; address, Shetye Building, Poibavdi, Bombay, 13, India.—Editor).

The general strike that broke out on the Great Indian Peninsular Railway (G.I.P.R.) on February 4, is of more than usual interest because in addition to the various economic demands that have been put forward by the workers, the movement has assumed a definitely political character. The G.I.P.R. workers are among the best organized and most class-conscious in India, and their struggle for better conditions of life during the last few years has been accompanied by a realization of the fact that no improvement is possible without the overthrow of imperialist exploitation.

Ever since 1927, the G.I.P. Railwaymen's Union (not to be confused with the G.I.P. Staff Union, which is still led by reformists that are trying to force the rank and file to scab.—Editor) had been making attempts to obtain redress of their grievances, but the Agent of the Railways paid no attention whatsoever to the workers' demands. In May, 1928, the leaders of the Union recommended that the weapon of the strike should
be employed. After having received a final
definite refusal from the Railway Agent, the
Managing Committee of the Union in No-
vember, 1928, formed a Committee of Ac-
tion to organize a 100% membership and
to collect a fund sufficient to guarantee the
victory of the workers.

The Union was under the leadership of
Comrades Thengdi, Bradley, Joglekar, Jhab-
wala and Kadam, and the enormous enthusi-
asm that was aroused among the railway
workers during the course of their organiza-
tional work, led the Government to order
the arrest of these five comrades in March,
1929, whereby the workers were deprived
of their ablest leaders. These comrades are
still undergoing trial along with 26 other
revolutionary workers at Meerut, on a charge
of attempting to overthrow British imperialist
domination and to establish a Workers’ Re-
public, or, in the words of the public pro-
secutor, “a Coolie Government.”

It may be noted in passing that Comrades
Thengdi and Joglekar had been elected by
the Trade Union Congress as delegates to
the Second World Congress of the League
Against Imperialism held in July, 1929, at
Frankfort on Main, Germany, so that after
their arrest it became necessary for the Trade
Union Congress to appoint new delegates.
One of those nominated was Comrade V. B.
Purandare, General Secretary of the G.I.P.
Railwaymen’s Union, who had been 13 years
in railway service. The President of the
Union, D. B. Kulkarni, who is also Vice-
President of the All-India Trade Union Con-
gress, was elected by the Frankfort Congress
to the General Council of the League Against
Imperialism.

It was under their leadership that the G. I.
P. Union at its July conference formulated
the demands of the strikers today. The most
important of these are:

1. A demand for the minimum wage of
30 Rupees (about $11) per month, whereas
the vast majority of workers do not receive
more than half this amount.
2. An 8-hour day for all, including the
commercial staff who work no less than 10-
hours a day and many of whom have to
work as much as 16-hours a day.
3. One day’s rest in the week and other
holidays.
4. Regular holiday periods.
5. The abolition of the daily wages system.
6. Free passes for all railway employees
and Union officials.
7. Supply of uniforms and waterproofs.
8. Abolition of racial discrimination.
9. Abolition of periodical medical exami-
nation (which is often used as a pretext for
dismissing large numbers of workers).
10. No victimization of Union workers.

In addition to these demands the strikers
are calling upon the authorities to re-instate
comrades Kulkarni and Purandare who had
been dismissed at the end of last year by
reason of their political activities as members
of the Workers’ and Peasants’ Party and of
their connection with the League Against
Imperialism.

The above demands were placed before
the Agent for the last time on December 22,
1929, and it was decided to declare a one
day strike on February 4, 1930, to enforce the
demands, and to declare a general strike if
they were not granted.

These demands having been categorically
rejected by the railway authorities, first
20,000, then 75,000 and then 125,000 rail-
waymen went out on strike. The workers
organized pickets before the workshops and
railway-stations which were guarded by strong
military and police forces. In spite of the
terror of the police, the strike was very suc-
cessful. At all the important stations such
as Manmad, Poona, Nosik, Nandgaon and
Kurla the stations are without light, the im-
portant workshops at Matunga, Parel and
Wadibunder are completely closed and the
whole tram service has been partly delayed
and partly stopped. The Government is run-
ning the trains with the help of strike-breakers
who are protected by strong military forces.
It is significant that the strike-breakers are
confined mostly to the literate section of the
staff, whereas the porters, sweepers, gate-
keepers, cabinmen and the rank and file gen-
erally are absolutely firm and united.

Another important feature of the strike is
that it is not confined to the Indian workers
only. All the Chinese workers who are concentrated at Matunga have joined the strike in a body and have declared their determination to stand by their Indian comrades, while on the other hand Anglo-Indians (Eurasians) and Parsis who receive favored treatment at the hands of the imperialist Government have been helping the Government as scabs and blacklegs.

The G.I.P. Railwaymen’s Union is receiving the moral support of other railway unions such as the Southern Mahratta Railway, the South Indian Railway and the Bengal—Baroda and Central Indian Railway. The All-India Railwaymen’s Federation, of which the G.I.P. Union is an important member, played a decisive role at the All-India Trade Union Congress at Nagpur on December 1, 1929, and along with the textile workers were responsible for the strongly anti-imperialist line adopted at the Congress, which resolved to boycott the imperialist Whitley Commission, to fight against the reformism of Amsterdam and Geneva, to affiliate to the Pan-Pacific Trade Union Secretariat and the League Against Imperialism.

It is obvious that the MacDonald Government will use all its power to break the revolutionary movement of the workers who are leading the whole struggle for national independence.

Nor are the leaders of the Indian National Congress, including the President, Jawaharlal Nehru (who is also a member of the Executive Committee of the All-India Trade Union Congress) giving any help to the strikers; they are advocating the reference of the ‘dispute’ to an arbitration board. But the workers will not be fooled. Only a few days before the strike began, they gave the proper character to the ‘Independence Day’ on January 26 by hoisting the Red Flag all over the country. It is in this anti-imperialist atmosphere that the struggle is being conducted by the railway workers who receive the support of the entire Indian working class and to whom every help should be extended by the international proletariat.

Lessons and Prospects of the Economic Struggle

BY A. LOSOVSKY

The following is the concluding part of the speech of A. Losovsky, General Secretary of the Red International of Labor Unions, delivered at the Sixth Plenary Sessions of the General Council of the R.I.L.U., which reviewed the work of the revolutionary unions since the Fourth R.I.L.U. Congress of March 1928, and prepared the base for the Fifth Congress, which is to take place July 15, 1930. Since the speech set forth the problems and tasks of the revolutionary unions in the light of new perspectives furnished by the world economic crisis, it is given as worthy of study and discussion among the ranks of the workers of the Pacific, whose particular problems are likewise dealt with.—Editor.

In order to be able to pursue a correct policy in the sphere of the leadership of the mass movement of the proletariat, it is necessary to carry on a relentless struggle against reformist and strike-breaking trade union bureaucracy on the one hand, and against the remnants of reformism in our own ranks on the other.