

CONTINUE DEBATE ON TRADE UNIONS AT 5TH CONGRESS

Heckert Warns Against Amsterdam Left-Wing

(Special to The DAILY WORKER)

MOSCOW, July 7.— (By Mail).— Fritz Heckert of Germany, continued the report on the trade union question, begun by Losovsky, before the Fifth Congress.

Just before Heckert spoke, a delegation of the Tenth Rifle Corps of the Red Army, presented a red banner for the workers of Hamburg, in honor of the October struggle in that city. Enthusiastic demonstrations of applause ensued. A representative of the Hamburg workers received the banner with a speech of solidarity with the Red Army and the Workers' Government. After him Thalmann greeted the delegation in the name of the Presidium. A demonstration was given by the congress to Clara Zetkin, in honor of her birthday, and Manabendra Nath Roy congratulated her on behalf of the Presidium of the Congress.

German Unionist Reports.

Comrade Heckert then delivered his report:

The general retreat of the working class has not yet come to a halt. The capitalist offensive is still on, and the Reparations Committee report makes for a continuation of this offensive. It is doubtful whether the German workers can resist the reduction in wages and lengthening of hours, which will then have an international effect. The German working class may thus become the world's strike breakers. A pacifist wave has swept over a part of the working class, which makes it more difficult to combat the Reparations Plan.

The speaker described in detail how the German trade unions collapsed during the money-inflation period, and under the general unemployment, and how the betrayal by the trade union bureaucracy, the expulsions and persecutions of the Communists by the officials of the General Federation of Trade Unions, had caused secession tendencies to appear. The withdrawal movement from the unions was strengthened by the lack of unity in our own camp and by the betrayal of the officials.

The persecutions on the part of the employers made the tasks of the Factory Councils more difficult, inasmuch as the revolutionary delegates to these councils were immediately discharged by the employers. This, and the expulsion of the Communists, was responsible for the decrease of Communist influence in the trade unions, and made increasingly hard the organization of the unorganized.

Describing in detail the recent struggles of the German workers, Heckert stressed the necessity of joint action on the part of German, French and English miners.

The development of small craft organizations has become increasingly favored by the aristocracy of labor, small groups of skilled craftsmen, and must be strenuously opposed. Workers' battles that are well led, as, for example, those of Ludwigshaven, can strengthen the organizations in spite of the recent defeat. The problem consists of establishing strike strategy on the basis of international experience.

The speaker pointed out the immense significance of the international workers' aid movement. He also emphasized the necessity of keeping the militant workers in close touch with the agricultural workers and small peasants. He agreed with Losovsky as to the correctness of the tactics, established by the Second Congress, in the matter of the shop nuclei system, and hoped that the lost positions would speedily be regained.

In respect to the Amsterdam left wing at the Vienna Congress, the speaker warned against harboring any illusions. Experience has shown that when it comes to a show-down this left wing always acts with the big-wigs of the right wing. The revolutionary words of the Amsterdam left-wing has misled the working class. The policy of the Red International cannot be built upon the vacillations and hesitations of the Amsterdam left.

A Minority View.

After Heckert's report, the debate was continued by Schumaker, speaking as a minority of one of the German delegation. Declaring that he spoke only for himself, and not for the German party, the speaker traced the development of trade union policy in the K. P. D., and maintained that the party had endorsed the formation of new industrial unions before the Frankfort convention. Even the Frankfort resolution permitted this tactic. Inasmuch as the achievement of leadership in the old unions is impossible, he said, and inasmuch as the trade unions sabotage the workers' struggles and expel the Communists, it would be well at present to organize the expelled and the unorganized into the new unions, altho the party members may remain in the old unions until they are expelled. The speaker took issue with Losovsky, Tomski, and Heckert on this issue, and maintained that even now new industrial unions must be formed. It is a mistake to continue to fight against this movement, he declared, and had the party supported the new unions they would have made great progress.