

# RADICAL PERIODICALS IN THE UNITED STATES, 1890-1960

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# Party Organizer

Volume 6  
1933



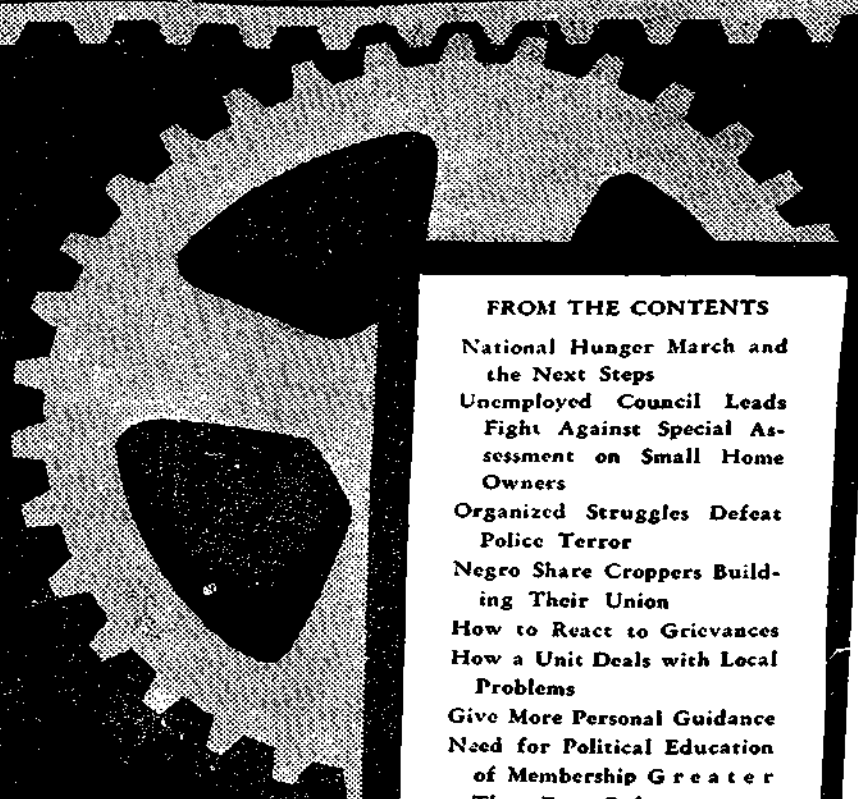
Greenwood Reprint Corporation  
New York  
1968

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**Printed in the United States of America**

# Party Organizer



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- How to React to Grievances
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- Give More Personal Guidance
- Need for Political Education of Membership Greater Than Ever Before
- Shop Paper Reviews

Vol. VI

January, 1933

No. 1

*Issued by*

CENTRAL COMMITTEE COMMUNIST PARTY, U S. A

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# PARTY ORGANIZER

Vol. VI

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No. 1

## National Hunger March and the Next Steps

**T**HE National Hunger March aimed to broaden the united front struggle for federal unemployment relief and for the Workers Unemployment Insurance Bill; to involve large sections of the working class in local struggles; to dramatize the struggle in a manner that would rouse the masses throughout the country; to present the demands to the U. S. Congress. These aims in the main were achieved.

It is necessary, however, to clear up some ideas that exist in the minds of Party members.

1) Was the hunger march necessary? There were those who argued against the march, *not understanding* or *underestimating* the political significance of the march: the opening of the United States Congress, which had no intention whatever of considering unemployment relief and the fact that it was a *Democratic* Congress, which in view of the election of Roosevelt, was to be compelled to make good some of Roosevelt's promises. This could be done at no more *impressive* time than at the very opening of Congress. Therefore the march was correct.

2) There were ideas that the National Hunger March would dampen the development of local struggles.

3) There are ideas prevalent that since only a delegation of 10 each were allowed to present the demands to the House of Representatives and Senate, these workers could have been selected in the various localities and from the different industries, and have accomplished the same task. This is the position of the liberals, Socialists, etc.—that the march was a “futile gesture”. This means to underestimate the entire role of *mass* mobilization, *mass* organization and *mass* pressure.

What has made the country ring with the question of *starvation* is just the National Hunger March, and with it the question of federal relief and insurance. But the march alone did not accomplish this. The intensified local activities and struggles leading up to the hunger march, the open hearings and trials, disclosed the mass hunger as never before. The mobilization of the workers at these hearings, struggles and demonstrations, the hundreds of thousands of workers who greeted the hunger marchers passing through towns; and, as was revealed through the actions in Washington, the splendid response of the workers everywhere against the imprisonment of the marchers, helped to deepen the class-consciousness, helped to revolutionize the workers throughout the country.

### Achievements and Weaknesses of the Hunger March

The strong points of the march must be pointed out: 1) More struggles in the cities and towns in preparations for the march. 2) All the marchers were elected by definite bodies of workers. 3) Good composition: a high percentage of Negro workers, men and women, especially from the South; nearly 1,000 young workers, including some homeless youth; a high percentage of native-born workers. 4) Only about 30 per cent of marchers were Party and Y.C.L. members (the check-up is not yet complete). 5) Better participation of the revolutionary unions (295 marine workers) and of some outstanding union leaders—marine, mining, textile, needle. 6) Splendid working class discipline and militancy, and good division and column leadership.

The shortcomings were: 1) An *insufficiently broad* united front. Only *few new* A. F. of L. and other reformist locals and mass organizations were reached that have not as yet participated in our struggles. (About 250 A. F. of L. members were present.) The opponent unemployed organizations were weakly represented. 2) Weak political preparation for the march. 3) Inadequate organization of the Party press, with the exception of the *Freiheit*. 4) Totally inadequate exposure of the enemies and splitters of the movement (A. F. of L. bureaucrats, S. P., Musteites, etc.). 5) Insufficient preparations in Washington itself, where, for weeks, a barrage of propaganda against the march, along the lines of Hoover's "discouraging" tactics, was being conducted. 6) Totally insufficient preparations for the return march, as a result of which there were some serious losses from exposure and needless struggles. 7) Failure to organize broad demonstrations in all the districts on December 6, the time of the presentation of the demands in Washington. 8) Failure to energetically recruit into the Party and Y.C.L. from among the militant marchers.

### Our Present Tasks

The struggle must be intensified not only for adequate local relief but to force action by the U. S. Congress.

1) Local struggles for relief, against evictions, for shelter, for food and clothing for the children, for veteran's relief. This can be amplified by struggles for the immediate concrete needs, *no matter how little they may be*, of the workers in the blocks and neighborhoods, which will rally the workers for struggle. This means the establishment of the broadest united front in action.

2) County and state conferences and marches, drawing in the farmers.

3) Setting up of committees in all the red unions and mass organizations of every character, to carry on the fight for relief of their members, and to draw the membership, through dele-

gates to the neighborhood unemployed councils into the general struggles of the unemployed.

4) Penetration of the locals of the A. F. of L., Railway Brotherhoods and independent unions, on the basis of the decisions of the Cincinnati Conference of the A. F. of L. Rank and File Committee for Unemployment Insurance; to intensify the struggle for relief and insurance along the lines laid down by this committee. Drawing of these locals into the Unemployed Councils through delegates and into joint activities. At the same time they must intensify their struggles against the bureaucrats, against expulsion for non-payment of dues, for relief from union funds, cuts in salaries, etc.

5) Continual exposure of local conditions through investigations, open hearings, trials, etc.

6) Persistent exposure of the splitters of the unemployed movement—the various fake insurance schemes being put forward by politicians, A. F. of L. leaders, the Socialist Party—Borders outfit, Musteites—Unemployed Citizens Leagues, and other local organizations.

7) A struggle against the right opportunist errors in the united front—a capitulation to the treacherous policies and practices of the reformists, on the ground that this is “against the policy of the united front”, that the “reformists will expose themselves”, etc. (This has been excellently exposed in the article by Comrade John Williamson in the December issue of *The Communist*.)

8) Building of the Unemployed Councils, especially in the towns reached by the hunger march. Building of block committees as the *basic* units of the Unemployed Council, but with greater flexibility when the workers themselves desire a more compact form of organization. Building of language organizations among foreign-born workers, who can be better reached through their own language.

9) Recruiting of the unemployed into the revolutionary unions of their trades and systematic recruiting for the Party and Y. C. L.

10) The Party territorial units must a) Build up block committees in their territory in the name and with the knowledge of the Unemployed Council. b) Fractions must be built in the block committees (and unemployed councils) of all Party and Y.C.L. members. The unit must direct the work of the Party fraction in the block committee. c) The districts and sections must work through the corresponding fractions, and not through decisions handed directly to the councils, through so-called representatives in the block committees and councils.

The building of the unemployed councils and the active struggle for local relief is the surest road to forcing the United States Government to grant federal relief and unemployment insurance.

I. AMTER.



## Unemployed Council Leads Fight Against Special Assessment on Small Home Owners

**T**HE successful struggle conducted by Branch 63 of the Unemployed Council of Chicago in defeating a special assessment on small home owners and involving them in this struggle is an experience which will be of great assistance to unemployed councils throughout the country. Branch 63 is located in 13th Ward, close to the Crane Co., a large metal shop of concentration of Section 7 of the Communist Party and the Steel Workers Industrial Union. The territory embraces a large number of small home and property owners. Workers who worked all their lives, bought small homes for themselves and their children, now are unemployed or working part time and are not able to meet the payments on their mortgages and are about to lose their homes.

The Steel and Metal Workers Industrial Union, Southside section, realized the necessity of reaching the unemployed in this territory, especially in connection with organizing the Crane shop. About two months ago the union called a mass meeting at which 75 were present, 25 of whom joined the Unemployed Council. Several meetings of this council took place in a private home. Discussions took place on how to get relief for one or another worker, but the work made little headway. The leading committees were composed of nearly all new elements, never connected with a movement of this kind and they felt somewhat helpless.

### Home Owners Taxed with Special Assessment

In the beginning of October, about 1,000 home owners living South between 43rd to 50th and Archer, embracing four blocks east and four blocks west of Crawford Ave., received a notice from the Board of Local Improvement to pay a special assessment for opening and widening of South Crawford Ave. Some of the small home owners were assessed as high as \$100.

The Unemployed Council at its meeting decided to immediately circulate a petition against the assessment and in a few days they collected several hundred signatures.

### Politicians' Attempt to Prevent Struggle Defeated

The Lloyd's Property Owners Association of Chicago, operating in that neighborhood, with a membership of 400, claimed to be organized for the purpose of serving the property owners. At its membership meeting where 200 were present, the leaders took the stand for the special assessment. Seeing the dissatisfaction on the part of the home owners, the politicians controlling the organization arranged for another meeting to con-

vince the home owners to pay the assessment. At the second meeting held in a church, the politicians with the aid of the priest, succeeded in getting 90 per cent of those attending to vote for the payment of the assessment.

The Unemployed Council, however, continued to collect signatures against the assessment and then called a mass meeting on Wednesday, October 19, just one day after the meeting in the church. The attendance was good; more than 400 workers responded. The Unemployed Council had gathered all the necessary information on the assessment and pointed out that pleading or depending on lawyers would not help the small home owners, but only mass mobilization and action would defeat this assessment. After a discussion a vote was taken on the question. The 400 home owners, with the exception of a few politicians in attendance, voted against the assessment. A committee, consisting of 25 home owners, was elected to work out further plans.

On Friday, October 21, the Lawn Civic Association, another organization of politicians and real estate men, who thought that here was an opportunity to make some money, called a mass meeting. The speaker pointed out the difficulties in fighting such an assessment and proposed to fight for a reduction since it was too late to kill the assessment. The representatives of the Unemployed Council took the floor and sharply attacked the association, warning the home owners not to be misled. The Unemployed Council representative received tremendous applause. The politicians seeing the situation used all sorts of demagoguery, appealing to the loyalty of the home owners as peaceful citizens, bringing forward their religious beliefs and warning them against the Communists. That these fakers were unable to convince the home owners was shown when the vote was taken. Everybody present with a few exceptions voted against the assessment. A second vote to decide which organization should lead this fight resulted in endorsement of the Unemployed Council's leadership. This meant a real defeat for the politicians. In order to maintain their influence the politicians and real estate men promised to co-operate with the council, but the co-operation was given in words only. When the Council called upon them, they were not there. This was utilized by us to prove to the home owners the real role of these people.

### Win Partial Victory

Alderman Bryan Hartnett and Ward Committeeman Baker responded to the invitation of the committee to attend a mass meeting. Realizing the situation, they demagogically spoke against the assessment and promised to give full co-operation. Some of the workers were impressed with their statements. Our comrades correctly pointed out to the workers that these people came out against the assessment now particularly in view of the organization and the coming elections.

After this meeting, the delegation went to see the alderman and ward committeeman, both democrats, and demanded from them to go with our delegation to see the president of the Board of Local Improvements, Lindheimer, who has the full authority to drop the case. The conference with the Board of Local Improvements took place November 2, 1932. The politicians, especially Baker, were pleading before the conference not to send a big delegation, only to send one or two representatives. A delegation of 35 small home owners was sent. Our delegation stated definitely that more than 600 small home owners would under no circumstances pay this special assessment. After long demagogic speeches, they proposed a six months' postponement of the assessment. The delegation stood firm and demanded that the project be entirely dropped. Finally, they agreed to one year's postponement. We did not achieve the killing of the proposition but made a motion that before the board would take definite action on the matter a new hearing of the home owners should be called, to get their opinion. This was granted.

Throughout the conference with the board, the politicians, all part of the democratic machine, tried to push Baker, who ran for alderman, and to make him the representative of the home owners. When we demanded a written statement in regards to the concession, Baker stated, "I will see that you get this statement through me." Our delegation demanded this statement immediately from Lindheimer, which was given to us. Through this move, we eliminated Baker.

#### Council Wins Confidence of Workers

The significance of this struggle is that the Unemployed Council reacted to the burning issue confronting the small home owners and was able through correct tactics to undermine the leadership of the politicians and win the support of the workers. This struggle proves that workers who have never followed our leadership are ready and willing to fight providing we show decisive leadership in defense of their interests. Now we have the task to link up the fight against the special assessment with other issues—foreclosures, high taxes and numerous other questions. Also, the struggle for relief must be intensified. More than 24 relief cases were handled successfully by the unemployed council up till now.

One hundred twenty-five workers joined the Unemployed Branch and 96 belong to the home owners' committee of the Unemployed Council. The question of the City Hunger March was brought before the home owners and 76 participated. The majority of them demonstrated for the first time in their lives. On November 22, a mass meeting in support of the Hunger March to Washington was called and 25 were present. The meeting unanimously endorsed the march and elected two delegates and raised \$10.68 towards the expenses.

Today, we see in this branch workers developing who will become good material for our Party. It is up to the Party members in this branch especially to strengthen the leadership and get in close contact with the most promising elements. No doubt, there are also many members who work or used to work in the Crane Company. These should be drawn into the Steel and Metal Workers Industrial Union.

### A Unit Organizes and Leads Rent Strike

UNIT 13 began its activity in a residential section in New York with the view of developing a struggle against evictions and for reduction of rents. At first, the workers in the territory, still partly employed, and some of them having doubts as to the success of such a struggle under our leadership, did not immediately respond to organization. But we persisted in our work, went house to house regularly, worked out a definite plan on the basis of the specific conditions in the territory, popularized the Unemployed Council as the leader in the struggle for the unemployed workers. During the election campaign we explained to the workers why the Communists endorsed the Unemployed Council and pledged its support.

Our aim throughout our activity was to convince the workers that only through organization and support on the part of the workers living in the territory, will it be successful in defeating the evictions and lowering the rents. His activity had results. The workers began to see in our comrades real organizers of struggles and defenders of the interests of the workers.

The workers on Crotona Park E., in the territory of Unit 13, faced evictions. Immediately they came to our comrades (most of whom lived right in that particular territory) and called on them for help and guidance in defeating the evictions. We took up the issue without delay. It was decided that to conduct this struggle effectively, a strike should be organized in the house affected, establish a house committee, and uniting in this struggle all workers, regardless of their beliefs, around this one issue of eviction. We succeeded in doing this. Workers from the Workmen's Circle, Socialist Party, Jewish Verband, were fighting together with unorganized workers under our leadership. When one of the Socialists made a statement at a house committee meeting that the Communists are interested in political gains and not in winning the struggle this was combatted by showing to the workers that the aim was to organize the workers around this issue and to defeat the evictions, as already proven in the process of the struggle.

The strike of the workers received tremendous support from

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hundreds of workers and drew them into the struggle. Representatives of the strike went to the synagogue attended by the landlord, exposed the landlord's action and succeeded in getting the workers attending the synagogue to support the strike. When the landlord evicted one worker, even the capitalist press was compelled to admit that 500 workers participated in this struggle and about 2,000 workers stood watching the scene.

Despite the attempts of the police the workers on Franklin Avenue were successful in winning their struggle. This struggle gave us the opportunity to prove to the workers the possibilities of fighting landlords that belong to the association. The protection given to the landlord, the arrest of workers, and the trials helped to expose the city government as part and parcel of the Landlord's Association. But particularly, it proved to the workers that organized action will defeat the attacks of the landlords.

The result of this struggle has been that the Party comrades who participated in this struggle are now recognized leaders of the workers. And what is of special importance is the puncturing of the bug-a-boo of Communism spread by the capitalists. The workers know that we can lead them in struggle and are ready to fight with them for their demands. They have confidence in us.

The entire action has brought good results. The Block Committee has been organized and deals with the problems of the workers. Preparations are under way to develop a center in the territory to serve as an educational and social center as well as to provide leadership for the rest of the territory. As a result of this struggle the Unemployed Council reports that at least a half-dozen houses are ready for organization and steps are being taken in this direction. The spreading of the influence of our press, especially the *Morning Freiheit* whose circulation has greatly increased. The failure to popularize the *Daily Worker* during the struggle is reflected also in its present circulation. And this has to be overcome.

While no systematic recruiting for the Party and the Y.C.L. was conducted during the struggle, immediate possibilities exist to draw in a number of workers into both the Party and League. Only four members of the unit actually participated directly in the struggle. But the whole unit was involved in working out the details of the struggle.

J. G.

### Organized Struggles Defeat Police Terror

**B**REAKING the police terror in Elmwood Park which has been going on for some time, was a problem which Section 8 had to solve. The May First demonstration was smashed by the police and hired gangsters. The political groups were de-

terminated to smash the growing movement of the unemployed and part time workers who were organizing to fight against the foreclosures of poor home-owners and for more relief.

When the village elections took place last Spring the Communist Party was on the ballot, which was a victory for the workers in face of the opposition of these different political groups. Our Party, after fighting these elements who tried to keep us off the ballot in court, had just two weeks time to hold one election rally. Even in this short time we were able to secure about one-seventh of the votes. This shook the props from under these political gangs throughout the suburbs.

In Maywood the Socialist Party refused the Workers' Ex-servicemen's League their hall, although the hall was rented and paid for. We demanded an answer from the Socialists. We forced them to admit that the politicians, together with the leaders of the American Legion and the officials of the American Can Co., one of the J. P. Morgan concerns, gave them orders to keep us out of the hall. The police were in front of this hall with machine guns in order to keep the workers out. Also, in Melrose Park, the workers were beaten, slugged and jailed on the same day, May 1. On May 6 the workers were lined up against the wall and shot down by machine-gun bullets. Eleven comrades were wounded and 58 arrested for daring to protest against the attack on the workers which took place on May 1.

In Elmwood Park the relief supervisor, Charleston, has his headquarters in the police station. Every time comrades from the council went there to demand relief for needy families, this capitalist tool called the police and together with the village firemen (who, by the way are deputized, carrying guns and belts full of lead slugs) would throw the comrades out or jail them.

I wish to relate here one example—a case of the wife of an ex-serviceman who came to the council and told us they had nothing to eat. Her husband was called to the Forest Preserves for work that morning. Since there were only another comrade and my self in the council headquarters, we went with this woman to Charleston. There we got a committee organized very quickly. I told the woman to present her case. He told her to come back Monday.

This happened Friday and for three days she would have nothing to eat. She started crying. We told her to stop crying—that the council was there to see that she and her three children would eat, and we wouldn't leave until she got relief. The workers were immediately sympathetic. They stood up like a solid wall, demanding food. The coward called for the police. They rushed in, grabbed me, but the roar from the workers and my determination to fight back put fear into the hearts of the police and they called for reinforcements. With them came the big fat Judge Mendriski. I had been before this judge many

times and now was my chance to expose him. They asked me what the hell I wanted in here. I told him this mother of three children came here to get something to eat and they refused to feed her. We are here to see that she is given food. I looked right at him, and said: "What the hell are you here for, to help this serpent deny this mother with her three children food? You don't care, you with your belly packed with steak." "Lock him up," was his reply. They pulled me out, but the workers followed and demanded that I be released. The police, seeing the determination of the workers for my release, were forced to let me go. The judge, also, seeing the militancy of the workers said: "Let the Red go. Next time he comes before me, I will beat him up." "Yes," said I, "that is what is on your mind, to jail and beat workers who fight for the right of the workers to live." The judge issued another order to lock me up.

Down in the jug this mother made the remark that she was going to "end it all". She came over with her husband and three daughters that evening and this is the story she told me and my wife. "I went home, turned on the gas. Just then the insurance man happened to be in the block and stopped in to see if I had money to pay him for insurance. My head was about to burst. Away he went. A few minutes later a neighbor came in and being stopped the second time I went out to get some air and the next thing I knew I was in the hospital and found out that it took one and a half hours to revive me."

As a result of this struggle the charities were forced to give her relief.

Here is another case. Jacobson, a painter, belonging to the A. F. of L. went to Charleston to ask for relief and he got a buck. When he came back a second time he was refused. His oldest son who is around 25 years of age, works for Sears & Roebuck and makes \$11 per week. The charities demanded to know where the boy was working. The father was afraid that the boy would lose his job, so he refused to answer, saying that Charleston could come over and investigate; that there was nothing to eat and that if he did not need the relief he would not ask for it. Jacobson was refused relief four or five times. Now Jacobson had been a hard worker all his life. He had been fooled by the capitalist talk that good times will return. But, with winter coming on and no coal in the house, he began thinking. His wife and another woman came over to the council and we elected a committee to take them to the charities.

When our committee came into the relief station, the case was turned over to a case-worker by the name of Miss Bauer. When she saw our committee, she wanted to run out. But we had the door blocked and made her stay in. She screamed for the police and they came to help send Mrs. Jacobson away again. Mrs. Jacobson was refused relief. When she got home Mr. Jacob-

son was found in the basement hanging to a rafter. Now was the time to act to stop other fathers from taking this way out. We got on the job quickly, rented a large hall, which they say holds 700 to 800 people. We got out a leaflet, and distributed it in large numbers. The hall was filled with workers at 7 o'clock although the meeting was called for 8. We knew from reports that the workers gave us that the police were going to try to smash this meeting. We were on the watch. At 7:30 up came police, 15 or 20 uniformed cops and about 50 hired thugs. They surrounded the hall, armed to the teeth.

Comrade Good was supposed to be the judge of the mass trial and he was late. Meanwhile, the police were trying to put fear into the crowd. Good finally came and we decided to start the meeting. I was chairman. I took the chair and opened the meeting. I knew that if I would mention Jacobson's name, I would immediately be arrested, so I spoke about all the other cases we handled. The workers, including many from fascist organizations like the American Legion, Scandinavian American Club and other religious organizations, cheered and applauded our activities and program. The police were licked, so I started to talk on the Jacobson case and up stepped the chief of police and said to me: "You have no right to try these men in this way. It is illegal. If you could prove that this is murder and that the men are responsible, you should take them to court and prosecute them in a legal manner." The workers booed him out of the hall and yelled: "Go on with the trial."

Worker after worker got up and testified as to their conditions. Then, to prove the charges of the workers against the charities, the woman who was with Mrs. Jacobson got up and told the entire story. She told the workers that everything we said was the truth and she will stand by the Unemployed Council because the council is doing good work. The applause was tremendous. Comrade Good was then introduced to sum up. He exposed the police and the bosses' court, gave a very good talk and the workers are still talking about this meeting. Resolutions were passed to stop the police from interfering with the council committees. Resolutions were also passed to send telegrams to Washington to act on the immediate demands. Resolutions also passed for immediate clothes and for the removal of Charleston and Miss Bauer. We won all these demands except the last one, which the council is still working on. Also the workers are not bothered by the police. The workers are still carrying on activities to gain more concessions. Workers are joining our council. More councils are being built in the suburbs west of us. Struggles are going on all through these towns.



### Party Unit—A Leader of Unemployed

**D**ESPITE the great stress that has been placed upon the importance of block committees and carrying on block activities, this work is still seriously neglected in our Party. The first task of a Party street unit, is to acquaint itself with the conditions, and become the leader of the workers in the territory in which it operates. Since the greatest problem confronting the workers today is unemployment and part time work, the task of building the house and block committee, the instrument through which to lead the workers in their struggles for relief, against evictions and high rents, is of outstanding importance. But here, we still conceive of work among the unemployed and the struggle for relief as demonstrative actions. This wrong conception originates from the attitude that "we cannot gain anything". To prove the incorrectness of this, we have but to point to one instance how a Party unit in New York has been carrying on block activities.

Our units that have been "concentrating" for years on one thing or another, would be greatly surprised if they would listen in at one of the meetings of this unit. Here the conditions of the workers on the block are actually discussed. "This worker is going to be dispossessed"; "this family is starving"; "how to combat white chauvinism"; "the block committee is going to the Home Relief Bureau, we need more comrades", etc. The conditions of individual families, as well as of the whole block are discussed and whatever actions are planned these are worked out on the basis of the conditions in the block and as a result of discussions with the workers on what has to be done.

#### Lead Fight for Free Milk

Besides winning relief for many of the families by leading actions against the Home Relief Bureau, the most important struggle that has been carried on in this block was the struggle for free milk. First the unit, after learning the immediate needs of the workers, decided that the fight for free milk was of immediate importance. The question was raised at a block committee meeting. The workers instantly formulated the demand. The methods used to organize this struggle were excellent. The workers of the block committee together with the unit comrades, canvassed the homes with petitions demanding of the city a free milk station in the block. After thoroughly canvassing that block and the adjoining ones with the assistance of neighboring units, getting a registration of the need of the workers—how long unemployed, if working, what wages—holding open air meetings, issuing leaflets, etc., a date was set for a demonstration at the home of the alderman.

By this time the entire territory was not only thoroughly acquainted with the issue, but many had participated in some

form of action in preparation for this struggle. The alderman refused to see the delegation elected by the demonstration and nothing was immediately gained. But on the very next day this demonstration was followed up by demands upon the milk trusts for milk, with the result that milk was obtained many times from three milk companies. But here our comrades fell into a serious error. The milk was granted without necessity for struggle. When a milk company demanded an apology from the block committee because it had issued a leaflet stating that the milk company had been forced to grant milk, a letter was sent to the company stating that there had been a misprint in the leaflet which should have read that the workers were forced to apply to them. It is here that the Party's leadership was not sufficiently decisive. If we had explained to the workers that the company had been forced by the organization in the block to grant the milk and that militant action will defeat attempts to withdraw the milk, the workers would have been willing and ready to put up a strong fight for milk and would not have so readily retracted from the leaflet of the block council. But this was not done.

It is not always easy to avoid these errors in carrying on activities on a block scale, especially so in the fight for immediate relief for the workers. In the struggle for immediate relief, there is the danger of separating the getting of relief from organization and struggle. The main emphasis in the struggle for relief must be directed against the city administration. Where we direct our demands against some large food trust, there too, the demands should be accompanied by militant action. We must show to the workers that these trusts are not separate and apart from the city administration and are directly responsible for unemployment and misery.

#### Bringing Out the Face of the Party

The manner in which the face of the Party is brought into the struggle is of great importance. This we can also learn from the methods employed by this particular unit. *The Communist candidate in the territory worked together with the block committee. The members of the unit worked with the block committee.* The Party in the election campaign pointed out to the workers what its stand was on unemployment insurance and immediate relief, and pledged support for the struggle. This it carried out in action by working with the block committee and has thus won confidence of the workers in the block.

### Negro Share Croppers Building Their Union

THE work among the Negro share croppers in the Black Belt was begun more than a year ago. But before August of this year, there was no proper form of organization, no system of meetings, initiations and dues payments, no basically established locals with a captain, secretary and literature agent, and what is more important, there were no concrete, planned or conscious activities being carried on by the members. Their meetings were held in vacant houses where they would listen to long and radical speeches made by the comrade working among them. Many of the croppers would walk distances of six to seven miles. After the meetings, all the members would leave without any particular tasks assigned except that all would pledge to be present at the next meeting.

#### Strengthening the Union

But now, all the members understand that they belong to the Share Croppers Union. Four months ago we had only 22 locals established, but now these have increased to nearly 50. The share croppers' union is built as follows. Series of small locals are formed and each local consists of 10 members (with the exception of certain territories where 12 or 13 live near each other). One cropper is captain, another secretary and a third is literature agent. The main task of these three functionaries is to see that the local functions, takes up the immediate problems of the croppers and decides what steps to take on these issues and to build other locals, women's auxiliaries and youth sections of the union. The leading body also sees that all its members attend the meeting, read the *Daily Worker*, write articles, pay dues and help to educate the membership.

The local meets weekly. The captains of the various locals meet at separate meetings, make full reports of the work of their locals and lay plans for future activities. Previously the captains of one section which is seven miles from the other section would walk to the captains' meeting and it would sometimes be 11 or 12 o'clock before they would get back home after the meeting. This system of meeting soon developed irregular attendance, and as a result, the following change was made. All captains in a particular section meet together. Each group of captains has selected one comrade to represent their section to the county captains' meeting. This comrade is known as the County Committee Captain of a particular section. Also another comrade is elected by the captains of the same section as sub-committee captain whose duty is to assist the committee captain. Generally the committee captain works on one end of the section while the sub-committee captain works on the other end. Once every two weeks the committee captain and the sub-committee captain meet together with the captain and sub-captain of the other sections and check up on all the work in the sections.

### The Demands of the Share Croppers' Union

The Negro share croppers are the lowest strata of agricultural toilers. For generations they have been kept in virtual slavery by a system of "furnishing" which kept the cropper family always in debt to his landlord. The prices of supplies, the rates of interest (sometimes 60 per cent) are determined by the landlord. No matter how high cotton prices rose, the landlord did the arithmetic and the cropper family was kept always in debt. Now the landlord class has no market for its cotton. The croppers are left starving in their cabins. No furnishing or production credit is given. Evictions for non-payment of rent take place regularly. The landlord can confiscate the stocks or serve attachments for the farm implements when the share cropper fails to pay his debts.

It is on the basis of these conditions and grievances that the Share Croppers Union formulated the demands, around which it is rallying larger and larger numbers of Negro share croppers:

*A minimum price of 10 cents per pound for cotton*

*The right to sell our own cotton*

*No forced "pooling" of cotton*

*No confiscation of the livestock or attachments of farm implements*

*No evictions; no forced collection of debts.*

*Free school buses for the children of the croppers and tenants without discrimination against the Negro children*

*The right to organize for bread and fight against terror and war.*

Already, the landowners are beginning to recognize the force of organization. After the distribution of leaflets (which because of the terror must be done illegally) the recognition of the landowners that the croppers and tenants were organizing into the Share Croppers Union, the right to sell their own cotton has been won on one plantation. A share croppers' committee was elected also to present the demands for clothing and shoes for a cropper and his family. When the committee went up to the landowner he was forced to grant this demand. The secretary of the landowner immediately issued an order for the clothes for this cropper and his family and in addition the cropper was given \$11 in cash and his wife \$12. All the members of the family were thus supplied with the necessities of life to tide them over the winter.

On another plantation the croppers and tenants have won the demand of debt cancellation. Some croppers and tenants here according to the landowner's figures owed as much as \$300. The landowner had told them to vacate their homes and move nothing off the place. But since the distribution of the leaflets and seeing that the white tenants were in agreement with the policy

of the union and were expressing their willingness to join up, the landowner was compelled to withdraw his threat and in addition cancelled all back debts.

### Our Immediate Tasks

But our job has just begun. Our central task now and in the immediate future is to win over for the union a broad section of the white tenants and croppers as well as the majority section of the Negro croppers and tenants. There are great possibilities to draw the most militant white croppers and tenants into the union on the basis of united action of white and Negro croppers. Today the white tenants visit the Negro croppers and tenants, eat at their homes, go hunting with them and help them gather their crops, etc. Since last year's struggle at Camp Hill the whites express a different attitude toward the Negroes. Prior to the Camp Hill struggle, the whites did not mingle with the Negroes as they do now. They say, that the landowners had told them that the Negroes were organizing against them—the white tenants—and they believed them. But since then, they understand that the union is fighting for them as well as for the Negro tenants and croppers and they want to join. But there still remains some mistrust among the Negro croppers towards the white tenants because of the role played by the misled white tenants in the past. However, the very conditions in the Black Belt is undermining this distrust and forging the unity of the white and Negro croppers and tenants.

We plan to develop a system of white locals of the Tenants League with an interchange of delegates from the Share Croppers Union. The white captains of the tenants' local will attend the local of the Negro share croppers. The Negro captain will attend the white local. In this manner, we will weld the unity of the white and Negro share croppers and tenants.

The next step is the organization of plantation committees on the large plantations where we have tremendous possibilities. We are also planning to secure simple and popular literature as a step in the education of the share croppers. The *Weekly Farm News Letter* will be sent to all white tenants as a method of breaking them into the movement.

The strengthening of the Party is an important task. Already there are three Party units which have been organized in the various sections. The comrades who are Party members are the best elements for the Party, the most developed, loyal and active comrades, many of them played an active and important part in the struggles here. But many more members can and should be won for the Party.

### How to React to Grievances

**I**N a metal shop in New York the Steel and Metal Workers Industrial Union had been carrying on successful work. In the spray department the shop group embraced one-third of the workers, with one or two Party members. Here the workers worked 54 hours a week. But during the busy season the boss compelled them to work 60 and 70 hours a week. This question was thoroughly discussed in the shop group and it was decided to convince the other workers to quit at the end of nine hours. Through individual approach, by speaking to the workers during the lunch hour, after work—and the members of the group themselves, taking the initiative to quit at the end of that time—we succeeded in getting the other workers in the department to follow suit. This struggle was won and the workers now work only the nine hours. In addition the demand for lunch money when the workers were called in on a holiday was also won.

As a result of this the group has grown considerably.

\* \* \* \*

In another metal factory where 80 workers were employed, the workers complained that there was no heat in the plant. This issue was taken up. We had a small nucleus of five workers there—but through individual discussions with the workers we succeeded in rallying them around this demand. It was decided that the workers present this demand, and if not granted, that they lay down on the job and produce less than ordinarily. The workers raised hell. One worker quit in protest. The workers began to carry out their decision. The boss was compelled to heat the place. The worker who quit was called back to work. This also raised the prestige of the group and it grew as a result of this struggle.

\* \* \* \*

In another factory—employing hundreds of workers. The workers in one department were getting very low wages. We were carrying on work there. Here we succeeded in getting the workers to produce half as much as they used to produce in the past. The wages were soon increased from \$10 to \$12 and \$14 a week.

\* \* \* \*

In a railroad shop in Long Island four fellows were taken off the job of cleaning the pits. The workers were enraged. The issue was raised in the railroad bulletin. We had no group there, just contact with one worker, who gave us this information. Immediately after the bulletin was distributed the four workers were taken back. The employers were afraid of the consequences.

A similar example of where the bulletin succeeded in winning the demands of the workers. In a railroad shop, to cut down expenses, the employers had eliminated a number of work trains.

The result was that the workers had to wait one hour for a train. Many times they missed the bank on pay day and could not cash their checks. The workers were kicking about this. Here also we had no group—only one contact. This issue was written up in the railroad bulletin. The work train was put back.

\* \* \* \*

In another Long Island shop, where we had no group with the exception of one contact, we decided to do something along one issue—the issue was speed-up. This issue was a burning one in the shop. We decided to make contacts with a number of workers and even though they were not ready to join an organization in the shop, to get them to work in unison in the shop—and lay down on the job. We succeeded in doing this and about 15 workers in the department cut down their production. This finally forced the foreman to agree to the demands of the workers.

The workers in this plant get through work at midnight. It is difficult to meet in a house at this time since we would be noticed. It is a custom here for gangs of boys to stand on the street corners—and we adopted this method to meet with the workers. After midnight we meet, stand on a corner and discuss the problems in the shop. Six workers have already joined the group in the shop.

### New Member Builds Unit

At the Ford meeting in Kansas City a worker filled out an application card for the Party. He told us then that this was the twelfth time he had filled out an application for membership and had never before been drawn into a Party unit. He told us that he had decided "to keep on filling out applications until their office will be so full of my name and address that they have to notice me." We have finally noticed him and today he is in the Party. Immediately he brought a few workers together from his neighborhood and a new unit was formed of which he has been made unit organizer. This unit is doing real good work now, has participated in the election campaign, arranged meetings, sent comrades to Negro churches and fraternal organizations to speak on the elections and the Hunger March.

## How a Unit Deals With Local Problems

**EDITORIAL NOTE:**—The following minutes of a unit in the mining section in Southern Illinois is a good example of how a unit should deal with concrete local problems. We want to raise two questions, however: What has the unit done in practice to carry out the very good decisions? Secondly, why haven't mine nuclei been established in at least two of the mines where three or more comrades are employed?

### Minutes of the Nucleus

Attendance: 12 comrades present: 4 from mine —; 2 from mine —; 2 from mine —; 3 from mine —; 1 non-miner.  
Order of business: 1. Discussion on Situation in the Mines.  
2. Unemployed Work. 3. Dues and Membership. 4. Discussion.

### Report from First Mine

Miners disgusted. Many who were enthused about the Progressive Miners Union are not even coming to meetings any more. They are now questioning the advisability of the building of the P. M. A.

Nomination of officers took place. Our nominees nominated but officials so manipulated that they were not nominated by the local. Elections took place after man of the miners had left the meeting. The vote was much larger than given to us.

A By-Law Committee was elected. Brought in recommendation that the salaries of the officials should not be cut too much, at most 12½ per cent. Because of the late hour and since many of our people were absent, our comrades decided to have the discussion on this question postponed, and it was carried.

Resolution in support of the National Hunger March adopted almost unanimously.

### Report from Second Mine

Miners disgusted. Do not any longer speak of the P.M.A. Are asking what the P.M.A. did for the miners. Miners pointing out that the P.M.A. did not fight in Franklin County, the home of Lewis and Walker, but Lewis and Walker are coming here, to the home of the P.M.A. to carry on a fight and are more or less successful because the P.M.A. is doing nothing about it.

Miners beginning to realize that the striking miners must be taken care of not by the miners that are working and through the 1 per cent check-off, but a fight must be put up that the city and various institutions take care of them. Also, must carry on a struggle against discrimination.

V. nominated for vice-president almost unanimously. C. lost out but P. running for scale committee was nominated by all members, and there was no opposition to R. running for Trial Board member.



### Report from Third Mine

No life shown to matters outside of their own mine. The men are actually revolting against the passivity of some of the leaders of the P.M.A. in connection with the strike. The men ready to quit work any time in support of the strikers. This question discussed very much. They would rather stop work than give the 10 per cent relief which is no relief at all.

R. nominated in the elections. Also, P. who met no opposition. Resolution adopted to support the National Hunger March. Mine is working and could not send anybody to Washington the way mine — has done. At the same time they could not donate any money since there isn't any in the treasury (the funds are tied up by the U.M.W.A.) and the miners just started to work and have to support the strikers.

### Report from Mine on Strike

Forty-three men were working Friday. The pickets handled very brutally. No effort made to have real mass picketing. The 43 men dug 16 flats of coal in 7 days (a flat is from 40-45 tons). Resolution read but failed to take a vote on it. At the meeting no discussion took place as to the actual situation but took up the regular routine work. A matter of plain sell-out.

### Discussion Brings Out Many Problems and Tasks

1. That the comrades popularize the achievements of the Unemployed Council in getting relief for miners whom the charity institution has refused relief and rent.
2. To mobilize the membership to have the locals elect committees to go to the charity institutions to demand relief and carry on a struggle against discrimination of the strikers.
3. To mobilize the rank and file to start mass picketing and stop all mines for that purpose. Elect rank and file strike committees to carry on this work. To revive the struggle against the opening of the mines by the Peabody in Taylorville (where they employ 1,200 miners from all over the U.S.A. and many who are not miners at all).
4. Party to issue leaflet to take up the above questions as soon as it is possible.
5. A meeting to be held with the other nucleus which has miners from three different mines all striking, and consider the question of calling broad meetings of left wingers for the purpose of carrying on the fight.
6. To have a slate of officers for local elections in every local where we have either comrades (7 locals) or good sympathizers (in the rest of them). Here the unit discussed the slate and worked out same for two mines, leaving the other two where election notices have not yet been posted until the next meeting.

### Unemployed Work

Main points taken up already. Main thing to prepare the ground for inviting our marchers to report when they come back. Also to have report on the state-wide conference.

Collections of money for the National Hunger March raised very sharply. The locals while supporting the march did not give any money outside of Mine — which sent a marcher and paid his expenses.

### Dues and Membership

Dues paid. A new member joined the Party from Mine — .

The question of the absentees was taken up. The four comrades not present to be visited. Comrades assigned to do this work.

Comrades reporting that they have new comrades for the next meeting. The nucleus would then have to be divided into two units, but meanwhile to hold all four mines meeting together until we get more members and establish ourselves.

The unit to get 10 copies of the Daily Worker each day. Thirty-seven cents collected to start getting the Daily. S. elected to take care of Daily.

Comrades reported that in Ridgely Precinct No. 7 our Party received 19 votes. All of them thrown into the waste-basket. We were not credited with any at all. In Precinct No. 10 our Party received 49 votes. Ten of them straight. Credited only with 11 votes.

Due to late hour discussion to be postponed to next meeting. S. assigned to read the resolution of the 15th Plenum and lead discussion.

Meeting adjourned at 10 p.m.

### Give More Personal Guidance

*The following extracts from a letter of an active Party comrade in Chicago throws much light on the inner life of our methods of work and our system of leadership. The comrade writes:*

"Here is my own personal experience. I work every day. I have for several years. I joined the Party without any soliciting. Very shortly, I was on the Section Committee. Then I was drafted into a unit as organizer. Then because, I brought forward to the section that our unit territory was too large and that a new unit was necessary in the territory, I was released as organizer of my unit and told to go ahead and organize a new unit in one week. I had to go right out into a new territory and form this unit. Already, we are told to form an unemployed council. Now

I am not kicking so much about that. Here is what I do kick about.

"It is criticism. I will be criticized next Tuesday night at the organizers' meeting because the unit is not larger; because I have not done more; because I did not attend some meeting or other. I work hard every day in a building as a painter—not a union painter. I have a few there who read the *Daily Worker* and subscribe to it. I cannot break down the Catholic faith there and start a shop unit. I do the best I can. However, no matter how much I do, I always hate to show my face because there are things I do not do that I was told to do. Directives, directives, directives. An organization letter sometimes of three pages. Hell, I could not do one tenth of it. I am getting tired. I am just as much as Communist as ever, but I am not 10 Communists. Sure as organizer I should do all these things. But if I was to go to all the meetings I would be so busy learning what to do that I would not even get a chance to try to get help do anything. I can't be everywhere all at once. I must sleep sometimes. We have spent enough energy at inner meetings to overthrow the whole capitalist system. My wife won't stand for it either."

What are these complaints of the comrade? Are they raised because he is a passive member of the Party? Not at all. The comrade is an active comrade, working day in and day out. He raises here basic problems facing our entire Party—the problems of developing the initiative and self-activity of the lower bodies; the system of leadership to individual comrades and unit; the training and development of cadres—all important problems for our Party.

A new comrade entering into the Party because he shows willingness and a desire to carry on work is immediately burdened with a thousand and one tasks that are physically impossible for him to accomplish. He is drafted into leading work, drawn into many meetings, and soon he is busy every day in the week and cut off from the workers with whom he has contact. The comrade travels in a vicious circle, unable to do many tasks required from him. Difficulties develop with his family at home. This probably would not interfere with his work, but when at the same time he gets nothing but criticism all the time from the higher bodies, he becomes discouraged, lets down on his activity and very often drops out of the Party. This accounts for much of the present fluctuation of our Party.

What then is the job of the leading comrades? How can this situation be remedied? How can we avoid such situations

as the worker emphasizes in the above extract from taking place? The 14th Plenum resolution dealing with this problem states:

“ . . . The center of gravity must be shifted to the development of the lower organizations, to the sections and units. The methods of leadership, assistance of checking up on the work of the lower organizations by the higher organs must be a method of personal guidance in accordance with the special conditions of the given field of work, of the given enterprise and not simply the sending out of circulars. In all lower organizations, committees must be formed which actually work collectively, and a stop must be put to the state of affairs in which the work is concentrated in the hands of a few comrades.”

How then should the section leadership which deals with the units concretely apply these directives of the 14th plenum to the problems raised by this comrade? Instead of condemning the comrade because he has not carried out every task, the section leadership should recognize the work done by the comrade and encourage his activities. The problems which he meets in the shop should be discussed—how to get particularly those workers who already read the *Daily Worker* together; how to meet the question of religion in the shop; how to raise the immediate issues around the concrete grievances which will unite all the workers regardless of their religious or political affiliations. In his work in the unit, the section leadership should discuss with the comrade concretely the problems in the territory, how to organize the workers around these issues, how to establish collective work in the unit and activate the comrades around the issues in the territory; how to eliminate some of the inner meetings to enable the comrade to carry through this work. Pains should be taken to explain the tasks and decisions of the Party to this comrade, as well as to each unit organizer, how to overcome the difficulties in carrying out these decisions, how to apply these decisions to the specific problems of the unit.

In such a manner the comrade will feel encouraged, will feel that there is a leadership in the section and will feel that he is a part of the collective leadership working out the problems that face the Party. Such personal leadership will help to develop, train and not discourage new cadres. This day to day supervision of the work of the lower bodies cannot be replaced by long circular directives.

## New Tasks Brought Out By Membership Study

SECTION 2 of Chicago recently carried through a membership control for the purpose of establishing a better division of work and assignment of tasks in mass organizations to every member. The facts found after an analysis was made, are very enlightening for our Party and show some of the basic weaknesses which must be overcome, especially in the fluctuation of the membership.

First, on the carrying through of the membership control. It was not a regular registration as is usually conducted. Commissions were set up with representatives from the district, section and units. A minimum of 25 minutes was spent with each comrade, discussing his activity in the Party, the work in the mass organizations, his proposals of improving the work of the unit, section, etc.

In all, 223 members showed up at the reporting places. Of these 76 per cent were Negroes, 83 per cent native born, 79 per cent unemployed and the rest part time and full time employed. But while 91 per cent reported affiliation with one or another mass organization which is a rather good percentage, the section at the present time is not utilizing the mass connections for the campaigns sufficiently. This is partly due to the political level of the membership, but basically because there is no guidance given to the members in their work in the mass organizations.

While the majority of those reporting had joined the Party in the course of participation in struggles, the Party makes insufficient efforts to further develop politically the new members. Only five reported substantial reading of Marxian literature, 22 are readers of *The Communist*, but the majority stated that they read only the C. P. Election Platform, and some other recent pamphlets. This, together with the decline in struggles developed by the Party, is basically responsible for the high fluctuation in that section.

The following figures show the tremendous fluctuation in that section: 58 per cent joined the Party in 1932, 28 per cent in 1931, 4 per cent in 1930, 5 per cent between 1921-1929, and 5 per cent charter members. This after the great influx of members in 1931, after the tremendous struggles carried on the South Side. The question what is happening to the hundreds of workers that applied and joined the Party must be of utmost immediate concern to the section.

The immediate tasks should be: to intensify the struggles for Negro rights and for the immediate demands of the entire working class on the South Side, and especially on the stockyards; to pay more attention to the raising of the ideological level of the membership; more personal guidance to the units and individual members in their mass work. This will make this the best section in the district.



*The Head-Light*—November, December, 1932—Southern Pacific  
R. R. Unit, C. P., District 13.

We have on hand the November and December issues of *The Head-Light*. In both issues of the paper, there are a number of letters from workers' correspondents dealing with immediate grievances in the shop. This is good, since these letters will help a great deal to develop a struggle for these grievances. However, it is not sufficient to raise the issues. It is our task to direct the resentment of the workers into organized channels by telling them how to combat these attacks.

For example. In an article in the November issue: "Works 20 Years and Gets Fired", what is the solution given in the paper. It states, "The only way to deal with this Gorilla (the foreman who fired the worker) is to organize and meet them like the Russian people met their blood suckers." This is not the immediate solution to this problem. We should point out to the workers first of all that firing of the older workers means more speed-up, using less workers to produce the same amount of work. Second, that the foremen can hire and fire at will because of the lack of an organization in the shop which will deal with these problems. Thus, proving to the workers the need for the establishment of broad unity committees to deal with even the most elementary issues. At the same time to show that such an organization representing the workers can compel the bosses not to fire workers at will. In addition the paper should raise the demand for social insurance for workers too old to work.

While the December issue is an improvement in dealing with how the workers should organize in the shops, it does not differentiate between the united front movement in the shops, locals and lodges, the Railroad Industrial League and the Party. There is a tendency here to speak too much in the name of the "Railroad Industrial Union". There is no industrial union in the railroad industry. We should hammer away at the need for organizing the unity committees to embrace all workers regardless of religious or political affiliations to combat the attacks of the employers, to expose the sell-out of the Brotherhood leadership. At the same time, we should point out that the Industrial Rail-

road League embraces all workers not organized in the Brotherhoods. And then point out the relations of the Party to these organizations. In this way we will not confuse the workers.

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*Waterfront Worker*—December, 1932—Group of Longshoremen  
—District 13.

A very lively first issue of the *Waterfront Worker* has reached us. In technical makeup it is one of the best gotten out bulletins we received. It deals in detail with the conditions of the longshoremen, the position of the I.L.A. officials, the "Blue Book" leadership and conditions in other ports. One specially good feature is the article on Tom Mooney and the 1916 Longshoremen's Strike, thus concretely linking up the case of Tom Mooney with the struggle of the longshoremen.

But what should the longshoremen do? This answer is not given clearly and decisively. Dealing as it does with a 10 cent cut in wages per hour, the bulletin, does not tell the workers how to organize. Instead, in only one short sentence it states: "What's to prevent us from organizing small undercover groups of those whom we know on each dock. This is the only way we can lay the basis of a real union. . ." While the first step is getting a number of longshoremen together, the aim is to develop a broad united front movement of the longshoremen on the docks of both organized and unorganized longshoremen and carry the struggle for the demands of the longshoremen into the I.L.A. locals by organizing the opposition movement to develop the struggle. This is not presented to the longshoremen.

What is more serious, is the complete failure of even mentioning the Marine Workers Industrial Union. Surely it is important in a bulletin of this character to point out the role of the industrial union, the demands for the longshoremen, the call for united action between the rank and file of our union and the I.L.A. "Blue Book" membership. But this is not reflected in the paper.

Why nothing on the hunger march and the fact that nearly 300 seamen and longshoremen participated in this important battle. Is this not of interest of the longshoremen of San Francisco.

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*Ford Worker*—December, 1932—Edgewater Plant, Ford Group,  
District 14.

Another addition to the family. The first issue of the *Ford Worker* comes to our attention. The comrades have made a good start in this paper. The aim should be to continue the regular issuance of the bulletin in the shop.

Just a few pointers. If this paper is to receive response from the workers it should deal concretely with even the most ele-

mentary issues confronting the workers in the factory. This is not done. There is very little on the grievances of the workers. A system of workers correspondence should be developed to improve this angle of the paper.

A good feature is the article on the lessons from the last wage cut. This is a good beginning in preparing the workers to forthcoming cuts and the need for organizing to defeat these attacks. But what pleases us most is the article of the Doll strike which is used to show to the workers in the Ford Plant that organization and struggle can defeat cuts and win better conditions. But, why the use of the Trade Union Unity League, without an explanation of what the T.U.U.L. is. After all, this is the first issue of the paper—and it should explain to the workers just what the organization stands for.

More attention in future issues of the paper to how the workers should organize, what we mean by the Groups of Action in the shop, whom they should embrace, their united front character, and how they should function.

Keep up the good work.

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*C. & S. Railroad Worker*—October, 1932—*C. & S. Railroad Shop Group, District 19.*

Good technical make-up. But this is not true of the contents. Instead of being the voice of the shop group, the united front organization in the shop—it speaks in the name of the Party. This can be seen in practically all articles. In no place in the paper do we see why this group endorses the Communist election campaign, but instead the position of the group is replaced by the position of the Party. It is this general line in the bulletin which should be changed fundamentally.

An additional point which should be emphasized. The first article deals with the Railroad Brotherhood and speaks of it as a "Company union acting as it always does, as an agent of the bosses". This lumps the workers and the officials together and stamps them as a united reactionary force. The Twelfth Plenum Resolution emphasizes particularly the necessity to sharply differentiate between the leadership of the reformist unions and the membership. This is not done in the article. To carry out the line of the Twelfth Plenum in our work and in the shop bulletin it is necessary to avoid using phrases and name-calling, but to expose the reformist leaders on the basis of concrete deeds and words, to expose the conditions under which the workers must work, to point out the position of the shop group on all the issues confronting the workers in contrast to the position of the railroad union bureaucracy. In this way to prepare for a broad united front movement in the railroad shops.



## Agit-Prop Work

### Need for Political Education of Membership Greater Than Ever Before

**I**N the center of our educational activities must stand the training of the new members. This is of such great importance that the Twelfth Plenum of the E.C.C.I. raises it very sharply in the resolution. It states: "A chain of Party schools must be organized for the purpose of educating the newly recruited Party members. . . ." For almost a year now we have been discussing in the columns of the *Party Organizer*, the question of establishing new members classes. At first we got out a special outline for these new members classes. It is over six months now that we have published Comrade Bittelmann's pamphlet, *The Communist Party in Action*. This pamphlet was especially written as a text for the six weeks' courses for new members classes. We shall not here repeat the purpose and method of these new members classes. That was taken up in detail in a special article which appeared in the May-June issue of the *Party Organizer*.

From the reports we have, those districts which have made an earnest attempt to establish these classes, have reported real progress. The general weakness common to all districts is the fact that no real attempt is being made to establish such new members classes outside of the district headquarters cities.

The Twelfth Plenum of the E.C.C.I. also takes up the question of the training of cadres. The resolution states: "To strengthen the Communist Party itself, by training cadres who are closely connected with the masses and trusted by them. . . ." In the past year we had a number of district schools, a national training school, a regional training school and a miner's school. These schools have helped quite a bit in the training of new cadres. However, the main method of the training of the cadres through political educational activities must be centered around the training of the whole body of functionaries. Recently the system of week-end schools and special classes for functionaries in the sections has been developed. At these week-end schools, we have already in a previous issue of the *Party Organizer*, suggested the following main topics: 1) Elements of Marxism-Leninism. 2) A class in mass work, with emphasis on trade union and unemployed work. 3) Organizational principles. These schools should last for a period of between six weeks to two months. We can also adopt the method of arranging functionaries classes on each topic separately of the three mentioned for the week-end schools.

Our experience has shown that in spite of some weaknesses, all of our *district schools* without exception have really proven to be a great aid in the training of functionaries in the districts and should be continued. The district schools are for the purpose of training comrades who are longer in the Party and have already had mass experience. The district schools have as their purpose the training mainly of unit and section functionaries.

In addition to the district schools, we should also develop the method of *one-week or two-week full time section and district training schools for the training of unit functionaries*, such schools should also include a broader body of functionaries than the district training school—the same subjects to be taken up, practically in the same form, as in the week-end school. Some of the experience with our one and two-week full time training schools have proven to be very successful. We are printing part of a report giving the experience of the Minnesota district:

"All of last week I was in Iron Mountain where we held a one-week full time Party school. Two units were involved in this school. There were between 35 and 45 students at the school every day—including about 10 non-Party workers. The school started at 9 in the morning and ended at 5 in the evening. The main questions taken up were: Communist Party program, organization, structure; we emphasized the unit functioning the most. Then we had a trade union course which was taught by the N. M. U. organizer. We took up especially in detail the building of the Auto Workers Union in the Ford plant, and the unemployed work. We discussed some of the recent articles in *The Communist* on the united front. It was in my opinion a successful school. The Iron Mountain comrades liked it very much. The element at the school was American. I believe that the quality of our Party membership is much better than anywhere else. Most of the workers there are experienced Ford auto workers or miners, most of them having worked in Ford plants even before coming to Iron Mountain. They learn very easily. Also the age of the Party membership is relatively young; that makes a difference."

Recently some improvement is to be noted in the political education and training of the membership, but this is primarily confined to the district headquarters cities. As one of the means of improving the political training in the sections outside of the district headquarters, we propose the establishment of circuit classes, that is, on different nights, in the various outlying sections. Classes for new members and functionaries to be arranged with one or two comrades covering them from city to city.

The reading of Party literature and resolutions is an indispensable part of our entire system of political training. On

various occasions the *Party Organizer* gave some facts showing how the district leaderships do not pay personal attention to this question. In the article which appears in this section on the Twelfth Plenum, facts are given emphasizing this point.

We refer the comrades again to the articles which appeared in the *Party Organizer* on the method of discussion in the units. We also quote from the Fifteenth Plenum resolution of our Party on this point. The basis for the political discussions in the units must be the struggle for the line of the Party (when we say struggle, we do not mean deviation hunting, slander and abuse, but the development of Bolshevik self-criticism). The struggle for the line of the Party, particularly by examination of the mass work of the Party, and shop, will greatly enhance the political life and interest for theoretical study.

We must remember that our schools are auxiliaries in the training of cadres. The main method of training the cadres is through the development of the mass work of the Party, through the development of the political initiative from below. The resolution of the Twelfth Plenum of the E.C.C.I. in speaking about the training of the cadres says: "The new cadres also must be drawn into the everyday revolutionary work among the broad masses. . . . Inner Party democracy, Bolshevik self-criticism, the discussion of the most important political problems in the lower organizations, concrete leadership of their work—all this must be the basis of all Party activity. This is also the necessary condition for strengthening iron Bolshevik discipline in the ranks of the Party."

S. D.

### Raises Need for More Elementary Training

I HAVE some concrete suggestions to make. Due to the fact that I am of American origin and have been exceptionally successful in the recent signature drive, I hope to have these suggestions taken seriously. Our section is a new one and in a residential district. The section committee of which I am a member is also new to a large extent. The unit bureaus are new also in the main. Due to bad transportation it is difficult to keep in touch with each other. The whole section has become more or less burned up with inner meetings. Some unit meetings lasting until 12:30 P.M. with little attended to. Very little recruiting is going on. Very little literature is being distributed. To criticize the leading committees and bureaus would be unjust in the extreme. For while we know we are not functioning properly, we can not put our finger on the exact trouble. We do try hard.

The main difficulty is to get comrades to realize their responsibility. Most of what I have said heretofore must be taken care of by ourselves I know.

Here is what I suggest. I am positive it is the most crying need we have.

A correspondence course in Communism. I think that all organizers and agit-prop units should take the course and all other members of leading committees, too. Also as many members as possible.

As it is now, I find that many unit organizers are made ridiculous by the peanut politicians on the signature drive. Besides, a simple course in Marx, such topics as planned meetings, political talk in meetings, discipline, and other very essential topics can be taken care of.

In that way, instead of just a gathering of reds we will have a snappy Bolshevik meeting.

It is hard for men who work day times to go to school. The Marxist Study Courses we have are entirely too deep for a beginner. I started a school with another comrade for each Sunday morning. We tried your study courses but had to discard them. The only thing that comes anywhere near being simple enough is *Shop Talks on Economics*. We were stuck from there on.

E. S.

\* \* \* \*

*EDITORIAL NOTE: We are glad to print this letter since the comrade here raises sharply the need for elementary training. There is a correspondence course in Fundamentals of Communism which can be secured from the Workers School in New York. But the suggestions made in the article in this issue of the Party Organizer on Party training is the basis for carrying through the proper education of the new members and functionaries. We suggest that these are followed by the comrades in this section of Chicago.*

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"Precisely because little time remains before the revolutionary crisis matures it is necessary, without losing a moment, to intensify and accelerate our Bolshevik mass work to win over the majority of the working class, to increase the revolutionary activity of the working class."—*Twelfth Plenum Resolution.*

## For Political Clarification On Twelfth Plenum Resolutions

**T**HAT our Party has not yet been permeated sufficiently with the necessity of political clarification of the tasks confronting us in this stage of the "end of capitalist stabilization" can also be seen in the sale of the Twelfth Plenum Resolutions in pamphlet form. These resolutions have been made available to the districts for more than six weeks. These resolutions contain important and valuable directives for our Party. But what has been the response of the districts? Districts like San Francisco, Seattle, and others have not yet ordered a single copy of the pamphlet *Capitalist Stabilization Has Ended* containing these resolutions. An important district like Philadelphia has satisfied itself with an order of 25 copies.—Cleveland has ordered only 100—Detroit only 150 copies. No district, with the possible exception of Chicago, has ordered sufficient copies of the resolutions to reach even district, section, unit and mass organization functionaries.

Why this neglect on the part of the leading committees in the district to popularize these decisions? Why this failure to utilize such important historic documents of the Communist International, which are vital guides in our day to day work? How can we bring these decisions down to the membership if our leading functionaries from top to bottom do not study carefully the Twelfth Plenum resolutions, apply them concretely to the work in the districts and their specific problems in the sections and units? The failure of the district committees to be personally responsible for the widest possible popularization and broad discussion of the Twelfth Plenum Resolutions is nothing else but underestimation of the value of such decisions of our World Party to raise the political understanding of the entire membership and improve the character of our work.

This can be seen most glaringly in some concrete examples. In Harlem at a functionaries' class, out of 15 present, only three comrades read the Fourteenth Plenum resolution. At a functionaries' conference on the Twelfth Plenum resolution, out of 60 comrades (embracing the leadership of the sections and mass organizations) 25 had not read No. 17-18 of the *Communist International* which contains an editorial and some of the speeches at the Twelfth Plenum. Similar examples can be given in other parts of the country.

The decisions of the Twelfth Plenum if properly utilized will mark a step forward in raising the ideological level of the membership and its understanding of the tasks now confronting our Party in the light of the latest decisions of the Communist International, and strengthen the struggle against all deviations from the line of our Party. These resolutions are an important weapon. Let us use this weapon.

# Party Organizer



SPECIAL  
SHOP  
ISSUE

Vol. VI

FEBRUARY, 1933

No. 2

*Issued by*

CENTRAL COMMITTEE COMMUNIST PARTY, U S. A

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# PARTY ORGANIZER

Vol. VI

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## The Shop—A Center of Mass Activity

THE material in this issue of the *Party Organizer* contains some of the best experiences related and discussed at the recent regional shop conferences. The exchange of these experiences should help in the further development and improvement of our shop work.

But in order to realize this, it is necessary to study and digest these experiences. One of the reasons why our work in the shops lacks political clarity and perseverance, why mistakes are repeated, is because some of the experiences become frozen—remain the property of a few individuals who are immediately and directly involved in the work.

The collective exchange of these experiences, the examination of these experiences will deepen and enrich our shop work. It is one of the guarantees in applying *concretely* the line of the Party in shop work and in the collective political check up.

If the experiences related at the shop conferences would have been told to the Party at an earlier date it would have aided greatly in our work. The *Daily Worker*, in reprinting some of the speeches made at the shop conferences asked time and again for articles discussing and commenting on these experiences, for articles relating to new experiences. *Not one single article came in.*

Who is responsible for this? We must say the responsibility lies mainly with us, with the district organizations. It is necessary to organize, encourage, guide and develop the initiative of the comrades participating in shop work in writing articles containing important experiences.

\* \* \* \* \*

The pre-convention discussion must serve to develop the mass work of the Party. The main phase in the pre-convention discussion in the units should be the development of shop work. The discussion in the units should be based on the line of the Fourteenth Plenum of our C. C. that "the main basis of the work and development of the lower Party organization is the work in the factory." This issue of the *Party Organizer* should be used as a guide containing concrete material for shop work in our pre-convention discussion.

\* \* \* \* \*

What is the chief task of our Party at the present moment? The Twelfth Plenum of the E. C. C. I. gives us a clear guide. It says: "*The greatest possible development and strengthening*



of the struggle of the proletariat against wage cuts and worsening of the conditions of labor, the exertion of all the efforts of the Communist Parties and the revolutionary trade union organizations to insure the independent leadership of strike struggles and the unemployed movement, the raising of the fighting capacity of the masses, leading them on the basis of their own experiences from the struggle for every day partial demands to the struggle for the general class tasks of the proletariat represent the *chief tasks* for all sections of the Communist International under the conditions of the end of capitalist stabilization."

What is the main base for the development of the struggle against the capitalist offensive at the present moment? It is the shop, the center of the attack of the capitalist class. Isn't it a fact that our Party is still isolated from the main sections of the American working class precisely because we lack solid contacts with the workers in the shops, particularly in the basic industries? The steel workers, the automobile workers, the railroad workers, have received numerous wage cuts. Certainly these workers are dissatisfied and are ready to struggle. The steel magnates have announced new wage cuts. The workers in each industry are facing new wage cuts and most vicious working conditions. We must say that the absence of large scale struggles in these industries is primarily due to our isolation from these workers, and lack of contacts and organization in the shops.

\* \* \* \* \*

The discussions at these two conferences have shown that the Resolution of the Fourteenth Plenum of our C. C. and the struggle for the carrying out of the Fourteenth Plenum Resolution is beginning to take root amongst large sections of the Party membership. At the same time it also showed that the Section, District and Central Committee functionaries have not sufficiently participated in the attempts of the lower organizations and our comrades in the shops in developing shop work and shop struggles. This only once more emphasizes the need of struggle against our bureaucratic methods of work and leadership. Indeed one of the main complaints of the comrades active in shop work was the fact that they do not receive immediate, intimate guidance from the higher bodies.

Both conferences have disclosed that our greatest weakness in the development of shop work is the inability of raising par-tial demands. And even still more, our inability to apply the policy of the united front in setting in motion the most backward sections of the workers in the shop for struggles against immediate grievances. At the same time comrades active in the shop have brought forward excellent examples how a Communist, by correctly raising partial demands and applying the policy of the united front, gains the confidence of the workers in the shop and develops shop struggles.

The discussion also emphasized the fact that our weaknesses in developing a correct policy of the united front was due to an underestimation and inability of fighting social fascism. It must be remembered that the shop is the very basis of building the revolutionary trade unions and opposition groups within the reformist unions. *The struggle for the shop is the key point in the development of a correct revolutionary strike strategy.*

The positive lessons brought forward at the Conferences are of great value and immediate use to the entire Party in the development of shop work. But this progress was mainly confined to the lighter industries. The Regional Conference for the concentration districts has brought forward the difficulties and main problems of shop work in the basic industries. We must remember that our policy of concentrating in Pittsburgh, Cleveland, Detroit and Chicago is based on the struggle of our Party to "firmly root itself in the decisive industries . . . and overcome the isolation of the Party from the decisive masses of the American proletariat." And this is the key problem that still confronts our Party.

*The present strike struggles in Detroit in the auto shops are of special significance to every district. These strikes are to a large extent the result of the improved methods of work, the guidance and participation of the district leadership in the work. The experiences in Detroit reprinted here which give some of the methods used previous to the strike should be studied carefully by all the districts.*

\* \* \* \* \*

The need of winning the native born workers was stressed at the shop conferences. At the same time the comrades refuted the ideas that foreign born workers cannot organize the native born workers in the shops. A living illustration of the important role which foreign born workers can play in organizing the native born workers was given by a comrade from a Patterson shop.

At the shop conferences all of the important practical political problems of shop work—the question of the unemployed in shop work, the question of the shop agitation, the question of the Party and union work in the shop—all of these problems were raised and discussed by the comrades active in shop work. The successful development of our shop work depends on the solution of all these problems. The exchange of experiences at the shop conferences and the further discussion in the entire Party will help in the solution of these problems.

\* \* \* \* \*

An outstanding weakness of both shop conferences was the very small number of Negro comrades present. Even in the discussion when the comrades were describing the composition

of shops in basic industries they merely mentioned Negro workers. But this was only done statistically. No reports whatsoever were made with regard to our special methods of work and activities in winning the Negro workers in the industries. The Fourteenth Plenum Resolution already spoke of the need of "making the red unions the real channels of Negro work." The entire Party must immediately realize this great weakness and take energetic steps in winning the Negro workers in the shops for struggle.

\* \* \*

At the Eastern Conference we had some women comrades from the lighter industries, but this number was very limited. Shop work is unthinkable without the winning of the women workers in the industries.

At the Eastern regional conference a most instructive report was given by the Y. C. L. comrade on the leadership in the Trenton doll strike. This strike has resulted in material gains for the young workers. The experiences in Trenton emphasized both the importance of the youth in shop and strike struggles and the possibility of winning strikes when a correct strike strategy is applied.

A necessary condition for the development of struggles in the shop is to fight against opportunism. At both conferences right and left opportunism manifested itself. Opinions that the social fascists can better formulate immediate demands than we, that the appearance of the Party in the shop is a hindrance in developing shop organization emphasize once more that we must carry on a decisive struggle against the right danger as the chief danger and against the "left" deviation.

The best indication of the earnestness with which the Party is beginning to take up shop work is the spirit of real self-criticism which prevailed at these conferences—self criticism not based merely on confessing sins, and pledges to be good, but based on actual contact with the workers and experiences of struggles in the shops. Only a self-criticism which leads to self-correction in the shops. Only a self-criticism which leads to the tempo in our shop work is improving, the general life of the Party is beginning to improve, the valuable guide of the C. I. in aiding our Party in the struggle against sectarianism is beginning to bear fruit. The beginning of contacts and organization in the shops have helped to create a healthy and refreshing atmosphere at the shop conferences. This spirit must permeate the entire Party from top to bottom.

Let us increase the tempo of our shop work. Deeper into the ranks of the Party! More intimate and permanent contacts with the large masses of workers!

## Concentration—A Means of Winning the Workers in the Key Industries

THE Communist International in Jan. 1931 raised for our Party the need of concentrating on the most decisive industries (mine, steel, textile, auto, marine) in the five largest districts (2, 5, 6, 7, 8). Since then the word "concentrate" has become one of the many terms of the Party. We "concentrate" feverishly. Party units were assigned to concentration points. Full-time organizers were appointed to certain factories. Special comrades were elected by the District Buros to supervise the concentration work of the Party. The comrades involved in this work tried their utmost to carry out the many instructions of the higher committees. But despite all the energy expended, the very formal and sectarian approach to this vital problem served as an obstacle to penetrating the concentration factories. The Fourteenth Plenum had to again emphasize that we "*must take steps to carry thru the directives of January, 1931, on concentration.*"

Only after the Fourteenth Plenum did the necessity of concentration begin to permeate the Party. At the conferences on shop work held in New York and Chicago, the comrades in relating their experiences showed that while our work in the shops is still of an elementary character, there is a beginning to understand how to work in the factories. As a result of a better approach to the problems in the factories and improved methods of work, some noticeable results have been attained. At the same time, however, there is still confusion on many important questions in connection with our concentration work.

### Our Past Methods of Concentration

What were our past methods of concentration? The concrete experiences brought out by the comrades at the shop conferences showed in general the following weakness in our concentration work:

- 1) Hunting contacts; 2) hunting grievances; 3) stereotyped shop papers, leaflets, issued primarily before the major campaigns of the Party; 4) parasitic form of concentration; 5) lack of leadership from the higher committees; 6) lack of understanding of the role and work of the shop nuclei; 7) insufficient understanding of how to safeguard the Party and organizations inside the factories; 8) neglect in developing struggles against espionage in the factories.

We cannot deal in detail with every point enumerated above. The basic weakness was the formal mechanical approach to the work. We were satisfied if we could show that we secured a number of contacts. *We did not really study and know the conditions inside the factories, raising the most burning problems facing the workers and developing struggles around these*

issues. As a result all these contacts remained on paper without any organizational advancement.

*We did not consult the workers with whom we had contact, discussing with them the grievances in the shop, formulating together with them concrete demands on the basis of these grievances, and activizing them in developing the work in the shop. We were merely satisfied with issuing a shop paper or a leaflet on the grievances which were dug up from the outside.*

We had a conception in the past that by assigning a full time comrade to take care of the concentration on the selected factory, we solved the problem. The result was that this comrade tried to do everything alone—edited the shop paper, mimeographed and distributed it, ran after contacts, and if he succeeded in finding out certain grievances in the factory from one of the contacts, without consulting anybody, proposed an action against this grievance in the shop paper or shop leaflet issued by himself. With this method of work we could not get any results.

In most of the concentration points the street nucleus or the individual comrades assigned to the work were left entirely alone. The higher committees, section and district, very seldom took the trouble to sit with them and discuss the problems which they face in their work. The higher committees assumed that the circular instructions sent to these concentration points were sufficient to develop the work. We have instances where the shop nucleus was entirely wiped out because of our lack of understanding of how to develop and lead the struggle inside the factory. In other cases, the shop nucleus did not do anything inside the factory for years because of the lack of leadership from the higher committees. In some of the concentration districts, the district committees solved this problem by assigning one member of the District Committee to take care of the shop work. He was made responsible for this work. He faced exactly the same situation as the comrades assigned to the selected factory. He did not get any help from the district committee and settled the problem singlehanded.

We have cases where members of shop units were used for general street agitation among the unemployed, with the result that the members of the shop nucleus were soon exposed and fired. In one city we "safeguarded" the members of the shop unit by having them meet in the headquarters of the unemployed council just opposite the factory in which the members were working. Most of the members of the shop nucleus were naturally fired from the plant.

For years we have been speaking about fighting the espionage system, yet we have a case where a whole shop nucleus was wiped out because we had a spy in the shop nucleus. The spy was not fired from the factory. That happened 8 months ago. But the spy is still in the Party and has been allowed to be active

in the union. The excuse of the district leadership for not exposing this spy, is that there is insufficient evidence against him.

### Wrong Conceptions of Concentration

In our concentration work in the past we faced a number of wrong conceptions and tendencies. Some comrades developed the theory that in order to make inroads into the big factories we have to first penetrate the small factories. The conception expressed was that since it is easier to build up organizations in the small factories, these organizations will supply the necessary forces and money for penetrating the big factories. While it is true that sometimes in one industry or town an effective strike struggle will have repercussions in the larger plants (Detroit), generally such a theory is justification for following the path of least resistance.

*This conception of concentration negates the Leninist understanding of developing organization and mass struggles in the key factories of the decisive industry which will influence not only the workers in the small factories of the same industry, but all the workers in the city and often influence the development of struggles in other parts of the country.*

The Warren strike influenced favorably the development of struggles in many other steel plants. In the factories where we succeeded to popularize the struggle of the Warren steel workers, we succeeded in creating enthusiasm among the workers and in some places gained organizational results.

We had a theory developed in one place (Binghamton) that concentration does not mean to select one factory and develop struggle and organize inside of it, but to carry on general agitation in all the factories in the same industry in the town, and wherever a struggle develops as a result of our general agitation—that factory will be our concentration point for future work.

There is a further wrong conception that has manifested itself in some of the districts that shop papers cannot be issued in factories where we have only one or two party members, or a few reliable non-Party contacts, because the information that these comrades will give us for the shop paper can't be properly checked up. This was theorized in order to delay the issuance of papers in the shop until a strong group was established. This had more basic causes—the fear to conduct agitation which would “interfere” with the narrow organizational routine work.

All these weaknesses and bad tendencies enumerated above were sharply exposed and fought at the two shop conferences. The conferences showed that we were making the first beginnings in our work in the shops.

### Beginnings in Improving Our Work

*What is of special importance is the fact that our comrades are learning the need of exposing even the most elementary grievances in the shop and developing partial struggles around these demands.*

Existing groups and even individual members were able thru proper methods of work in the shop to set in motion the whole department around a certain grievance. The action of the Stick-Together-Club in winning the 15-minute rest period; the movements in the steel plants against the welfare schemes; the defeating of wage cuts in a given department or section of workers (steel, miners), the gaining of certain demands as free shoes, sanitary conditions, etc; are all evidence of the fact that the comrades understand more clearly the necessity of rallying the workers around their immediate issues. These small actions in most instances resulted in organizational gains. However, these struggles are still isolated to small groups of workers and were not utilized to broaden the struggle and develop it to a struggle directed against the state apparatus, etc.

In many places we developed a system of getting and organizing contacts, using all possible forms of approaching the workers in the factory. In one place we succeeded to get splendid connections in a big factory thru a checker club. Another place we organized our forces in the factory for struggle through a sport club. And at a third place a small house party helped us to build up a fighting group inside of the factory.

*The comrades are beginning to understand that personal friendship with the workers inside the factory is an important factor in building up organizations; that these organizations will disappear if we do not develop struggles even on the smallest grievances.*

We have some experiences where the district leadership as a whole was drawn into the work, meeting with 3 or 4 workers of the factory, discussing with them their problems, and how to organize the workers inside of the factory (Detroit). This proper method of leadership resulted in a rapid development of the movement inside of the factories. At the same time the leadership became acquainted with the detailed problems of the workers and were able to lead them (the resulting strikes in Detroit).

We saw from our experiences that the foreign born comrades could become the leaders and organizers of the native born workers (Paterson, Warren, Detroit, Gary, etc.)

In certain places we did not only talk abstractly about the problem of connecting up the struggle of the unemployed with the employed in the factories, but actually developed such struggles and used in many cases the unemployed struggles to gain organizational results and develop struggles inside of the factories (in many steel factories).

The experiences proved that a mere issuing of a shop paper or a leaflet even without any organization inside of the factory could develop struggles and win demands and as a result of this create organizations inside of the factory.

*Thus we began to understand that "the first essential condition for successful work in the factories is daily contact with the masses of workers in it and a thorough knowledge of the position of the workers in the factory and of the concrete conditions for struggle" (Fourteenth Plenum Resolution)*

#### Concentration a Political Responsibility

The small successes cannot satisfy us in our work. The fact remains that the number of shop nuclei did not increase in the basic industries, that the membership of the existing shop nuclei is growing very slowly. In the November-December issue of the *Party Organizer* we wrote about our factory work, especially about systematic attention of the leadership to factory work and how to adopt conspiratorial methods in this work.

It is necessary to emphasize a few more points:

That District and Section Committees must consider their first political responsibility to those units which are concentrating on the important plants. This means that all the problems, in the concentration work, must be thoroughly taken up in the respective committee, a clear line of policy developed. There must also be the strictest check-up on the decisions made and on the forces assigned to carry through the work. While comrades should be assigned to help the units to carry on the work, the main problem is to develop the initiative of the units and to train the members in the concentration points.

Concentration means to utilize all available forces and organizations to penetrate the selected factory. The I. L. D., W. I. R., F. S. U., Labor Sports Union, should very consciously be drawn into the concentration work. The Unemployed Councils, trade unions, Y. C. L., must coordinate their plans with the Party organizations. The fractions in the various mass organizations led by reactionary and social-fascists should be made conscious of the concentration plan of the Party.

The language papers should be used more extensively in our concentration work. There was a very good suggestion in the Chicago shop conference which should be considered very seriously, i.e., that all the shop papers and even shop leaflets should be sent to the language papers which have influence among the foreign born workers in the given factory.

The leading committees should investigate very carefully the causes of the many failures in their efforts to penetrate the factory and to continue the work with renewed energy on the



basis of carefully considered measures to overcome the previous shortcomings.

We have to put an end to the deadly organizational daily routine in our factory work. We must develop the struggle against the capitalist offensive and against the policy of the reformists.

"Precisely because little time remains before the revolutionary crisis matures is it necessary without losing a moment to intensify and accelerate our Bolshevik mass work to win over the majority of the working class, to increase the revolutionary activity of the working class . . . The main link which the Communist Parties must seize upon in solving this problem is the struggle for the everyday economic and political interests of the broad masses against the increasing poverty, against oppression, violence and terror." (Thesis of the Twelfth Plenum of the E. C. C. I.) —J. P.

*The reports from the various plants on our experiences in shop work are reprinted here without any mention of factory, city or name of comrade. This is done with the view of protecting our work and connections.—Editorial Committee.*

## Steel and Metal

### How to Develop Permanent and Intimate Contacts

THE decision of the Party to make this steel plant a point of concentration is absolutely correct. We have seen in the last two or three months activity to make it ready for immediate transformation to war production. Already barbed wire is made inside the mill for Japan. We have not yet the full details on this. What is particularly significant is that while all the 15 open hearth furnaces are not running full capacity, they have built up three more open hearths—and this together with other activities in the plant shows that with the cooperation of the War Department the plant is being transformed for war production in preparation for war. Normally 14,000 workers are employed here. In the event of war at least 20,000 will be employed, since they will manufacture very important war material.

Within the last two years the wages of the workers have been

cut by 50 per cent. There have been three regular general cuts in February, October and January of last year. They affected all departments. But the wages are forced down even beyond this, because most of the workers are employed part time.

No one has been developed sufficiently to take over the editing of the paper. It has been the product of Comrade X. If comrade X, went to jail the paper went also to jail, and did not appear. However, as far as furnishing the contents for the paper some articles were furnished by members, but in the main most of the contents were written by Comrade X. We never had an editorial committee or discussion of articles that were placed in the paper. *However the paper itself had won the admiration of the steel workers in the plant, even though it has many faults. It has been able to gain several demands for the workers—such as water fountains that never existed, such as safety devices and many others. Workers whom we didn't even know went into action and developed a little struggle of their own without our leadership, only through the guidance of the paper. These struggles came to our attention only later.*

However, the lack of personal contact inside the mill, the inability of our comrades to weld contact with other workers, made the shop paper something that was just gotten out, the grievances raised in the bulletin were not developed, no action could be developed since our comrades did not form an integral part inside the mill to take up these grievances.

We must have a different approach to concentration. Unless the Party leading committees and functionaries give more constant and serious attention to shop work, unless there is organized a most intensive study of our experiences in shop work, we will not be able to take the proper steps. If there is going to be concentration, let there be concentration and not just talk about concentration.

#### System in Making Individual Contacts

How are we beginning to move out of this rut? Our system down there now in the mills is the old reliable grape vine system—that is like they have in jails—contact with one man, seeking out the trusted or best man as a means of propaganda and developing organizational contact all along the line. We have some real good examples in this connection.

We are establishing a rigid check-up on the work inside the mill. At every unit meeting and union meeting, comrades get up and report on their week's activities, report on their assignments, that they have done during the week, whom they have handled, what contacts they have secured, etc. Already, although this has taken place now within the last month and a half, we are beginning to see tremendous results and possibilities that will come out of this method of check-up.

### Some of Our Experiences in Establishing Contacts

Take, for instance, Comrade H., who has four friends. He is a Negro worker who came to our dance and was quite impressed in seeing so many Negro and white workers together. It was an I.L.D. dance. Our section organizer set the example to the unit and went over and started talking to different workers who were in the hall and he picked out this Comrade H., who proved to be very interested. He stated that he worked in the mill and the section organizer went to his house and talked with him and made friends with his wife and children. Then Comrade H. took the section organizer to four other workers. From 8 o'clock to 12 o'clock they went to visit these workers. In this way, a group is being formed around Comrade H. This is just what we want.

Take, for instance, Comrade B., who came in through a Russian organization. We have been checking up on this comrade constantly. For weeks he failed to make any report. Finally, by putting pressure on Comrade B., we got him to make an appointment with three American workers whom he knows. I went with Comrade B up to these three American workers' homes. There we began to talk about farming, etc., and pretty soon it developed in a roundabout way into a discussion on organization.

It happens that Comrade B. knows that one of these American workers likes playing checkers. Now, comrades, do you know what happened? Probably this does not apply to every situation. But it did work here. Comrade B. knew a comrade in Baltimore who was a champion checker player. He said, I am going to bring this comrade here. This interested many workers. Eight of them came down. In other words, eleven contacts were realized as a result of this.

We have a comrade here, sitting right in this room, who has an "unusual" way of making contacts. He makes friends with the workers on the job. You know the lunch buckets are not so full now. He manages to carry a few extra apples in his lunch basket. He passes the apples to some of the workers and develops a friendship with them and so he was able to bring several workers into the union. He is an Italian worker, and yet he was able to bring some American workers in. Now we have this American worker, the same one this Italian worker drew into the union, and he is very interested. He wants to know why we can't get American workers into the union. I explained the resolutions of the plenums to him in a very elementary language. I told him some of the mistakes that we make, what our troubles were. And he said: "You know down there in—— there are many fellows who may not be interested in the union, but they are interested in learning about radios, and he also knew a fellow who can give instructions, and they are going to start a radio club."

### Unity of Employed and Unemployed

Unemployed work is very important, particularly here. Formerly all of our plans were on paper. But now we are actually putting them into effect. A thorough discussion was held in the nucleus, especially on the question of the Hunger March. As a result of this it was proposed immediately that the Unemployed Council should be formed, that is the organizational committee, and the development of committees in the steel workers' section.

Many comrades felt that the workers in this section were not ready to fight. Of course, it was known that there was misery to a certain degree, but how much we did not know, because we did not get among the workers in the neighborhoods. And there we found that within a radius of six blocks, with the exception of two families, everybody was in immediate need of food, coal or clothing. As a result of this canvassing, three committees doing this work, two on each committee going around from one family to another, talking to them, asking them about their conditions, talking to them about the necessity of getting together, we found a splendid response. After the two day's investigation we were able to form an unemployed committee on the following day, getting the house of a worker right in that block, and in this way we formed two block committees in two important steel workers' streets. Following that we developed action and were able to win relief for unemployed steel workers. This is just a beginning. Our perspective is for developing block committees on a wide area throughout the steel workers' neighborhoods and a march on the plant, possibly in six or seven weeks, according to how well we are able to mobilize and organize.

Unemployed work is extremely important. On this question our ability to organize the unemployed steel workers will make it just that much easier for us to organize steel workers who still have a job.

On the question of developing issues. Only through these personal contacts will we be able to sense the needs of the workers and their moods. The developing and deepening of these issues bring into motion many workers who we otherwise have no contact with.

A concrete example. Last February, 1931, when one Greek comrade in a department, through personal contact with a few workers, was able to mobilize quite a number of workers, without the aid of leaflets, through preparation of a committee inside that department, we were able to bring 135 workers to a meeting.

On the question of the *Daily Worker*: We are already beginning to make some movement in this respect. Our shop nucleus is taking steps to distribute the "*Daily*" inside the mill. Two specific days were picked out whereby our mill workers will send correspondence to the *Daily Worker* and the distribution will be made inside and outside the mill.

I think that in dealing with these seemingly small questions and experiences, my own opinion and the opinion of the comrades who helped me to prepare this report, is that we are really placing the work of this most important conference on the proper basis, on the basis that this will enable us to really set our teeth in several central problems and arrive at practical, tangible results which will result in a definite and noticeable improvement—and that is what we are here for!

### Building Organization Thru Partial Struggles

I WOULD like to give a short report on a steel plant. In this town about a year or 14 months ago we did not have anything, just two or three Party members. Then two comrades from the district were assigned to work there. Now, after about 14 months time we have three shop units and two street units.

The steel unit, which is our concentration point is a very small unit, only organized something over a year ago. We had about 20 to 30 applications, a majority of them Negro workers. About a half of them now dropped out of the Party. Although the unit was organized in January, it did not function until June or July. Due to weaknesses of the section the unit died out. But, finally, the district hammered away and the unit was reorganized in June or July by the district. That is the time when I was assigned there. From July up till now we were able, through our shop bulletin, especially in July, to expose the bad conditions inside and we were able to force the company to stop docking the workers 25 cents from their pay every month for a club organized by the bosses. They are not going to deduct 25 cents any more out of the workers' fee, at least not unless he can make \$100 a month.

There were many small grievances—bad toilets and drinking fountains, also rough language at the works. They used oil cans, from which to drink the water. When we exposed this in the bulletins, the company was forced to give us galvanized water buckets and drinking cops.

In a safety meeting three or four months ago, in the department where I work we raised a lot of hell with the foreman and the bosses about the speed-up and unsafe conditions. Finally the bosses saw something was wrong so they tried to find out how all that came out. They fired one comrade a few weeks ago.

### Did Not Utilize Hunger March to Strengthen Organization

At the plant until now, we had only about 40 members. We are a pretty good strong department group; in one department where I was working, eight members were in this group. We could have more members or solid groups in the plant if we would properly utilize the Hunger March in this steel section, that was mentioned yesterday by a few comrades. We had about 8,000 workers in the hunger march, or about 12,000 from the starting point, but what happened after this hunger march? These workers at the plant did not have a single leaflet after this hunger march, with the exception of two weeks ago, when we had a mass meeting in the section and there was a few hundreds leaflets distributed. But after the hunger march there was issued just one leaflet when we went to Pittsburgh to form the union. The workers would come to the headquarters and we would give them supplies and food but there were no leaflets to give them.

### Developing United Front for Struggle Against Wage Cut

This section has many steel plants. The first wage cut was announced in October, 1931. News was spread on the inside that, when the workers will accept this 15 per cent wage-cut, there will be more days of work. This was the illusion that after the wage-cut there would be more work. The first wage-cut, the union was not on the job, but on the second wage-cut, we had a couple of mass meetings in the town. The workers were talking in the mill and said the mass meetings were against the wage-cuts. Of course, we were not strong enough to accomplish anything. Now, the third wage-cut is on the way; it is going to be some time this month, but not much later. What are we going to do on the third wage-cut?

We are preparing a united front conference which is going to be held this month. This conference, is to embrace all the organizations and all of our contacts. We have hundreds of contacts and we want to visit every one to establish department groups, general groups, to get all our contacts together and organize the Anti-Wage-Cut Committees.

At this plant I think there are only a little over 1,000 working part time, one or two days a week. The workers inside are all old timers working for 20 to 25 years. All the workers were in the steel strike of 1919. I spoke to many workers inside the mills, but they say they will not strike again. I asked why? They say, we have been fooled once. They collected \$5 and they sold us out. They are the same bunch now trying to organize. They will do the same thing as in 1919.

This is our weakness where we have to explain to these workers the difference between our union and the A. F. of L. I think in the near future, in spite of all this terror which is going on the last two or three months, comrades deported, many arrested at relief stations, and terrorizing and firing from the factory, we can develop struggles in the plant. I heard one comrade, in his opening remarks say we must safeguard our workers inside. I don't know, I was careful as much as possible and I was fired. If you want to do some work in the mill, you are not able to keep still inside. In my department, I was trying to keep quiet as much as possible, but I was fired anyway. Of course, in this struggle, you must tell the workers what to do, maybe not openly. In my department many workers waited for me to ask me question. They wanted to know how to get relief. Of course it is my duty to explain to them. And there will be many times in this section where Party members will distribute leaflets outside, from house to house. Well, that is exposure. Everybody knows everybody in the steel towns. So, I think one very important question in front of us is to establish methods whereby we can safeguard our workers in the shop.

### Problems Faced in Building Organization in a Steel Town

I WANT to report a little on the work in a steel plant. About a year ago in this mill we had a group of about 150 in the Metal Workers Industrial League. This group from what I know and have heard, carried on work, not in the mills, but merely agitation work. They didn't take up any struggles and actually remained just an agitational group. For this reason, this branch of the union in the mill has fizzled out like so many others all over the country. We have been trying to reorganize these workers who have been in the union, but this is a slow process because many of them still have the old opinion of our work. We have a shop unit there of about eight or ten members.

And all of these comrades are Italian workers, a couple of South Slavs—that is all. It is very hard to get these comrades to do any work. Some of them will speak to people of their own nationality. They won't approach anyone else. And for this reason it is very hard to get contacts. A few cases where we have actually got contacts and made assignment they go and visit them, and they have seen them and recruited them into the Party—workers direct from the shops—not on the basis of carrying on shop work but just telling them that the Party is the workers' Party and not because the C.P. is in the shops.

Many of these comrades also do not take up the union seri-

ously enough. And it took a lot of talk to convince them the other way. They must build a union. We have succeeded in getting one group there only about 10 members to function regularly, to take up the shop conditions there and to carry on work on the basis of the conditions which exist there. Also, a group in another department of about twelve members. All these groups however have a bad feature, they are all Italian workers. Many of the workers are Slovaks, quite a few Croatsians in the mill, but there have been no efforts made to get them. There are left wing organizations among the Croatsians and these organizations should furnish us plenty of steel workers because practically all of these Slovaks and Croatsians are steel workers.

The shop bulletin has been issued for the last couple of months in the mill taking up the conditions there. However, the shop bulletin hasn't been done collectively. The members of the shop unit cannot speak English, let alone write any articles for it. They tell me about the conditions, report in detail many instances of the conditions there, and what can be done, and I have to write the articles for them. And in this way they don't take enough responsibility, it appears as if they don't have anything to do with the shop bulletin, and it is not really issued by themselves. That is one thing we will have to correct.

The shop bulletin has created favorable comment in the shop. Last time the bulletin was issued I met a worker who had just come out of the mill and just received his bulletin. He told me that he had read of the Party quite a while and he would have joined it if he wouldn't lose his job. I explained to him that there is no danger of losing the job if we worked at it correctly. I convinced him. I got his address. He is an American born element—the only American contact. This just shows our lack of work inside the shops. Our comrades are afraid to talk while on the job. And this instance where I got this contact of the American born, if we have someone to talk and lead a discussion on the conditions we can get some work done there.

Now another point in the work, is unemployed work. This is very serious in our section. There is practically no unemployed movement, except a few small groups. We can see here as elsewhere, that without an unemployed movement you can't build the union. And it must be up to the union to build up this unemployed movement. We cannot separate the unemployed movement and the union as we have done up to this time. The union must have its unemployed branches and this is to carry on all the unemployed activity. And they must recruit directly into the union.

Now on the coming wage-cut. The comrade previously reported that we intend to have a united front conference to which we can draw these language organizations, the ones that are



under our leadership, and others. There is a possibility of getting delegates. The workers are already talking about this general wage-cut. And they are pretty sore about it. The wages amount to 22 cents an hour.

And the policy of the mill is to divide the work with all the workers, in many cases five and six hours a week at 22 cents an hour. And then they have to depend upon the small amount of relief they are able to get from the Welfare Relief organization. Also, in connection with the unemployed work in the section, the Musteites have succeeded in building quite a number of Citizens Unemployed League branches. A branch of unemployed with a membership of about 100, now is in the control of Muste. Due to our lack of work and organization in the entire section, Muste's organization is spreading throughout the section but mostly in the small farm rural towns. They are trying to spread their propaganda and build up Leagues in the steel towns and try to develop a movement of the workers. We must be ready to guard against this. We must show to the workers in these organizations that ours is the only correct program of action.

### Need of Continuity in Work in Shops

**T**HE main weakness in all our work in the shop is the lack of continuity once we have established some of our groups and our committees inside the shop. We seem to be able to get to a certain point in shop work and then we stop. I want to take for example our experiences and examine one or two shops in which we have established fairly large groups at one time. However, because we were not able to continue the work, to know the next steps in developing struggles, training the members in the process of these struggles, the union groups today are practically non-existent.

In one steel plant we began work by first discussing with our comrades the various problems. On the basis of this we began to recruit for the union in the shop. In a few weeks we built up a union group of 45 to 50. In one section of this plant where 500 workers were employed we had 26 dues-paying members of the union. This union was built because we took up with the workers the concrete grievances and the daily needs in the mill.

For example, the safety shoes. The workers had to have safety shoes but were compelled to pay for them as much as \$3 and \$4 a pair. We raised the demand of free safety shoes. This stirred up workers who were not even in our organization. We began to raise this question at the safety meetings—and the demand was won. But we did not know how to go any further.

### Know the Factory for Proper Leadership

We called meetings of our union, and what did we take up? We discussed the conditions in the shop. We were satisfied and they were satisfied that we had won something, but we did not discuss other grievances around which struggles could be developed. We were not sufficiently acquainted with the shop to be able to guide the workers to dig up additional grievances in the shop. The result was that for weeks we had meetings with the workers, discussed with them, took up the dues payments, various mass meetings that we held in the town, and week after week we could definitely see a decline in the attendance at the meetings and a decline in the membership.

We began to discuss the trouble. We found that as long as we were taking up the issues of the workers, we were constantly getting new blood. But when we did not discuss the actual grievances there was a decline in enthusiasm and in members in that particular mill.

We had the same thing in another mill. A mill of some 250 workers. In one department we had 75 per cent of the workers organized in our union. In fact, we were already discussing a strike situation. But today also here we have practically no organization.

In another steel mill we won the right for the Negro workers to buy coal. In this same mill some workers in one department, following the advice of our leaflets, organized a committee and went to the superintendent to protest a wage cut in the mill and also against the speedup. Alongside of that particular department we had Party and union members, but they did not know that such a movement was developing. Because our comrades did not give leadership to this movement and work out methods for presenting the demands the committee that went up to the boss was immediately fired and nothing happened in the shop.

### Must Have Perspective for Struggle

We also seem to have a lack of objective when we go into a shop. Lots of times we start organizing groups in the shop because we are told to do so. We don't go there examining the conditions of the workers and setting ourselves a certain objective we intend to reach by developing the work. I think we must put forth an objective for the workers we are organizing. The demands we used to raise in the steel industry before—we set an objective there—we called upon the workers to organize and strike against wage cuts. What was the result? Certainly the workers saw clearly that it would be impossible to strike against wage cuts at that particular moment. They knew they had no organization and no leadership. In the steel mills, in our union, although we carried on some activity, it was very weak.

The whole thing looked like a mountain to the workers. They did not think and did not believe we could develop a strike, therefore, we did not develop any struggle around the issues of previous wage cuts that took place in the steel industry. Today we have learned something. In my opinion the slogan we have now on the question of the wage cut is better. We don't speak on the subject of strike, at least not now, not yet. We speak of defeating the wage cut.

This wage cut can be defeated, as we have already defeated a wage cut in one steel mill here. A 5 per cent cut was defeated two weeks ago without a strike. We started some agitation on the question of the cut and some discussion among the workers in the mill, and this in itself helped to defeat the cut. I think that certain demands, even a wage cut, can be defeated without a strike, especially if we call upon the workers by giving them leadership and guidance and first of all acquainting them with the union in the mill. The workers will not recognize the slogan as something impossible to achieve, and therefore this slogan that we put forth now about defeating the wage cut will depend to a large extent on how we develop the movement.

### Initiative of Workers Suggests New Forms of Organization

I WANT to tell you about a certain struggle that was carried on without developing a strike in a shop in our district. This shop I am working in is a big shop that employs about 20,000 workers when it works full time and 5,000 workers at present.

In this shop there is practically no organization or union and to develop any fight against this wage cut we as yet have no forces in there. On that basis, we considered what could be done in that shop. The method we adopted is to develop small struggles where the comrades are working. I want to relate one experience where we got certain organizational results on the basis of small struggles.

#### Win 15 Minute Rest Period

In the place where I was working, we worked on a belt, that is, every worker did one operation on the belt. On this belt, every worker has to do a certain operation; he cannot go away from that belt while working because if he goes away the next worker can't do his work, and so on. When a worker has to leave his work for a minute, a relief man has to do that operation while he is away.

These workers for a long time were getting five minutes relief in the morning before lunch and five minutes in the afternoon. These workers were very dissatisfied and thought this wasn't enough time, and were kicking about it all the time. One day

we made a suggestion that all the men on that particular line should take fifteen minutes relief instead of five. All agreed that if every one would take fifteen minutes it would be easier to get away with it, than if only one worker did. Because if one worker did it the boss could do something—lay him off for a week and so on. I immediately seized that opportunity and pointed out to the workers that this was the only way we could get something in the shop, if we all stuck together, and the workers agreed.

The next time the relief man came around we told every worker in that particular group, when he went out, to stay for fifteen minutes. The relief man relieves one worker, then the next one, and so on. We told the workers to stay out for fifteen minutes and not to come back until the fifteen minutes were up. The workers agreed, and they did it. The relief man was very sore, and when he got through with this group of workers he took down all the names and took them to the foreman. But when the foreman saw the long list he had and all the names, he didn't even come over to tell the workers about it.

*This way we gained the 15 minutes in the morning and 15 in the afternoon.* I pointed out to the workers that this should convince them that only if we stuck together could we get anything. I told them if we were organized in some form or other we could get many other victories against grievances which affect all the workers in the shop.

### Build "Stick-Together" Club

And there were many grievances there on the job and the workers agreed to that, and right at the place there we decided to form a "Stick-Together" Club. Many workers had the habit of telling the foreman of different things the other workers did. We decided one of the things we should do is not to be squealers, and the workers agreed to it. And the workers took the organization as their own because this organization arose on the basis of their own experiences and they knew it was their own organization.

Of course, this organization, after it was established, was very loose—only one group of workers in one particular section, who saw each other every day, and talked things over. We had no regular meetings or anything of the kind. But I had the perspective of broadening it out, consolidating it, making it the organizer of struggle, and then pushing it into a form of union organization. But shortly afterwards a lay-off came, and this organization did not function for some time.

After we came back, we tried to revive it, but could not do it on the basis of nothing at all. But certain grievances came up, which revived it. One day, one of the workers forgot to ring up his card and he was docked, and he was sore. The same question came up where the foreman came to collect money for the Red Cross. This was supposed to be voluntary, but it was

not. When the workers refused, the foreman wrote in the names, and the workers had to contribute. The workers did not like it, and we utilized this to establish the "Stick-Together Club," and our problem is to broaden it out and try to establish some stronger form of organization where the workers would be able to carry on work on a wider scale.

So far it involves one department and only young workers. But I want to say that one thing we have learned is that when I try to carry on work in that shop on the basis of direct Communist propaganda, bringing in newspapers to the workers, these workers were prejudiced against the Communists. No matter what I told them, the propaganda of the capitalist press was counteracting our propaganda. But on the basis of such a thing, we would establish a form of organization and the workers recognized it as something they organized, decided on, and that it was on the basis of their own experiences and grievances, and they knew it was their own organization.

### Struggles of Unemployed Strengthens Shop Organization

FIRST, I want to give you a little picture of this steel mill. This mill at the present time has on its pay roll about 3,000 workers in the mill. The majority of these workers are working one or two days a week, sometimes one or two days a month. Most of them are foreign born workers—almost 65 to 75 per cent, are Polish, Ukrainian, Croatians, etc. About one-fifth of the workers are Negro.

The situation in the mill at the present time is such that the major issue before the workers in the mill is the question of relief, since most of the workers are not even getting any pay. They work a couple of days a month and that pays their insurance which is compulsory in the mill and also pays up the company debts, which they owe to the company store. These workers who get this credit from the company store, go more and more in debt to the store and now you will find the situation where workers owe \$50 to \$100 to the company store.

When we started concentrating on this mill, we found ourselves with a small group of workers. These comrades, being foreign-born always had the excuse they couldn't do anything because there are no American workers in our union; we must get the Americans, then we will be able to work. They forgot entirely that 70 per cent of the mill was foreign born workers. The activities of this small branch of the union were mostly of a general character, putting out leaflets once in a while about general things, calling on the workers to join the union, calling a mass meeting, etc. One mass meeting was held and three workers were fired because they were at the meeting. The Union was not strong enough to put up a fight against this terror.

### Party Members Begin Active Work

When we again seriously tried to get the job of working in the mill, the first thing we did was to get the Party members. With these comrades we discussed very seriously what is the major issue, the most important question to the workers in the mill, and the major question was the question of relief. We put out a leaflet on this question, the leaflet was distributed by unemployed workers on the day when most of the workers went after their relief, and this was very timely. Here they were getting the groceries, were dissatisfied, and we had this leaflet on relief. A discussion started when two members of our union were right among the workers and of course they helped to carry on the discussion and talk about the demands we raised in the leaflets.

What happened? As a result several days later, many workers went to the company welfare and raised the question of relief for the single men as well. The workers came to the welfare agency for more each week, some stayed there and wouldn't leave the office, asking for more than they were getting. Some of them got it. The mistake we made was not to follow up that demand and that fight for more relief. We just discussed it with the comrades, tried to approach these workers, and this is about all we have done after that.

This also brings up the question of the continuation of our work. Following up our demands with more struggles until we win the demands, and also raising other issues. The shop nucleus brought out a shop bulletin and here again we saw how the workers simply grabbed this bulletin. We found immediately as soon as the bulletin was put out the company was just running wild trying to find out where the bulletin came from. They put in an extra number of cops around the entrance to the mill. They even tried to look into the homes of some of our comrades who are pretty well known in the section where the mill is located.

We found that in spite of this terror that came as a result of the bulletin, workers in the mill were reading the bulletin. Some got together and read the bulletin right inside the mill.

We immediately began raising the question of new members and we found that almost every one of our members had connections, even though they were unemployed, who worked in the mill, probably a year ago or four or five months ago. They knew the workers personally, went around with them and so on. We discussed the question of getting these workers they know, get them into the union, give them something to read, keep in contact with them. By doing this work we got in a number of American workers whom the comrades thought it was impossible to get in before.

One of the comrades brought out the question of key men. This is a very important, serious and sometimes decisive question when it comes to a struggle. We spent a number of meetings

on this one point, in finding out where are the key departments also what are the possibilities in the shop, how many influential workers we have in these departments, workers who lead groups of workers and to whom the workers will listen and whom they will follow them when a strike breaks out.

#### Unemployed Struggle Building Union and Party

We find that without carrying on a struggle for unemployment relief we will be able to organize the workers. We find workers of the mill only working a few days; they are faced with eviction, have no gas, cannot send their children to school because they have no shoes, their children have no milk. We find that unemployed work helps us to build the Union and the Party. We have with us a comrade who came into the Union as a result of this work, came into the Party as a result of unemployed work.

We had a family who was going to be evicted. We found out about it, we organized block committees, and stopped the eviction. In our block committee we had a number of mill workers. In fact these workers were the leaders in the block committee. They accepted the responsible business of the committee. They were doing most of the work. We also went to the City Council and demanded shoes for the children of unemployed and part time workers. We won this demand, but unfortunately did not popularize it. As a result, we found a number of mill workers coming closer to our Union and to the Party.

#### Combine Struggle Against Wage Cut with Immediate Relief

On the question of the coming wage cuts. We are expecting a probable 10 per cent cut. This has not been officially announced but rumors are being spread among the workers. This coming wage cut is a big problem to the workers. Some say they are not working so they are not interested in it and the question of relief is important. The question of the wage cut cannot be raised without raising the question of relief with these workers.

In a discussion with the workers on the coming wage cut, a number of tentative plans were worked out. The question they have raised is, of course, the fight for relief. They raise the question of getting 50 per cent of their relief in cash. Why? Because they didn't get a cent in wages and they have no money to buy things—they have to buy salt, oil for their lamps, etc. They felt that this would be much easier to get than all cash relief instead of all groceries. They also proposed to demand an increase in relief, and this they did not settle definitely. They have not decided how much of an increase we are going to demand.

They brought out the question of compulsory insurance. They now have to pay \$1.10 a thousand or \$2.20 for two thousand.

They are forced to pay it out of their wages. We will demand that the insurance be paid by the company for all workers who work less than six days, also that insurance should not be lost if the workers are laid off or fired.

On the question of the united front to fight against the wage cut. We have discussed this with our branch. We have discussed in a way first, the question of organizing the anti-wage-cut committee. Well, comrades in fighting against the last cuts of October 1 and May 15 most of our work consisted in agitation and in this agitation we mainly brought out the question of organizing the strike against the wage cut. But we never took up with our members, how will we be able to help the workers in the mill to organize these anti-wage-cut committees, how to do it and how to go about it.

We have not really come to the basic issues, basic grievances of the workers, no definite perspective of developing immediate struggle in the shop. Right now we are beginning to do this and I believe that this united front campaign coupled with work inside the mill, will develop a fight for local grievances which will really bring definite results, about which we will be able to report very shortly.

### Partial Struggle in a Metal Shop

**I** WORK in a metal shop which, during the war, produced bullets for the air service. This shop employs mostly women workers—55 per cent women—most of them Spanish. The wages in the shop average \$12 a week, but most get \$8, including some skilled workers.

#### First Steps in Building Organization

We tried to strengthen our work when we came there. First, at our unit meeting we took up the question of how to become personal friends with the workers. We started agitation inside the shop around the immediate grievances: low wages, speedup and the question of overtime. We visited some workers in their homes. We had one article in the *Daily Worker* during this period, and the article was pasted up inside the shop; also, there was a distribution from the outside.

During the election campaign we had a distribution inside the plant of the platform of the Party, in English and Spanish. During the period of the Hunger March, a non-Party worker collected \$8 on a list in his department. Workers contributed as high as 50 and 75 cents for the Hunger March. The total collection for the March was \$10. As a result of that we gained forty contacts on the Hunger March list.

Now on the question of the shop nucleus and the guidance



the Party gave us: First, the district did not call us in even once to discuss what we are doing in the shop. The section only for the last five weeks has given attention to our problems. But they paid attention only by sending a representative to the nucleus. But no work was carried on from the outside. The same is true of the union leadership.

We did not have department nuclei. We had a joint Y. C. L. and Party nucleus. We always met together. The comrades of the nucleus used to come to the union office almost daily. We did not bring forward the Party nor the Y. C. L. The League and Party members acted as union members. We did most of our work as union members, with the result that we recruited only one member into the Party during the three months, and that was on the basis of personal contact. We picked one of the best leaders in that group and recruited him into the Party.

#### Immediate Issues Basis of Partial Struggles

We conducted some partial struggles in the shop. First, in the \_\_\_\_\_ department, as a result of certain chemicals used, there was a very bad odor in the department. The comrades immediately raised the question that they could not work under such conditions. They mobilized the workers in that department and we had decided to stop work. On the basis of that, all the workers stopped for 10 or 15 minutes, demanding that they stop the use of that chemical. An hour later they changed it and the workers went back to work. This was a result of a sharp struggle. Through this we recruited eight members into the union.

Another struggle was conducted on the question of overtime work. The workers said they would not work overtime unless they were paid time and a half. They were also forced to work on holidays and sometimes on Sundays. The comrades, together with the other workers, demand that on holidays they get at least 50 cents lunch money. The boss refused to do anything, and the workers quit an hour and a half before the schedule, and the boss had to pay them for the hour and a half.

There was a girl in the shop who died as the result of an accident. We immediately issued a leaflet when the girl was injured. We put up a union lawyer and doctor on the job and they told us that we must have a private nurse for the girl. When we issued our second leaflet it was already too late—the worker had died. During the whole period the Party members did not respond, with the exception of one or two. On that day it happened that a special leaflet was issued calling the workers to the funeral. Certain Y. C. L. members were assigned to distribute the leaflets. The comrades overslept, and as a result the workers who wanted to come down did not know

where to come. Only in those departments where the comrades were active did we mobilize the most workers. Five new members were recruited as a result.

The last point I want to raise is on the question of our perspectives. In discussing this question with the comrades of the section committee, our perspective is to develop a struggle in that shop. We have quite a number of sympathizers for the movement. A certain situation developed in the shop where everybody was laid off for one week. Certain workers were told to come back the following week. On the day when these workers come back to work we will have to develop a struggle on the question of at least getting carfare. There are many tasks in the shop. The main thing is the concentration on the part of the section committee from the outside, together with the comrades from the inside, and I hope that as a result we will be the next shop to be entirely organized.

## Railroad

### Work Among Negroes in Railroad Industry

I WANT to deal principally with the experience we have had in organization in a railroad yard. In the past few months we have been able to establish an organization of dining car stewards, waiters and cooks.

This is important because it is the first real success we have had in organizing any number of Negro workers. In the railroad league we have had a number of Negro workers in different sections of the country, but they would come and go. We would make little successes at certain places which would last two or three months and finally disappear.

#### Unity of Work and Negro Workers

This movement, however, has been organized principally by workers on the job. We are able through one or two Party members to make contacts with some key workers in this particular department, and practically all of these workers have been organized right on the job. The contacts we made of Negro workers as well as some white workers with cooperation from the outside were able to build up this group around actual conditions on the jobs. We made the same mistake here as elsewhere by putting up general demands. But this was corrected. We took the old agreement of the Dining Car Employees, and with the cooperation of these workers were able to redraft it to include a number of new demands—to include special demands for the Negro workers.

Around these demands we are organizing the workers on a united front basis. Attempts have been made in the past to organize all dining room waiters, without any success. Now, because of the situation in the industry, where the conditions of all workers are being undermined, where Negro workers at lower wages are replacing in many cases white dining car stewards who received \$175 a month, the struggle for better conditions is uniting both Negro and white workers.

I will not go into the detail of the agreement. But, instead of going to these workers with leaflets and with our 1, 2, 3, 4 and 5 general and abstract demands, we took this agreement and went over it with individual workers and formulated the tentative or proposed agreement, taking up the question of wages and working conditions in detail. We had this mimeographed and circulated in the cars. *Today we have two-thirds of the workers in the organization.*

### Problems of Organization

Fifty cents a month is being contributed by the workers to what we call the "Organization and Negotiation Fund." We have set the goal that we organize on the basis of the grievances and for a fight to enforce the proposed agreement that was drawn up. We are calling upon the workers not to pay dues, but to contribute 50 cents a month to finance the organization work and the negotiations of this agreement.

There have been a number of difficulties in the work. The workers are constantly on the go. They are not in one place like shop workers. There is never a time when we can get more than a half of them together. We have opened a headquarters and we are attempting to draw in these workers when they come off the trains, so that we can be constantly in touch with them. We are organizing on the basis of car committees. We set up a committee of three on each car, developing little meetings as they go over the road. This is sometimes a very difficult problem, because one-third of the workers are on the job while one-third are sleeping and the others available for meetings.

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### Developing Struggle Thru Personal Contact

**I** THINK two points stressed at this conference are points which have not received too much attention by our Party, by our movement as a whole. I think that is one of the reasons why we haven't made as much progress as we could have made in the basic industries. The first point is the question of real personal contact with the workers in the shop.

In one railroad center, we have been putting out a bulletin

for about a year and a half. The workers like that bulletin, they eat it up, they grab it; for hours you will find them discussing that bulletin. But when you come to these workers, they want to know who you are. They know each other, they want to know who you are, and unless they know you and unless they know someone who knows you, you won't get into these places very easily. That is what is happening in this place.

Now I will give you another example. In one plant we concentrated for quite a while. We sold the *Daily Worker* for two weeks, at one time reaching a sale of 17. The company got wise to it and terror broke out. A lot of the workers who bought the *Daily Worker* must have been fired. We have never made any real personal contact with these workers. They didn't really know us, we didn't really know them.

### How We Make Personal Contacts

I want to use one or two instances where, due to the fact that we have been able to develop personal contact, we have made the real beginnings of actually getting into the shop. There is a point where the railroad workers come to work. When I first joined the Party I was sent to sell the *Daily Worker* at that point. Three years later, when I began to do work on the railroad, we still didn't have any connections with these workers. My unit was assigned to get connections with these workers. About three blocks away from where these yards are there is a Negro territory. We figured if we would get into that territory we would find a large section of those workers living there. The comrades went out for six months with the *Daily Worker* and the *Liberator*, until they got workers they could really talk to. Little by little we won the confidence of a few of these workers. And then they built up a club, around these workers. Today this club has grown. Most of these workers are Negro workers. Most were working there at one time and have now been furloughed. However, there are some still working there. I know most of them. I can go into any of the houses, talk to their families. Now we have the basis for establishing a real organization.

I will give you another little example. We got connected up with a worker, an engineer. This worker was interested in our paper and movement. Now, after four months, when I am a personal friend of his, he tells me, "you know how I came into this movement. I thought it was pretty good. I wrote to a friend of mine in Chicago. He told me he thought it was O.K., so I came in." Before he came into the movement he wanted to find out who we were and he never came to us but wrote to a friend of his to find out. This fellow is against the reds and Foster in particular. But after doing a little bit of work there he came and told me that one of the fellows he had lined up is a red, who reads the *Daily Worker*. He has subscribed to the *Daily Worker* for about one or two years. I went to

see him a few weeks ago and found that there were three railroad workers reading the *Daily Worker*. One of these fellows I think still belongs to the Knights of Columbus, a good Irishman. He likes the *Daily Worker*, and I think if we do real work on them we could get them into the Party. This fellow that is against the reds has changed since he is working among them.

### Small Group Can Develop Struggle

This brings me to the problem of leading the work in the shops in such a way that the small groups we have are merged in actions and are not picked out by the boss. If we do this, I think we can build strong and solid organizations everywhere. And I don't mean we need 30 or 40 workers before we can start. When I speak of struggle, I don't mean only strikes; even if a leaflet wins a demand for a worker, that is a form of struggle.

I want to bring out one concrete experience. We got connected with a certain worker who has a lot of influence in his shop. After a talk with this worker, he felt that the question of the speed-up was a burning question, and we felt that if we got a large group around the question of speed-up we wouldn't need a strong union organization. If we could get a couple of fellows to spread the word around, this would be enough to an extent to stop the speedup. This worker began to approach the workers to discuss ways and means of stopping the speed-up. This was two months ago. We got together seven workers and we used to meet right after work on the street corner around midnight. We had no other place to meet in, no hall, etc., because of the late hour. These fellows began to spread the word that we have to stop the speed-up and slow up a little. This began to take effect, to an extent. All the workers began to slow up. The company soon became aware of this slowing up, and they also knew we had organization. For a period of a month and a half they were able to stop the speed-up and the foremen were pretty much stumped and wouldn't get very far, because we had a solid bloc.

Well, we still have seven or eight workers who meet at midnight, outside the place, but because we were able to develop a movement which didn't involved only a small group, we were able to win the sympathy of these workers and show them that we can get somewhere.

## Carry the Struggle Against War Into the Shops

**I**N the resolution on the war in the Far East and the tasks of the Communists in the struggle against imperialist war and military intervention against the U.S.S.R., the Twelfth Plenum of the E.C.C.I. points out that "the period of relative stabilization in international relations has ended; that the attack of Japanese imperialism on China which is taking place with the full and open support of France and with the secret support of England, marks the beginning of a new imperialist war." It pointed out how the U.S.A. is striving to provoke war between Japan and the Soviet Union in order that by weakening both Japan and the U.S.S.R. it may strengthen its own position in the Pacific.

The Party manifesto, issued in January, 1933, shows that war is already going on in the Far East, in Latin America. It exposes the aim of the Japanese army through the occupation of Jehol to reach the Soviet border all along its Asiatic frontier. It exposes the League of Nations as an instrument of war and the Second International as shamelessly preparing to repeat in the coming imperialist war the present role of the Japanese social democracy as betrayers of the working class. Billions are being spent in a new race of armaments, and other millions are being spent for peace conferences that have been following each other in the last years as a camouflage for war preparations (while in the U. S. A. and in the other capitalist countries millions of workers are out of jobs, millions of farmers are at the mercy of bankers, burdened by heavy mortgages, taxation, debts, etc.). The manifesto calls upon the toilers of the United States to increase the struggle against developing imperialist war.

### Weaknesses in our Anti-War Campaign

If we examine our anti-war campaign conducted in the last year, then we must come to the conclusion that we have not taken all measures to reach wider masses of the toiling population. We did not yet succeed in bringing the campaign among the workers in the factories; that the Party and the trade unions did not concentrate with vigor in the industries which can be mobilized for the conduct of war, such as metal, chemical and transport; that we did not spread our campaigns to the millions of farmers among whom the anti-war sentiment strongly prevails; that we did not reach the masses of American youth and the masses of women in industry with our anti-war campaign.

Our campaign still remains to a great extent a purely agitational campaign. Yes, such agitation must be followed up and extended. *But this agitation campaign and the propagandist activities must be followed up by the revolutionary work of the Party among the masses, by concrete work. At this stage our task is to concretize the slogan of setting up anti-war committees in every shop, in the neighborhoods and workers' organiza-*

tions, to concretize the slogan of stopping the shipment of munitions, to concretize the slogans of demonstrating against the bloody Japanese imperialist bandits and in support of the heroic Japanese revolutionary workers, to demonstrate against the imperialist war-makers of Wall Street and Washington. It is necessary now more than ever before to develop the struggle against the capitalist offensive to lower the standard of living of the masses. All these struggles must be linked up with the anti-war struggle. (These struggles will facilitate the setting up of anti-war committees in the factories, in the mass organizations), on a neighborhood scale, among the unemployed. But this in itself is not sufficient. It is not only through economic struggles that we develop anti-war activities. It is also necessary to develop the political struggle and specific activity against war.

### Build Anti-War Committees in the Shops

Today more than ever before we must intensify our activities toward penetrating the factories and building the shop nuclei, one of whose major tasks will be the winning of the masses for our anti-war struggle. This is one of the fundamental organizational tasks of the Party particularly at this moment. Special attention shall be concentrated on building shop nuclei in ammunition factories, in the shipyards, in the railroad centers, in other branches of transport, in factories that can be easily transformed into war plants (auto, chemical, rayon, etc.). In this respect the districts must have a clear program of action.

The setting up of anti-war committees cannot be accomplished in a mechanical manner. In certain factories or mass organizations, in the neighborhoods, such committees can be set up legally, after an intense ideological campaign among the masses. In other factories, such as ammunition plants, shipyards, etc., according to the situation, such committees can be set up illegally or semi-legally. In this respect we must work out the methods of how to get contacts, how to utilize the contacts inside the plants, how to spread anti-war literature among the workers, etc.

### Develop Partial Struggles

In all industries, including the war industries, wages are slashed and on the basis of the continuous rationalization workers are laid off. In addition to the development of the struggle against the wage cut, we must arrange demonstrations of solidarity of the employed and unemployed workers. In the shipyards, for example, where workers are laid off, we must rally the laid-off workers and draw them into the struggle for immediate relief and unemployment insurance and utilize their connections to reach the masses still inside the plants. In the war plants it is of special importance to develop struggles against wage cuts, speed-up and around other grievances in

the plant. Here such struggles are in actuality a struggle directed against the government.

*In the anti-war campaign all forces of the Party must be mobilized; nuclei, street units and fractions in all mass organizations, and especially in the revolutionary trade unions, in the unions of the A. F. of L. for the conduct of an intensive anti-war struggle inside the unions, to set up anti-war committees, to lead the workers especially in metal, chemical, marine in the struggle to hinder production of ammunition and war material in general. For months and months, from the ports of New York, Philadelphia, Norfolk, New Orleans, San Francisco, Seattle, transport after transport has left for the Far East and Latin America loaded with ammunition or raw material to be used for war purposes. While the American bourgeoisie is talking about a boycott against Japan, Mr. DuPont realized a profit of 37 million dollars in the last year. Shipments of cotton, scrap iron, chemical stuffs, etc., to Japan are continuing this year.*

During this year two or three demonstrations took place in different ports of the United States against the transportation of ammunition to Japan. The working class has not yet succeeded in stopping one single shipment. It will succeed in the near future, if the Party, the Marine Workers Industrial Union, the militant workers among the railroad men, among the longshoremens will concentrate with all forces to rally the masses for action, repeating the heroic struggle of the Seattle longshoremens in 1919. In every port of the United States anti-war committees must be built among the longshoremens, among the sailors and seamen; anti-war committees on board ships especially those which take the route of the Far East and Latin America.

### Stop the Shipment of Ammunition

*An immediate task for the shop nuclei, for individual Party members working in shops, metal plants, chemical factories, shipyards, on the waterfront, is to keep their eyes open and see what is being produced, what is being shipped, what steps are being taken by the bosses for the transformation of the industry into a war industry, etc. The nuclei, individual Party member, sympathizers should discuss immediately these problems with the most conscious of the workers in the plants, bring to the knowledge of the whole factory crew what is going on, through leaflets, legal or illegal gatherings—according to the situation. One of the tasks is the exposing of the concrete facts of war preparations in the industries, in the press which will become valuable issues around which to mobilize large masses and bring the anti-war struggle into the factories, to the docks, railroad centers, aboard the ships. On the basis of such information, shop gate meetings, anti-war demonstra-*



tions shall be arranged in front of the plants. Real efforts must be made to stop the shipment of ammunition.

*This activity will spur the initiative of the masses, of each individual, each Communist, each sympathetic worker who is conscious of the necessity of fighting against war in the places of work; will spur the building and extending of the net of anti-war committees which must become instruments of vital importance for the mobilization and organization of the masses in the anti-war struggle.*

—F. B.

### How to Win Leadership of the Workers

I WORK in a foundry. We have had four direct wage cuts. Now they introduce another system — piece-work. Each worker used to make between 50 and 60 cents an hour, and now he makes 30 cents an hour doing the same work. The workers have not been organized in the shop at all.

Last summer there was somebody who distributed leaflets there, and there was a little news in the *Daily Worker* about the shop, but I could not find anybody who was doing the work. Later on I found that I wouldn't be able to do anything until I joined an organization. So I joined the Unemployed Council—and then the Party. Then we started to work in the shop. We organized a group in the factory, but some stool-pigeons exposed the workers who attended, and they were fired.

We started to organize workers in our department alone. And so far we have ten workers ready to join the union. I also have two fellows ready to join the Party. Here is the way I got the fellows together. They have a scheme in the shop here to replace workers at lower wages. Instead of a German they have a Pole. The Polish worker who takes the job gets his wages cut. I explain this to the workers at dinner time. I tell them that we have to organize so that the company can't take advantage of us. The workers begin to listen to this. And I bring the *Daily Worker* and leaflets, and give it to them.

One time it was very cold there—no heat. We have to take a bath in the shop because we get so dirty, but we can't. We couldn't eat our dinner—so cold in there. About ten fellows sitting down came and I said: "How about electing a committee to see Mr. \_\_\_\_\_." They laugh at me. "They won't give it to you," they say. But we finally convinced them. So two fellows went. We told the boss that the fellows get sick. The boss promised the heat. The fellows laughed at us, not believing we would get the heat. At 2 o'clock heat was coming in. I go around to the workers. They see heat is on. Then, the next day, there is no heat. The workers come around and say to me, "Where is the heat?" I meet the boss and tell him the heat is shut off. He said, "No." Well, I said, there is no

heat in there. He said, "Well, you better see the man who takes care of it." I find out that the heat was not shut off, only pipe stuck. So the workers now trust me.

I tell them we got to organize against the wage cut. They tell us they were going to cut our wages 10 per cent. The workers were getting \$4. Now they are going to cut 35 cents. It takes a day and a half to make that \$4. Some of the workers earn as little as \$2 in two weeks. I have seen checks between \$2 and \$4 for two weeks. I tell them they would be even better off if they get relief from the relief bureau. So I tried to organize. They say it is impossible to organize now with so many unemployed. I ask them if he want a job with four children and a wife to feed like this.

One worker who I first thought was not responsible proved to be a good contact. I had to do some work for him and then I started to talk to him, and he said he didn't give a damn for the job. He said he would rather be on the relief. He came to our meeting, and now all our department is going to be organized except five fellows whom I suspect. I am going to make the others join the Unemployed Council and maybe later the Party.

### Systematic Work in Shop Leads to Struggle

SEVENTEEN months ago I came into the Party. I was an unemployed worker. Since then I have carried out some work outside, but recently I succeeded in getting a job in a factory, after about 14 months' unemployment. I got a job in a fur factory. In this factory there were 130 workers, 30 of them organized by the left wing industrial union. For seventeen years this shop had been unorganized. Another comrade was working in the shop for six months. His department had only seven workers. He told me when I came into the shop that almost all of his department was organized by him. All agreed to stick together when the time comes for future struggle.

#### Making Personal Contacts

When I went into the factory the boss paid me 35 cents an hour. A young worker came to me and asked me: "How much does he pay you?" I told him. He said: "I work here three years and I get the same." I said: "I was going to ask for a raise." I asked him: "Are you going to do that, too?" He said: "I went three months ago, but the boss ignored me." I told him: "If you had not told me that, maybe I would go. But since you told me, I won't." He said: "What are you going to do?" I said: "I am going only when you and I and everyone goes." He said: "You can do nothing, because everyone are dumbbells." I said: "I don't think so." I then said: "Who do you think is the worst man here?" and he pointed

out one man named M———. I said, "I am going to prove that this man will say the same thing about you as you say about him."

I went to this man and he wouldn't talk very much. Then I began to tell this worker that I felt tired. He didn't answer. I asked him: "Do you feel tired?" He said: "Well, what are you going to do?" I said: "No one says anything here." And he said: "No. Everyone is a bunch of damn fools." I said: "Did you hear that?" It happens that this man gets only 20 cents an hour. He said: "How much do you get?" I said I got 35 cents. He replied: "Yes, I know. But I got a big family. If I say anything they will kick me out." I said: "What about you and me and him and the girls and the others getting together and talking about it?"

#### Individual Contacts Builds Organization

Another worker was hired the day after myself and he got 20 cents an hour. By Saturday he had worked more hours than I had and he got less money. He said: "I don't come to this job any more." It took me about two hours to convince the worker that he should go back to the shop. I said: "I've got two more workers, and you and I make four. The boss fooled you, and so we are going to fool him." "In that case I will come back to the shop," he said.

I started to work very hard, especially when the boss came. The worker said: "You talk too much, and now you work more than anyone." I said: "Tomorrow I will tell you why I work so hard. Later I talked to the boss. I told him I have a friend, his wife is very sick and he has a big family and he is not working. And the boss said: "If he is like you, then he can come in."

So I said to the workers: "We got another worker with us." Then I got still another. His father, a foreman, went to the hospital. He was replaced by someone else. This boy doesn't like the foreman because his father cannot go back on the job. I speak to him. He said: "If you think we can do something I stick with you." So we got together about eleven workers.

#### Strike Struggle Victorious

The day came when the boss tried to do some trick among the organized workers. The union called a strike. "If you want," I told them, "I will pull the department in the morning."

I didn't sleep all night. I thought: "I have ten workers, but there are nine more there. Maybe the others won't want to come out." I went into the shop in the morning. I said to the workers: "The union backs us up; what about it? The workers agreed. We told them: "We are on strike; you should stop." The workers agreed.

So we went on strike. The other comrade came along, all alone. I told him: "Now, I come out, with my department."

And we started. After two days we got the whole shop out on strike. The first thing, I got the *Daily Workers* and gave them around. We had there Negro and white workers. We picked the best ones and put them in the leadership, like one American fellow, who is a Party member now, chairman of the shop. We elected him chairman of the strike committee, and another, a Negro comrade, too, and in that way we succeeded in having now in that shop a nucleus composed of 16 workers; 9 Party members and 7 Y. C. L. members. There are six Americans, four Negroes and two white American workers.

### A Proper Method of Leadership

I AM going to deal with the situation in the mines of \_\_\_\_\_.

About a year ago I was sent in by the \_\_\_\_\_ district of this territory. When I got there, the conditions were pretty bad in our organization. We could not accomplish anything. I was on the section committee and we discussed how we could get into the mine and organize mine groups and mine units. I proposed that one of our leaders should get a job in the mine and begin work from the inside. The section committee decided that if anyone could get a job in the \_\_\_\_\_ mine we should go in there. I took the chance and I got a job there. We started with the work, but could not make much progress.

While I was working in the mine some wage cuts took place. First the cutters received a slash of five cents. The next month they cut the day men, especially the shot firers, etc. A few weeks later they gave a wage cut to the drivers. They split the wage cuts because if they would have given a general cut the workers would have struck.

I took this up with two Party members in the mine and I proposed that we should issue leaflets and expose how the bosses were putting over the cut. When the leaflets were distributed inside the mine, the miners started talking. It reached the bosses and they began to investigate who was responsible. At the same time they were going to cut the drivers 25 cents a day. I saw a couple of drivers and told them that they should get together and talk the matter over. If necessary, I told them, I would come to the stable. They said this would expose me and they could handle it alone. They called in all the drivers and refused to accept the wage cut. The result was that on the day they were to be cut they put signs not to start work. We got notice in the mine that the drivers were staying out. I told the workers that if the drivers went out, we should go out with them. This went around like wildfire. We all got up and the assistant boss stood right there. He called the superintendent and said that he would have to do something about it or the entire mine would walk out. The superintendent

came and told the drivers to go back to work—that their wages would not be cut. We popularized this, and the result was that we got 16 union members and we increased the Party unit to 8.

About a month later, they started another wage cut on the machine men. The big boss came around and told them that instead of 65 cents they would get 60 cents. The machine men would not take action on it. I tried to talk to a couple of them, but they said we are only 12 and if we would go out we would not get the support of the other workers. We could not convince them, and they accepted the cut.

The bosses then went around to the others and told them if they want to work in the mine they will have to load more clean coal. The big boss said, "When you load the car don't lay them on the long side but on the wide side." This meant that they have to put another ton of coal on the car. The workers could not see that this was a wage cut. We issued leaflets, but it had very little effect on the miners. They laid off 120 men from the mine. When they started to lay off the men, we spread the news about a new wage cut. And the wage cut did come, another ten cents. When the machine men accepted this cut, the day men received a cut of another 15 to 18 per cent. We got busy with leaflets. But it did not help.

A few days later we had a general cut. When this happened we issued leaflets and called a meeting last Sunday. When the company found out that the National Miners Union had a meeting they said the mine would not work until the new year. We visited the workers and got them together on the basis of this. They all voted to come out on strike after the new year, when they returned to work.

### The Bolshevik Policy of the United Front

*Excerpts from the Speech of Comrade Kuusinen at the Twelfth Plenum E. C. C. I.*

"THE proletarian united front, in the Bolshevik sense, is a militant agreement between the conscious revolutionary Communist vanguard and the not yet revolutionary masses of the toilers. Only the immediate practical aims of the present class struggles of the proletariat, the actual action slogans of Communist policy, can serve as a political platform for the formation of this militant agreement, not the principles of the Communist program which are, as yet, incomprehensible to the non-Party and reformist workers, but which ought to be popularized among them during the course of the actual partial struggles. As an organization form for creating the united front from below, that is, for linking up the Communist vanguard with the broad masses, only the forms of proletarian democracy can

be used, not the much more highly centralized forms of Communist Party organization. The policy of the united front consists precisely in the correct employment of the forms of proletarian democracy; the correct policy of the united front consists in making the best use of the forms of proletarian democracy for the purpose of revolutionizing the majority of the proletariat.

"In this general sense, the tactics of the united front from below represent the line which must be followed in the entire work of the Communist Parties in agitation and in mobilizing the masses (in the press, in every campaign, in every case of mass direct action, in the daily work, in the shops, and trade unions, among the unemployed, among proletarian women, young workers, etc.). In its *special* sense, the method of the united front should take the form of a Communist organization approaching either in its own name or otherwise—all the workers employed in a given enterprise or locality, district, or trade, or in the most important cases, throughout the whole country, with the proposal to carry out a joint mass action around some definite concrete question.

"Such united front initiative should comprise short and lucid practical proposals as to what sort of action is involved, what is to be done, what demands are to be voiced, and how the workers are to make decisions on the initiation, the leadership, the further conduct, and conclusion of the given action. Every united front initiative of this kind should be supported by an intensive preparatory campaign among the masses. In such cases, it is also possible to approach the members of a definite trade union organization (or of several trade unions), on occasion also the worker-members of other political or cultural proletarian organizations. This constitutes the special method of the united front from below. This method does not pre-suppose, but on the other hand, does not preclude the possibility, that in special exceptional cases a Communist proposal of unity may be sent to a lower trade union organization as such, or even to a local social democratic organization; this, however, must be most rigorously checked in each particular case (and in my opinion should not be undertaken without the express consent of the Party leadership). The tactical expediency of such a step depends, above all, on how far we can keep the initiative in our own hands, and how far we are in a position to create organizational key-points for ourselves among the masses during the course of such a united front action; we cannot reckon on any success unless we are able to accomplish really systematic Communist fractional work in the development of such an action.

"The Bolshevik policy of the united front is not a 'bloc' policy; it does not mean 'making peace' with the social

democratic or reformist leaders (as the renegades of Communist, Brandler, Trotsky and others would have it). All opportunistic tendencies in this direction (for example, glossing over the differences with the reformist leaders who, it is alleged, are becoming 'revolutionized') should be most decisively rebuffed. The united front of the Communist and non-Communist workers *against* the bourgeoisie, must be unequivocally contraposed to the social democrats' policy of the united front *with* the bourgeoisie. The whole meaning of the Bolshevik united front lies, firstly, in the class struggle against the bourgeoisie, and secondly, in isolating the agents of the bourgeoisie from the mass of the proletariat."

*"To organize on a sound basis constant Bolshevik work among non-Communist workers in the factories, in the reformist and other trade unions, and among the unemployed, and systematically to expose the treachery of the social-democratic and reformist leaders, and to win over the workers who have come under the influence of the fascists."*  
(From the Twelfth Plenum of the E.C.C.I. Resolution.)

### Struggle Against Social Fascism Condition for Shop Struggles

#### Editorial

THE Twelfth Plenum of the E. C. C. I. closely linked up the question of undermining and smashing the influence of social democracy with the development of the struggles for the every day economic and political interests of the broad masses. In the development of mass work in our Party there is too much of a division between the development of struggles for the every day economic and political interests of the masses and our struggle against social fascism. This is particularly seen in our shop work. Because we do not see any social fascist organization within various shops, we underestimate the influence which reformism and social fascism, exercises upon the workers, and we do not consider social fascism as a factor and force which we have to reckon with in our shop struggles. We cannot develop the struggles for the immediate needs of the masses unless we conduct a constant fight against social fascism.

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Our weakness in the recent growing strike struggles in Detroit are primarily due to the underestimation of social fascism within the shops. Members of the I. W. W. and Socialist workers became chairmen and served on some of the most important

strike committees. These workers, misled by social fascism, have brought into the leadership I. W. W. and Socialists who are playing a strike breaking role. Because of our failure to carry on a consistent exposure of the social fascists in our daily activity in the shop in preparation for the strike and to differentiate between social democratic leaders and workers, which is also noticeable in our agitation and propaganda, these Socialist and I. W. W. workers who are working in the struck plants, have fallen victims to their social fascist leaders.

The lack of a political approach in our shop work is most evident in our wrong application of the policy of the united front. The policy of the united front must precisely be based on developing organization and struggles involving workers who are under the influence of reformist unions and social fascist organizations, involving the workers who are still under the influence of the open bourgeois parties. In developing these united front activities based on the immediate grievances of the workers, the sharpest fight must be carried on against social fascism. Had this been the case in our shop activities in Detroit workers would not so readily come under the influence of social fascism.

Our wrong approach to Socialist workers is also seen in the just complaint of Socialist workers who attended the Lenin Memorial meetings in Milwaukee. These Socialist workers complained against our comrades for calling them yellow-bellied Socialists and adopting a hostile attitude towards them.

Once the strike in Detroit began to grow, all shades of social fascism appeared on the scene to head this strike in order to behead it. Because of the fact that the American Federation of Labor in Detroit lacks the same organizational strength as for instance in New York and Chicago, the comrades underestimated the danger of the strikebreaking leadership of the American Federation of Labor in the auto industry.

The wrong conception which underestimated the reformism are linked up with the wrong policies which lead to the abandonment of our work in the reformist unions. This is clearly reflected in the underestimation of social fascism in the shops. There was hardly a single strike in the past period, either of a spontaneous nature or those led by the red unions, which did not immediately face the question of fighting the strikebreaking leadership of the A. F. of L. and social fascism.

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In the development of struggles, in leading strikes, in our shop work, we particularly underestimate the danger of "left" social fascism. The comrades at the shop conferences have reported how the Musteites are making attempts to penetrate some important sections of the steel industry, railroad, metal, etc.

In our work amongst the miners it is necessary to fight decisively against the sectarian approaches which deny the im-



portance of building opposition groups in some sections of the U. M. W. A. and in the newly established Progressive Miners of America.

In our fight against social fascism it is necessary to remember what the Twelfth Plenum pointed out that we must particularly expose the manouvers of the "left" social fascists. An expression of a conciliatory attitude towards left social fascism is seen in the resolution of the Chicago District Committee of September 17 which says:

"While the miners took over most of our demands and proposals for carrying on the struggle, we were not able to out-manouever the right and unconscious reformist elements . . . The task is establishment of the united front of the miners, supporters of the Progressive Miners of America, while at the same time criticizing those leaders who attempt to narrow down or break the strike . . ."

Instead of pointing out that "left" social fascists are particularly dangerous, the differentiation is made between conscious and "unconscious" reformists. In our struggle against social fascism, we must defeat those tendencies which fail to strictly differentiate between social democratic leaders and workers, and those tendencies which favor the united front from the top (unity at any price.)

These major weaknesses of our shop work were clearly revealed in the discussion at the two shop conferences. The fact that these two conferences hardly discussed the question of our struggle against social fascism emphasizes the point that we have not as yet recognized that in our struggle to win the workers in the shops we must conduct a relentless fight against social fascism. Comrade Browder in his summary remarks at the Chicago regional conference very well stated the problem:

"Then, too, that aspect of politicalizing our shop work, which is represented by the struggle against social fascists, against the Socialist Party and the Musteites, the A. F. of L. leadership, renegades, etc. It is quite true, as some comrades said, that this has been neglected in the discussion. As work in the shops comes to a higher stage of struggle, we are inevitably faced with the problem of struggle against social fascists, and that it can be so much neglected shows the low development of our shop work. Surely one cannot speak of winning the miners of Illinois without speaking of an intense struggle against social fascism every step of the way. Neither can one speak of progressing very far even in those industries which are entirely unorganized, except in terms of meeting and defeating the influence of the social fascists. There will never be a time when our work progresses to large mass activities in these industries that the social fascists will not appear. They will appear in a very strong position, because they come in not alone on the basis of getting among the workers themselves,

but they come in with the cooperation and assistance of our class enemies, the bosses. The conquest of the shops by our forces can only be accomplished as a result of the defeat of the A. F. of L. and the S.P." (Complete speech printed elsewhere in this issue of the *Party Organizer*.)

In the pre-convention discussion the problem of developing shop work must stand in the center in the development of our mass work. The question of our struggle against social fascism should therefore be taken up in relation to the entire question of developing shop work, shop struggles, and in the growing strike movement and struggles.

### Work in An A. F. of L. Local

I AM going to say a few words about work in the A. F. of L. In our city we have a Machinists union composed of about 4000 good standing members. They are divided into various locals. I belong to a local composed of about 400 members. About 200 members are still working in the shop, some full time, some part-time, and some overtime. Last May our agreement expired and there was no organization so far as we were concerned except for a few individuals, because Party had only a few members before the wage cut. When this happened some were expelled and some took the position that we will organize a new union and to hell with the A. F. of L.

The question of voting on the new agreement, which was a 15 per cent cut or from \$1.00 an hour to 85 cents came up. Our constitution provides that before we can go out on strike 75 per cent of those working in the shop have to vote for it, then we can go out on strike. The 2,000 men out of work were not allowed to vote on the agreement. Only those working in the shops were allowed to vote. And as I said before, without any organization as far as the left wing group is concerned, the wage-cut was put over by two votes. We failed to get the 75 per cent by two votes. And nobody could find out who voted for the cut.

Now, I want to say a few words about my local. After the big splash that we made in the Machinists Union a few years back, after a few heads were busted and a few of us got expelled, we simply forgot that there is a Machinists Union and we simply let them do whatever they pleased. During the last few months, the Party began to move towards the work in the A. F. of L. and that forced me to be more regular at my meetings and more active. The first question I raised in the A. F. of L. was the question of relief. My idea was that we should elect a committee in the local and demand relief for the workers there. The district of the union went on record taking 10 per cent of the wages of the men working and distributing it to all men there. So one week it might be \$1.00

the next week \$2.00, etc. And some locals had money, thousands of dollars. The men were insisting that the 10 per cent should not be taken from their wages.

The District Council recently decided to withdraw that assessment and asked the workers to voluntarily donate certain parts of their earnings to the unemployed.

The next problem that came up was the question of the 50 per cent cut in relief. We received a communication on it and the president threw it into the waste basket. I made a motion that the local goes on record for the Hunger March and that we send a protest against the 50 per cent cut in relief and also to send delegates to the conference. He asked who send me there and so on. I told him I was a worker and finally the chairman refused to entertain the motion. But the membership there decided that they are going down to the conference and three rank and file members came and were seated as visitors. At the next meeting there was fireworks, the members protesting against the A. F. of L. I pointed out the reason why the Federation of Labor in the city was not protesting against the relief cut because two of the leaders were serving on the relief commission. In the course of these activities we brought in the question of the Unemployed Council.

We have today quite a few of the machinists who are members of the Unemployed Councils. At the last meeting when our funds were exhausted to the last dollar they asked how about relief. The members said to hell with the union, etc., we will go to the Unemployed Council. One fellow got up and said he did not care whether it was a Communist organization or not, that he needed relief and the got it for him. In my local they have a group of eight or nine fellows who are in the Councils. We are trying to elect a committee in the local to work with the neighborhood Unemployed Council to get relief for the members of our local. One fellow for instance who we thought was not so good, who was against the Communists, asked me where the Unemployed Council met. I told him, he went there and now he is getting more people to come with him to the Unemployed Council.

On the question of the A. F. of L. and unemployment insurance. We went to visit certain organizations, those we know are more or less radical and we will work with them on this. We called conferences, but we failed to keep in touch with our connection and the groups and we are now trying to overcome our weakness in this work.

## Fighting A. F. of L. Leadership in the Shop

**B**EFORE I speak on the shop nucleus I want to say two words on the impression of this conference. I think this conference is of great importance to all of us, and I for one feel that I have learned a lot from this conference. If conferences of this sort would be organized at least every three months, where we could exchange our experiences, we can certainly accomplish a lot.

I represent a needle trades nucleus in a shop of 125 workers. About a year ago this shop was one of the best millinery shops in the needle trades due to the work of the comrades in the shop. What have really been the accomplishments of the Party members in this shop? We have kept up this shop under the best conditions in the trade. We have kept up this shop until the last minute, when the industrial union as such was wiped out of the trade. We have smashed the leadership of the Lovestoneites in the shop. This shop is now under the control of the A. F. of L. and here the method of work has changed to the method of opposition work. What is the situation in this shop and what are the methods of work of the opposition?

After the stoppage, due to the militancy of the comrades in the shop, the A. F. of L. union was not in a position to put through all their fake agreements immediately and they were compelled to give us conditions in that shop where we actually got increases in wages, while in other shops they got cuts.

We had a group of 12 workers, non-Party members, consisting of two branches in the shop. In the third branch we have not succeeded in getting workers in officially. However, we have connection with the workers in that department.

The A. F. of L. leadership made an agreement with the bosses to shut down the shop in order to force down the conditions. This to a great extent ended our work. The workers were terrorized and under the fear of losing their jobs were ready to submit to anything in order to keep their jobs. They were told that the shop was shut down completely. And here I want to stress what methods we have used in order to give leadership as the Party nucleus to the workers in this shop. We have been around the factory every day. We met with the workers and with one branch of the shop we had a party where we had 20 girls, who were the most backward elements of the shop. We made them feel that we were their friends, and gained more confidence than we had before. We also organized group meetings during the three months the shop was closed down.

We discussed how to organize joint meetings of all the branches. They did not allow all the branches of the shop to meet together to take up their problems. We have succeeded in having during the time a joint meeting, warning the A. F. of L. officials against a reorganization in the shop, which was the main purpose for closing down the shop, to get the Communists and sympathizers out of the shop. We succeeded in preventing

the reorganization. However, we have failed in one thing, and I want to stress it here.

We have reached a point where some of the workers were terrorized to such an extent, that they accepted a wage cut of 50 per cent in order to come back to the shop to work. In the next department it happened that the workers got an 11 per cent wage cut and also agreed to work single time over time.

The third department, the trimming department, of which our nucleus consists has changed from week work to piece work. Here we were not able to mobilize the workers to fight these conditions. We were not in a position to mobilize the workers to take a stand to fight this situation in the shop. It is my opinion, due to the general situation in the trade, being that we have not learned yet the correct approach how to really begin to break this terror in the trade, in order to mobilize the workers to fight against these conditions. This in my opinion is a very great shortcoming.

I want to report that we did succeed in organizing a class during the time when the shop was closed, a class on current events and also on the History of the American Labor Movement. We feel from these classes we will be able to draw in more workers than we could probably get to a meeting. We get them to the class and through the class also take up the shop problems with them. We have also succeeded during the time when the shop was closed down to break away some of the active elements of the A. F. of L. union in the shop that were working in the organization committee for the A. F. of L., and recruit them in our group.

### Work in Reformist Unions

The consistent every-day struggle of Communists and supporters of the revolutionary trade union movement for the establishment of the united front of the workers urgently raises before all the sections of the Comintern and of the R.I.L.U. the question of work *inside* the reformist trade unions and the *methods* of this work. The influence of the reformist trade union bureaucracy, especially in countries with long established and strong reformist trade unions, is one of the chief hindrances to the development of class struggle, and cannot be broken down by shouts about wrecking the trade unions, for which Communists are not striving, nor by deserting the trade unions, but by persistent work inside the reformist trade unions, by fighting hard to win every member of the reformist trade unions, for every elected post in the trade unions, for securing the dismissal of the reformist trade union bureaucracy and winning over the local organizations of individual trade unions and the local trade union councils of the reformist unions. (From the Twelfth Plenum of the E.C.C.I. Resolution on Lessons of Economic Struggles).

## Building Revolutionary Organization in a Reformist Controlled Shop

I REPRESENT a shop nucleus in a needle trades shop. It is a dressmaking shop under the jurisdiction of the International Ladies Garment Workers Union. There are 160 girls working and about 45 men.

I want to touch mainly on three points; the work of the shop nucleus, the relation to the trade union work, and our perspectives.

### Build I. L. D. Branch and Vote-For-Foster Club

The work of the shop nucleus has improved. For instance, we organized an I.L.D. branch in our shop. We were unable to get these members into the Party. They were not even sympathetic to us. We organized a shop I.L.D. branch with 75 members. I think it was the first I.L.D. branch on a shop basis in New York. We recruited three members into the Party during the time the branch has existed.

During the Election Campaign we organized a Vote-for-Foster Club. After the Election we called the members of the club together and asked them what they intended to do next. We proposed that the club as a body enter the I.L.D. This was taken up in the Executive of the Club and they called a meeting and decided to enter the I.L.D.

### Trade Union Opposition Grows

Our main work is in the opposition. During the last year and a half we had two strikes. Our boss has two shops, and there are two separate shop nuclei, one in our shop of nine, and the other six members, and through the shop units working as a fraction we carried on the work in the trade union. We have a trade union opposition group of about 35 members of which our comrades are in the forefront.

We had two stoppages, one against the check-off system. After the strike the A. F. of L. bureaucrats decided to have the check-off system, whereby we come and renew our books, or take out working cards. The idea was to check up on the militant workers and any time one of these workers are a week or so behind in their payments, they can kick them out. We pointed this out at the shop meeting, and decided that I should not collect the working cards. I will not go into detail, but I did not collect the cards. I was expelled from the union and taken off the job. We had a stoppage and I was reinstated on the job and into the union. And the stoppage on working cards resulted in the entire card system being taken up, and there is no such question any more.

We succeeded in stopping the reorganization schemes of our local. I was on the negotiations committee and the boss was ready to admit the question of reorganization—a 40 per cent reorganization. Our efforts stopped this.

### More Attention to Building Party

We have many weaknesses in our work in the nucleus. The fact that we did not recruit any new members, except three, for the last three years, is nothing to brag about. I think that the question of personal contact, that the comrades brought out here is very important. When we sit in the shop we talk to the workers as much as possible, but our comrades have the tendency when we go to lunch, to gang up and separate from the workers. This has to be overcome; we should mingle with the workers, instead of remaining by ourselves.

We also have now and then an open unit meeting, where we invite the workers of the shop that are close to us, we discuss various problems, ask them to criticize the comrades and sometimes they have quite a bit of criticism. We discuss the problems with them and then take them up with the Buro and try to solve them.

We took up the question of the Hunger March at a meeting, where there were 75 to 80 girls present. We explained what the Hunger March was and asked them to elect a committee to the conference. The committee was elected and we succeeded in electing a right winger who never went to such conferences. At the discussion, there were a few Musteites who said, "Don't give any money to those bums." We had a long discussion on this and the committee was sent and we collected \$5.00 to donate to the Hunger Marchers.

The important thing is to show the face of the Party, to become a shop nucleus. We took this question up and considered it carefully and from this conference and from the experiences of the other comrades, I am sure we will learn something and will be able to conduct the work more constructively than now.

### Building Opposition Movement Thru Struggle in A. F. of L. Printers' Local

I WISH to deal with the attack of the Printers League, a bosses' organization, demanding a drastic reduction in wages and abolition of certain shop conditions, and the function of the opposition group, organizing groups of members of the A. F. of L. within the shop in order to prepare them for the struggle against the impending wage cut. Before the wage-cut was announced, we had a situation in two shops, one newspaper shop and one smaller job shop, where we actually carried on struggle on minor demands.

In the newspaper plant, we carried on a struggle for chairs and lockers. It seems very minor, but these workers realized that only through organization in the newspaper plant will they be able to get something and naturally they followed the

leadership of the opposition group. In the other printing shop, the working conditions were very bad, union rules were violated, the union officials refused to comply with the demands of the workers to remedy these conditions. The workers came to the opposition group, and as a result they had a strike and won their demands. These workers joined the opposition group, 18 out of the 19 that work in the shop.

#### Opposition Rallies Workers to Defeat Vote on Wage Cut

When the wage cut was brought before the membership of the union, the opposition group could stand up and say that, "Here, we have an organized group, here we have workers who have followed us and by putting forward a concrete policy, how the workers can succeed, we can fight the wage cut. The workers rallied to the opposition group. In the first vote that was taken, for instance, the officials and the bosses who joined together in proposing a certain agreement were defeated by over 1,500 votes. In the second trick ballot, which the officials tried to put over on the members, again the opposition group succeeded in defeating.

But particularly important is the fight that was carried on in the newspaper shops. I want to impress upon you that the newspaper workers are still getting a comparatively high wage, that this union is a union of highly skilled workers and well organized. You may think that the workers are perhaps not ready for struggle. When the wage reduction was proposed by the employers, the workers answered practically unanimously that they would not accept it. The officials were defeated twice in their attempt to put over the wage cut and certain other proposals of the Publishers Association. Only through a maneuver were the officials able to put through an arbitration decision. The arbitration award was for a wage cut and the stagger system. The workers accepted the cut without much protest. Well, they didn't care so much—they still made a high wage. But the stagger system has hit them so hard that the most backward workers in the most important newspaper plants some of those workers who never opposed their officials, have put up a splendid front against the stagger system that was brought through the arbitration. The result was that, after various meetings, shop action committees were formed and, in spite of the officials, certain shop struggles were conducted.

#### Workers Refuse to Submit to Stagger Plan

I cannot go into detail, but let me say that although there is no agreement between the bosses and the union that the stagger plan is abolished, in most newspaper shops the stagger plan is not in force. There is no such agreement that the plan is abolished, but the workers refuse to submit to this stagger plan. This is the result of the concentrated activity carried on by the Party members, carried on by the opposition groups, and particularly through broadening out the united front, joining



hands with militants that are even opposed to the Party, or to revolutionary ideas, but that are willing to fight the attacks of the employers. It is significant that the workers of a most reactionary newspaper were the first ones to rally against the stagger plan. It is natural that they were affected first, because it is a reactionary newspaper, and there you could see on the floor of the shop, workers getting together. It was a thrill to see these workers get up and say that they would not carry out the decision of the arbitrator, that they would declare this decision "null and void."

This lesson is of importance, not only to printers, not only to a certain section of the workers, but it points out that within the A. F. of L. union we can carry on work, but we must carry it on correctly. We must remember particularly that we must go to the shops and our Party members working with the A. F. of L. members in the shops must carry on the struggle down there.

#### How We Organize the Youth

We have also the problem of the youth. There are young workers employed in our industry. For a number of months the young workers complained that we don't pay attention to them. We have some Y. C. L.'ers in the union. They organized a youth club because, according to the union laws, they are "not entitled to the same rights as the journeymen are." Through this club they carried on activity, and they participated splendidly in fighting the wage cut. They were attacked from two sides. They got a double wage cut, and when this question came up they invited one of the speakers of the opposition group to their club meeting. And there you had the apprentices of the union accepting our program, working out resolutions on the plans of our program, presenting it to the meeting. Naturally, the officials were against them. The apprentices, 500 of them, lined up almost entirely for the opposition movement. Nobody had any interest in them except the opposition movement. At the last meeting of the union a fight was on between the opposition movement and the apprentices on one side, and the union officials and the bosses on the other side. It is important to point out in this respect that while the apprentices may say that we didn't pay attention to them before, as the young workers generally say that the Party does not pay attention to them, but when they presented their grievances and joined in this struggle with the adult workers, and when the adult workers adopted a proper approach, there you could see a splendid united struggle on the part of the adult and the young workers.

#### Deal with Needs of Unemployed

It is significant that although this is a highly skilled industry, we suffer from unemployment in the same proportion as any other industry. A third of the membership is working part time.

A third of the membership is not working at all. Unemployment has become a burning problem. We had to devise a policy in regard to the unemployed, and our policy was at first, naturally, to take money from the treasury. At one meeting, we demanded that \$30,000 be taken for the unemployed, who faced a blank week, without benefits. We received over 1,200 votes, the officials 700, but the officials declared the motion lost. We had there a definite movement of the majority of the workers in support of our policy. It was necessary to bring forward other points, such as city relief. The printers who get benefit from our union are not entitled to city relief. On the basis of city relief, on the basis of more relief from the union, and on the basis of unemployment insurance, we put forward a program for an unemployed organization. This organization was only just organized, yet it has had meetings where over 200 were present. Relief from the union, relief from the city, unemployment insurance—a three-front fight that must be carried on at the same time.

I do not want to give the impression that we have not made any mistakes, that we have succeeded in all fields, but I am bringing these points out—the fight on the scales, the fight for the apprentices, the fight on the unemployed—to show that within the A. F. of L. we can do work if we direct it against the bosses, at the same time exposing the bureaucrats—and through formation of a united front with the workers in the shops.

### Building United Front in Strike Struggle

I WILL deal with a number of strikes in dye shops. Recently there was a strike in the \_\_\_\_\_ shop, in which we applied the united front tactic. Here we found the United Textile Workers Union, one member of the National Textile Workers Union and a few sympathizers. When we came into the strike the organizer of the U. T. W. immediately whispered to some of his sympathizers that the organizers of the N. T. W. are in, and they should be gotten out of the meeting. When it came time for the shop meeting, the organizer of the U. T. W. tried to kick us out. He brought out the fact that the important thing to be decided is which union shall lead. We, however, emphasized that the important thing is to unite the workers to defeat the wage cut. We also pointed out to the workers that we didn't come there to break up the strike but to help them to establish the unity of all the workers in the shop against the boss. The workers listened and decided that the question of the union will be decided later.

The need of getting together all the workers in the shop, both the night and day shift, was taken up. This immediately put the U. T. W. organizer in the background. The conditions of the workers, the demands for which they were fighting, were

discussed. The workers also combatted the organizer of the U. T. W. when he proposed that instead of mass picketing the shop should be picketed two by two. These workers resented this and told him that this was wrong. They decided on mass picketing from 7 o'clock until 9, and after that two or three pickets to see that no warps came out of the shop. This shows clearly that these workers were following our policy of holding the shop together. As a result of this, when they got together to decide whether or not to continue the strike, the members of the U. T. W. sided with us. They decided to continue the strike on the grounds that the members of the N. T. W. who are working in the building had issued a leaflet calling on all the workers to go on strike, and the other workers had agreed to strike after learning that the boss was contemplating a wage cut during January.

After the meeting we spoke to many members of the U. T. W., pointing out to them the role of the N. T. W. They wanted to know why we have two unions in the city. We explained the difference, also why the U. T. W. organizer would not accept a debate on the question of the role of the U. T. W. or the N. T. W., although we had challenged him twice.

Now as to the other dye strike. We received a report from two unemployed workers, formerly dye workers themselves, of a strike in the \_\_\_\_\_ shop. Immediately we got in touch with some comrades from the Unemployed Council who were formerly dye workers, asking them to mobilize as many workers as possible. We went down there and mingled with the workers. The N. T. W. was the only organization down there. We told these workers that the first thing they should begin to do is to organize mass picketing in front of the shop, at the same time arranging for a mass meeting right near the place, to discuss the demands and elect a strike committee. *It is important to note that here the unemployed rallied solidly behind the employed workers. When they learned of the wage cut and that the workers were battling against the 14 hour shift and for an 8-hour shift, they told the workers to follow the leadership of the N. T. W.*

In the morning, out of 150 workers only 12 appeared on the picket line; the rest of them stood on the sidewalk. The Party members appeared on the picket line. The workers were afraid to picket because of the police, and it was necessary to break the terror. The police knew one of the Party members, who had sold *Daily Workers*, and wanted to know whether he worked in the shop. I told the policeman he had no business to ask this, because he doesn't work in the shop either and neither do I. Immediately all the workers, seeing the disturbance, began to gather around and a heated discussion on the conditions, the wage cuts, etc., took place. The boss saw the demonstration and came out. He heard the discussion, and the result was that the wage cut was immediately withdrawn.

## Establishing Department Organization Thru Winning Partial Demands

I WISH to speak about the experiences in a packinghouse center. It is a city which has about 5,000 population, mostly packinghouse workers. We have there two larger corporations, and some small independent plants.

In one of the small plants a wage cut of 15 to 20 per cent was announced. These workers were members of the A. F. of L. They expressed their willingness, however, to talk over matters. We issued a leaflet on the facts we obtained, and we visited the workers again. They agreed to come together in a house. We discussed the problems and found that they want a real union. *The main question raised is that our organization is against religion and that they don't think they can belong to an organization which is fighting religion. They also raised the question of Communism.*

During the discussion, which lasted about three hours, we explained to them that one can be a member of the union without being a Communist or giving up his religious beliefs, as long as he is willing to organize to fight for his immediate demands. After this meeting they raised certain questions as to wage cuts and other grievances. They pointed out that they are no longer getting paid time and a half for overtime. They felt that they could not get the previous wages, but that they could get the overtime back to time and a half.

We decided to call another meeting and at this meeting we had seven workers, and they decided to organize the workers in their department mainly on the issue of overtime. In the next meeting we had already 20 workers.

### Successful Partial Struggles

The question raised by them was that the day before they worked fifteen minutes overtime without getting paid for it. We decided to demand the overtime back. We had a strong group organized in the department, and they felt that this department could win the overtime back. The next day they were told by the manager to work overtime and the committee which they elected at the meeting told him that they would work only if they got their overtime pay. *They started talking to the workers and after about five or ten minutes they got their overtime pay.*

Then the question of the community chest came up. The workers were told they had to pay 30 cents a week for something like six months—this would have amounted to seven or eight dollars—which they were to give to the chest. All the workers were against it. This issue was discussed and we decided to refuse to contribute to the Community Chest. The department group decided to mobilize other departments to stop payment to the Community Chest. The result was that during two weeks time they prepared this work. When the manager,

the representative from the Community Chest, came to ask for donations, every worker told him that they were not going to pay. The result was that, with the exception of a few, all the workers refused to pay.

#### Build Department Groups

Through these partial struggles, we were able to establish organization in three departments. Now they have three department committees, and representatives from all the others.

Only a few days ago, when one worker was fired, they were able to stop the firing. Sixty workers walked out. They said: "If you fire this worker, we refuse to work. This struggle was won.

But we have a few weaknesses. While we have fifty workers in these plants, we haven't one Party member in the plants. We are taking steps to get members—a few of the best in the group—into the Party.

These partial victories have helped, and there is talk going on among the workers for our movement. The A. F. of L. has members in only one department in one of the big plants. In other departments there are quite a large number of Negro workers who are all for our organization. Through concentrating on one specific shop, it will give us the possibility of establishing organizations in the other plants.

#### Our Work Among the Longshoremens

THE Marine Workers Industrial Union picked out this city as a concentration point. At one time we had 900 members in our union. However, from that time, there has been a period of a year and a half where no work was carried on. The problem was to make contact with the longshoremens.

We went down to the waterfront and began mingling with the longshoremens, not telling them what to do but primarily listening to what they were talking about. After a few days we could pick up a conversation—we could hear the longshoremens talking about a certain thing and starting a conversation with another group. In this way we became known and they began to trust us. We got names and addresses and started visiting them.

Along about the middle of the summer there was a rumor of a wage-cut. We followed this up with leaflets and an open air meeting and came out openly as a union and agitated against this wage-cut. The response was very good. They turned out to the meetings, drew up resolutions against their union officials to be sent into the I. L. A. office and began to show signs of struggle. At this time there were no meetings of the I. L. A. and we raised the issue that they should hold meetings and discuss the wage-cut. On this basis they forced the local leaders to hold meetings.

In the *New York Times* there was an article where the leaders of the I. L. A. had openly proposed to the ship-owners that they would investigate and if conditions were found necessary they would allow a 10% wage-cut to take place. We immediately found out that the leaders of the I. L. A. had left for New York. We issued a leaflet asking where he was. When he came back he was met by a group of 35, demanding to know where he had been.

About four days later a meeting was called by a group of the A. F. of L. and they started to discuss the wage-cut. The longshoremen got wind of this meeting and they packed the hall. And when the I L A leader got up and told hard luck stories about the poor shipowners, they raised hell and closed the meeting.

From this period of the first attempt to cut the wages, there was a lull in which our work was just general agitation. When the October wage-cut discussion began to take place in New York, we again began to get more and more response from the longshoremen. We developed some struggle among the crews and got such a response that we anticipated a strike.

However, it must be said that we failed to develop any strike on October 1 due to a number of reasons. We failed to get organization or consolidate the groups. The main reason is that we were an outside force.

I can only point out the importance of working on the inside. The union itself is primarily of seamen. Regardless of what we say that people can go from one industry to another, this does not mean that we are going to be accepted by the longshoremen. Because of this the longshoremen call us outsiders, therefore they were not so willing to form an organization under our leadership. However, we issued leaflets on the waterfront and these longshoremen themselves had drawn them up, and made longshoremen went into the membership meetings and made proposals and motions along the line of the leaflets.

The very fact that we were isolated from the workers there before and due to the fact that we were outsiders, we failed to get any organization. Once or twice we organized a group of 35 or 40 workers, where we sat and discussed with them one night and the next meeting there were only five or six showed up and so we failed to organize any groups down there. I don't make this as an excuse but one of the reasons why we failed to organize any groups. Another thing, we failed to organize these groups and any organized opposition in the I. L. A. was due to the failure of understanding the importance of visiting them at their homes. We were too well known and they refused to talk to us on the waterfront. And through our activities and agitation and the influence that we had among the longshoremen, they kicked out certain of the fakers in the Union and elected rank and file members in their places. We gained prestige and sentiment on the waterfront. To give a picture of how much influence we have among the longshoremen—a fight took place

there about the issuance of a leaflet. The I. L. A. leader attempted to stick one of our members in the back with a knife. The ones who took part in the fight were those who took sides with us.

The new agreement was signed and the entire struggle took place, that is, a crystallization of the inner fight against the bureaucrats of the I. L. A. This culminated in the longshoremen demanding the opening of the books and checking up of the finances. And in this check up they found out that the leader had spent almost the entire income of the union. They demanded that the bonding company come down and give their statements. The I. L. A. leaders manouvered through gangster methods to prevent this expose being brought before the longshoremen. In order to cover up his misuse of funds and keep him from being kicked out he separated the local and one bright morning the longshoremen found that they had a new union on the waterfront they didn't know anything about. He got a charter from the national office. Now the fight is around this. Here we find ourselves in a position to form a united front. A united front that we were never able to have before. Here there are thousands of longshoremen that belong to no union. At the same time that they are carrying on this fight, the longshoremen are completely unorganized and there is no union which leaves an opening for a wage cut and unless this looseness is slacked up they are going to cut wages. Already they are talking of a wage cut taking place. These coastwise longshoremen are being brought into the union and used as a backbone of the I. L. A. organization. This gives us a backbone for our united front. The new local is taking the initiative through the rank and file members and in the next few days are going to put a call for a united front.

There is one word on the question of Party relations. Comrades I want to say that while it is true that the Party relations are improved, I can say it is not anywhere near to what it should be. Out of all the struggles there has been practically no longshoremen in the Party. The reason is obvious. The Party carried on no independent activities of its own on the waterfront, except during the election campaign. During this period of time the Party came down on the waterfront and even today any time a worker says anything about getting a wage cut or anything he is immediately branded as a Communist. Every rank and file member of the I. L. A. is considered a Communist and referred to as such, yet the Party carries on no independent activities there at all.

**Auto****Proper Method of Concentration Leads to Struggle**

IT IS not always easy to organize groups of factory workers. It is necessary to be persistent. From one auto plant two workers promised to have six fellows to a meeting. I came to the fellow's house and he had the other fellow present. He called me aside and said we have to go away from here. Later he told me that his wife is against him belonging to any union, or any organization and that she threatened to call the police. We went to another place and had a meeting with these two fellows. At the next meeting a few more came. At this meeting we took up the proposition as to what we can do in the plant. The discussion brought out that some of the men had been told to work on two machines. Working on two, three or even five machines is not unusual in auto plants, this had not yet been introduced. They decided to paint a sign against working on these two machines, and signed it the Auto Workers' Union. There was quite a commotion in the plant. The superintendent asked each worker if he had put up the sign, if not, did he know who put it up, but he could not get any answer from them. After about two days, the practice of each man working on two machines was discontinued.

This was a little thing but there are many other grievances of this nature around which we can develop struggle. The next thing these three workers decided to do was to put out a leaflet, twice the size of a business card, to be distributed inside the mill, in tool boxes, etc. This was done, and again raised quite a lot of discussion. At the following meeting which was a little larger, the proposition was made to distribute a leaflet form the outside. In the meantime, we had another group of workers getting together from another plant of about 300 to 400 workers—a small shop. This group had somewhat the same experiences. Starting from one or two, at the last meeting we had 8 workers. This group is made up of tool and die workers.

**Skilled Workers Ready for Organization**

We have been in the habit of expecting action only from production workers and looking with contempt on skilled workers, but here were skilled workers wanting action. We got out a leaflet and called upon them to organize into the Auto Workers Union. They not only proposed this leaflet but three fellows who were there raised \$5.00 to help get it out.

The leaflets were signed by the tool and die makers group of the Auto Workers Union. What was the result of putting out this leaflet? The leaflet was distributed at two large plants



and a few smaller plants. It dealt with the grievances that the tool makers felt at the present time. They objected to the leader system—which is a system where one fellow takes the lead in the work and he drives the others on. It won't go into all their grievances here. After the distribution of the leaflet in the plants at the following meeting of the group, a discussion was held on the reaction of the workers to the leaflet. It was decided to get another leaflet to answer the questions of the workers on the first leaflet. Some of the questions they asked were what is the Auto Workers' Union, what is the difference between this union and the A. F. of L. union, what is the initiation and dues, etc. After the discussion such a leaflet was put out and is being distributed at the present time. One more thing about this meeting of this group which is made up of tool and die workers. At the last meeting a decision was made to get in contact with workers from the other departments, particularly the departments next to them, and the next leaflet to deal with the problems in the other departments. One of these tool makers said it is not enough that we are organizing in our own plant. We have to spread out.

I want to take up the question of one more group that we attempted to organize. This is a group in another auto plant. We have five comrades working in this plant. I happened to meet with this group. At the time of this meeting two of them were working and three expected to get back into the plant. Since then they did get back. Arrangements were made for another meeting the following week. That meeting was to take place on Saturday afternoon and all of these comrades were working overtime, so that the meeting did not materialize. Then, we had a comrade who had been active in organizing a group in this plant some months back. I went around with him to visit a couple of contacts, but found that some were working again and so didn't see them. The comrades in this particular section of the city had twelve contacts. They visited these twelve contacts and they all promised to come to the meeting. At the meeting four of them showed up, which is a good percentage.

#### Give Tasks to New Union Rerrecruits

As to whether or not the workers want to fight, the very reports we get after lay-offs and wage cuts of sabotaging proves that the workers want to fight, and it is up to us to give them the means. I believe that if we handled the very first meeting with these groups in the right way we would have results. One of the comrades came back from a group meeting and reported to me that he had had a meeting with five workers and he got all of them to join the Auto Workers Union. I asked him what he had said. He said that they decided to join the Union but it didn't occur to him that unless he gave these workers some concrete work—even writing up and distributing leaflets regarding conditions in that shop, that it would be pretty difficult to get these workers to come again even though they had signed an ap-

plication. At the first meeting a discussion should be conducted bringing out the conditions in the shop and the necessary action to take regarding these conditions. After these groups are organized and begin to function it is even more necessary that we follow up every little happening that takes place in the group, in the plant, etc. I have seen a group develop to pretty large proportions in one plant. We organized a group of 40 members. They carried on a certain amount of work but they were not precautions, and as a result of distributing certain leaflets, 36 out of the 40 were fired.

#### Leadership Should Give Attention to Every Problem

Our experience, not only in the automobile industry, but also in the steel industry, shows how necessary it is for the leading comrades to meet with these groups and take up the minute details for every little incident that happens in the plant. I had an experience in one plant with a comrade who was working there. He was formerly a member of the German Y.C.L. and I had a right to assume that he would know how to act in a shop. When a leaflet was being distributed, he received one while he was eating his lunch. He got all excited, jumped up and ran all over looking for the comrade who was distributing, found him and patted him on the back and shouted what good work he was doing. Of course, the comrade pretended he didn't know him and told him to go to hell. However, the damage was done and I think this shows how thoroughly we should discuss every bit of activity that we carry on.

#### Shop Work — Main Political Task of Party Leadership

WE are developing the conference of auto workers. We had conferences before and they failed. The question we faced was: should we call the usual conference—a conference of mass organizations under the name of the Auto Workers' Union, or should we try to get workers from the shops? We came to the conclusion that the only way to build up the Auto Workers' Union is to get meetings of workers from the shops and on this basis to create a basis among the workers for organized struggle in preparation for strike in the various auto plants, especially concentrating on Ford.

In two weeks time we had fourteen meetings of auto workers in one plant, not only through Party members but also various mass organizations. When we began to hold the meetings of these workers we did not know much of the problems of the workers. We knew things in general. We knew that they were kicking against their conditions, but we did not know in what form. It was necessary to become acquainted with the issues

and problems facing the workers. In this work we involved the whole district leadership—the district organizer, the secretary, etc.—everybody working among the auto workers to help organize these meetings.

It is important at this time especially for us to get contact with these workers. When we had the meeting we found out that some workers were working now, others have their badges and therefore are on the payroll, and still others had hopes of getting back into the shop. And so we began to find different problems presenting themselves in these meetings.

We combined the work among the unemployed with the work in the shops. Also, the question of relief from the companies. We had block meetings. The workers are grouped together in certain sections of the city. In these neighborhoods we called house meetings, raising the combined issues of the workers inside and outside the shop.

In one Party unit we took up the question of work in the shop. We stopped talking about what we were going to do and we went into the unit and asked how many worked in the shop—how long out of the shop—any contacts in the shop, etc. Somebody said he had some contacts. How long would it take you to call a meeting? He thought he would need about ten days so we gave him two weeks. They called a meeting and this created enthusiasm among the comrades.

We had a case where a comrade, and a good comrade, said he knew four workers in the shop. He told us he could not call them to a meeting because one was a Catholic, another was still making \$5 a day, and "of course, we could not get such people into the union." But what are the facts? It is true that some workers still get a comparatively big wage. For instance, we have one fellow working in the tool room of the Foundry Department still getting \$7 a day. He reports the discontent of the workers there who are getting a cut. In one department they were preparing to cut the wages of the workers from \$6 to \$4 a day. One comrade said: "Good for them."

We have to combat these conceptions. The discussion we had on this brought out some other problems and helped to clear up the questions, but also gave us an indication that this view is strong in our movement.

Now, the question of the shop paper. Technically it is a little better off. We feel, the slogans we have raised in the fight against the wage cut—"Strike Against the Wage Cut" will have a good effect. We raised the slogan of "\$5.00 minimum wage"; the workers responded very readily. In spite of the fact that we haven't thoroughly organized the editing of a paper, we have established a prestige among the workers.

The *Michigan Worker* plays an important role among our workers. I will give an example. One of our comrades, walked into a plant and had a *Michigan Worker* in his pocket. When he hung his coat up, he saw it and got scared. We decided the thing for him to do was to hide it some place because we had

heard the service man goes through the pockets. He stuck it in the tool box and forgot about it. He was putting up a new machine and sent his helper to get some tools. His helper saw the paper and started to read it. As a result, seven or eight gathered around and began to talk about it. The foreman walked in and took the paper and put it in his pocket. He said to the worker who had brought the paper in, "I know you brought this paper in here, but I am not going to say anything about it, but for Christ's sake, be more careful, because if you are not, the other foreman will hear about it and he will have to fire you." (The foremen also got cuts lowering their wages to very little above the workers. We have established three contacts with foremen; one foreman gets \$5.00 a day, that used to get \$9.00. We can utilize them in the building up of new connections and carrying on work.) This foreman walked away and then the young worker walked up and said, "Hey, let me see that paper"; he said, "I can't, the foreman took it." This young worker said he wanted one, and asked where he could get one. He was told that it would cost money. He pulled a dollar bill out of his pocket and said, "Will this cover the cost?"

There are excellent possibilities for work. The street cars, the busses are buzzing with discussion. The workers talk when going to work; they talk openly in front of the service men. This creates a condition for us of real struggle. *We have raised for the workers a perspective for organizing a real strike. As a result of our work, we can organize a real strike against the wage cut.*

### Methods of Work in Organizing Youth in Auto Industry

I WANT to speak on some of the experiences we have had in winning young workers in a large auto plant. Since last May we tried to establish a group in this plant. Sometimes it met and sometimes it did not meet, but there was no activity. Only about three months ago we got on the job. One young fellow whom we came to speak to said he wanted to organize but he did not know how. We talked to him about two hours and he still did not want to come. We went back there the next week and spoke to him again. This time he gave us some other kind of argument—that is was too far to go and so on. Finally, we moved the meeting closed. The next week we went down and got him and he came with us. We found this young fellow had many contacts in the neighborhood. In the course of the next three or four weeks following we began to meet some of the young auto workers. We spoke to them but they as yet had no confidence in us.

### Applying Youth Forms

We took up the question in the nucleus of how we could get more addresses of these young trade school boys. We decided to have a party under the name of a sports club. We put out a raffle ticket, raffling off a \$5.00 gold piece. We wanted two trade school boys with whom we had contact to sell these tickets to the boys inside the plant. The first week the tickets were out they came back and reported they were afraid to sell them. We had quite a discussion and they agreed to sell them the next week. The next week they reported they approached one man in the plant and he said sure he would like to have one of them but that he only had two car tickets, would they take them, they said sure; but then a fellow came up and bought the car tickets for a dime and he wouldn't buy the raffle tickets.

We did succeed with the party. There were about 100 fellows present. This was a house party, just a regular party of young fellows, but there were many trade school boys and young auto workers drawn in from the neighborhood. These fellows we had talked to before that were afraid of us were also down there. We won their friendship and confidence and the result was the next time we approached them to come to a little meeting we were organizing the young Ford workers to elect a delegate to the National Hunger March, several came down. As a result of this party we got in touch with a group of young fellows from 20 to 24 who had a social club. Later on we went down to the social club and found there were all kinds of auto-mobile workers there. There were a lot of young fellows and also some older workers. The district organizer joined the club and spoke about the Soviet Union to them. One fellow said he had seen her speak in the neighborhood and that she was a Communist; yet, they made her the organizer of the girls in the club. She is beginning to win their confidence now.

As a result of the Party, six young trade school boys and a few other connections we got in the neighborhood wanted to join a club. We are going to build this club into a plain athletic club so they can establish themselves on a friendly basis with these workers and learn their problems in the shop trade school and get some of them to elect a delegate to the Auto Workers Conference.

### Leaflet on Hunger March Brings Results

This party was held just a few weeks before the National Hunger March and we took up how we could get this before the young trade school boys. We said we can put out a leaflet, but you can't distribute it because the boys go in all directions when they leave, some get on street cars, some walk, some ride buses and some have cars. We decided on distributing the leaflet inside the shop and some of the comrades gave us some good ideas. They said, where time cards are, there are no service men around this place all night and you can go in there

at night and put in leaflets and in the morning when the fellows go to work they will get them. We put out a half page leaflet on the hunger march, two of the comrades who worked there formerly, but were laid off got into the plant Monday night December 5 and put the leaflets in at about a quarter to twelve. The next day we tried to find out what happened to the leaflets. Our comrades said they never saw the leaflets when they came to work, so we supposed the service men must have gotten them.

Accidentally about a week later we ran into a young fellow that six weeks ago we had been working on to draw him into the nucleus. He was the sole support of his family and his father put pressure on him to keep him away from us. And this young fellow who was working on the afternoon shift had one of these leaflets. The afternoon shift got the leaflets instead of the fellows on the day shift. All the workers got them. They were talking about it. They thought it was a great thing. And this young fellow had lost his fear. Also, we heard about this same leaflet later on from a young fellow, who recently joined the League. As a result of all this work we now have a nucleus of 7 members. They have attended regularly for the last six weeks. We have a leadership there. We have comrades who have learned through this, to lead the work among the young trade school boys.

#### Getting Contacts

About three or four months ago we had a unit of girls that were quite young. Two of these couldn't leave the house unless they attended League meetings. We asked them if they have any friends. They said sure. Then they started to bring their friends. We had a class and they started to read *Toward Soviet America*. As a result we got more members.

Well, we took up the question last time of getting some young trade school boys for the conference. And what did we find? We came down to the old members. They said it wasn't any use. But the new members were willing to try. We took one of the oldest comrades, a girl. We asked her don't you know any workers? She said yes in my neighborhood there is one who worked there, but it wouldn't be any use. And she found out after talking to him that he wasn't as tough as she thought he was. He spoke to us about the conditions. And he belongs to a church organization. And there are many more trade school boys there. He made contacts for the purpose of getting a group together. And these comrades said before it can't be done. It is a struggle to get these old sectarian ideas out of the comrades' heads.

I want to draw just a few conclusions from this work. And this is the first conclusion. As long as the comrades were in the office we didn't get anything done. It was necessary for us to get out among the workers. And now we have some leadership. Second thing, this is just a beginning of breaking our isolation. We begin now to see the many possibilities of developing strug-

gle. Before we only knew general things. The trade school boys were afraid to say anything; now they introduce us to their friends. This is one of the reasons we have made headway in this work.

### Role of Language Press in Concentration

PROBABLY in most of the basic industries foreign-born workers are found. In such a situation the role of the language press is very important. There are many sections where the English language is absolutely unknown. There are hundreds of thousands of workers here who are 15 to 20 years in the United States and can't speak an English sentence. They read the language press. Because they are employed in the basic industries, and because they read all language papers, therefore, the role of the language press is clearly apparent.

What is the relation between the language press and the Party organization? It is a very bad one. Usually the comrades only send in reports when they have some affairs or when there is some meeting. From the shops there is absolutely nothing. In the many years of my work in the *Rovnost Ludu*, it has always been the same. When there is a strike there is established a Press Committee and dispatches are sent to the language press. Sometimes, like during the Hunger March, in one day at least 20 to 30 letters were sent in usually three or four pages long. *Not only when we have a hunger march should it be written up, but we need the news from this particular neighborhood, from this particular shop, from this particular city every day and as often as possible.*

Pittsburgh is a big Slovak city, more than in any other city in the United States. At least 30 per cent of the population help the language press seriously. These promises have not been fulfilled. In this we may say the situation is the same as in all our other work. We have a press conference and the press conference decides we will concentrate on this particular shop. From the shop, or organization, or unit we will send news releases and so forth every week. We will go and write up two or three articles on the situation, and we will distribute the paper to the workers. But nothing comes out of these conferences. Our time is very costly, and it is taken up by these conferences, but nothing happens. The decisions remain on paper.

In this respect, the continuation in the press of press releases is most important. If there is not a continuity in the stories which we write about, then it is simply like a shooting star—for a second light and then everything is dead again. To make the people interested, you don't need only the story, or one leaflet. If you want to write only one thing about a

particular shop and stop for a year, don't write. Don't write once, but write regularly. I have a proposal which I believe would orientate labor press to our shops. *I believe that every Party bulletin published should be sent to every Party paper in the United States.* If we would get such things as the shop bulletins into our hands we could have two or three columns every day on the conditions on the jobs in the shops. This is what it would mean, the orientation of the paper toward the shop. It would get many splendid stories, splendid points, what is happening in this job, and in this shop. We would orientate on nearly every industry; what is going on in plants, in the mines, in the steel mills, the packing houses, etc.

On the other hand, we would get the whole Party organization orientated towards the language press. The language press is neglected. No one takes it seriously; the comrades seem to have a superiority complex and think the language press doesn't amount to anything. I hope, comrades, this will improve. I believe, comrades, that this idea should be accepted, and I believe it would be of tremendous help. When something exceptional happens, write it and send it in to the press, and it will be published. If these workers don't read English, don't read the *Daily Worker*, they can read the stories in the language press. If we give our language press to these workers, it doesn't mean solely we will get some ideas into their heads on the question of this particular shop or on the question of this particular movement, but it will be connected with other issues in the paper in which they are interested. They will discuss these papers and in this way we can go not only to the workers, but into their organizations where there are hundreds and thousands of workers, and in this way we will become a force in these organizations.

### Special Attention to Problems of Women Workers

THE Twelfth E. C. C. I. Plenum resolution calls upon our Party to turn our faces to the factories. How is this decision being carried out in the work among women masses? We must study the shop conferences of December 30th-January 1st held in New York and Chicago for an answer.

In many of the factories represented women are employed. In these factories the women have special grievances in addition to the main grievances of lower wages than the men.

However, with very few exceptions, the reporters brought out the neglect of special work among women in the shops of concentration even at a time of preparation of the strike where the majority of workers were women. The comrade from the Trenton doll factory says, for example:

"The Regal Doll employs 850 workers, 85% of which are



young workers and half of these young workers are girls. The wages were as low as \$3, \$4, and \$5, a week and the hours ranged from 50 to 70 and even 90 a week. One woman worked 85 hours for \$6.00 and \$7.00 a week." Further he states:

"Monday morning, mass picketing began in driving rain. Half the shop struck. The girls (with whom we had practically no contact during the strike preparations) showed the greatest militancy on the picket line." The workers won 15% to 30% increases. Some of the workers in the shop received as high as 200% increases, Girls, who previously received two and three dollars are now getting a seven to eight dollar minimum.

The reason that the women went out on strike was due to the putting forward of correct demands as exemplified by results of victorious strike.

A comrade from New York further brought out the neglect of work among women in the knitting factories prior to strike preparations.

"Last week a group of workers from one of the largest knitting mills in Brooklyn came up to the office and said that a new system has been introduced in the shop, the 'check-up' which will mean discharges or a wage cut. There are about 200 workers, about 60 workers are men and the rest—140 women, and they are neglected whereas the men are mechanics and better off. One group of ten brought up 19 to the union and they all were ready to call a strike and were sure of all the men, but admitted that they had no contacts with the other workers. Still the group was ready to strike without mobilizing the women. We corrected it in time, mobilized all the women workers for the strike which resulted in a splendid victory."

A third comrade speaking at the Chicago Conference gave some good examples of partial struggles conducted by girls in a metal shop without our leadership.

"I went to the house of these girls and found they were working in a large metal shop (1,100 employed now). It turned out that these girls have been trying to agitate the rest of the girls to walk out. It is pretty nice to bring out their methods of organization in this shop without us. In one department where they had 70 girls, 18 worked with this girl and they had six they were going to go through with it. Several walked out. One of the girls grabbed a pole and wouldn't go. Some drifted back. All 16 are going to go through with it. They sent delegates to the other girls. They are going to start a fight against the last wage cut. They have spontaneously put up a struggle against the lay offs. They are going to raise hell and they were able to keep one of the girls who was laid off twice, able to keep this girl's job."

At the New York Conference a comrade pointed out the following:

"We in Lawrence also realize that it is absolutely necessary to work out special ways and means of approaching the women. We not only have the difficulty in general to organize the women because they work during the day and have to be home at night, but because these are Italian women and have very large families. We remember the experience that we had at the first indoor meeting. We had arranged a party for the children the day before. There were about 150 children and these children brought some of their mothers to the meeting next day. And what do we find? At nine o'clock they had to go home to put the children to bed. We must work out ways and means for them to come to meetings where they can learn how to organize."

From the above we must draw the following conclusions:

1) That our work among women in the factories chosen for concentration in the basic industries by the center and the districts have so far remained on paper, (Western Electric and the Stockyards in Chicago, Wood Mill, Lawrence, Mass., textile mill in Passaic, N. J.) limiting our activities only to needle and miscellaneous light industries.

The present Detroit strike in Briggs, Hudson, Murray Body plants is no accident. It is a direct result of daily activities and preparations of factory groups. While insufficient attention was paid to work among women, the problems of getting the women into factory groups and into struggles were not entirely neglected insofar as agitation and propaganda is concerned. For over two years the comrades of the T. U. U. L. and the Party met with futile efforts in getting the women to join the Auto Workers' Union. However, in the present strikes the women workers who make up a large number saw a possibility of improving their conditions. When the strike was called and the demands drawn up which included substantial pay increases for women workers, they whole heartedly came out in support of the strike and led the militant picket lines twenty-four hours at a stretch. The number of women who joined the Union were far above expectations. The Detroit District and the Union must consciously follow up the activities among women and overcome the tremendous handicap of forces for work among women.

2) That neither the Party, the Y. C. L., nor T. U. U. L. sufficiently recognize the need of special forms and methods of work among women and girls as part of the general work of the shop nucleus and shop groups, in preparation for united front struggles in the factories. This neglect greatly weakened our work since we were isolated from this particular category of workers in the factories, thus endangering the successful mobilization for struggles and strikes.

3) That now more than ever will the Party nucleus and

sections have to develop special forms of work among women along the lines laid down by the E. C. C. I., namely developing women's delegate meetings. This will have to become the responsibility of the shop nucleus and not to be left to the Women's Departments. That the present work among women carried on around the factories such as distribution of women's leaflets, occasional bulletins, sale of the *Working Woman*, will have to be increased ten-fold. The women recruited into the unions as a result of strikes and struggles will have to be given special attention by the unions both regarding political education and social activities, which will have to be worked out concretely in given localities, in conformity with activities of the Party for work among women.

Let International Women's Day campaign mark the beginnings of carrying through the C. I. line for work among women in the factories. "Once and for all an end must be put to the under-estimation of work among the proletarian women, which is specially important at the present time. Working women must be mobilized on the basis of delegate meetings, this work to be regarded as general Party work." (Resolution Twelfth Plenum E. C. C. I.)

A. D.

### Needle

#### Special Approach to Women Results in Victorious Strike

LAST week a group of workers from one of the largest knitting mills in Brooklyn came up to the office. A new system has been introduced there—a check up. They mark down every garment that is produced by every worker separately and they know what they are paying to the worker and after the worker is through with his day of work, they tell him—your garment cost him fifty-four cents to produce, the next man to you made the same garment for thirty-five cents. I am losing money on you. That system has been introduced only about three or four days ago. These workers feel that this system will mean discharge or a wage-cut, and they are right. We made arrangements with this group and a group of 19 came up on the next day.

About sixty workers are men and the rest of them are women. There are about 200 in the shop. The men are mechanics and get higher wages. Those who came to the meeting said that they have no contacts with the other workers, the only contacts that they have are the mechanics or better paid workers. They also stated that in case of a fight on dis-

charges they are sure that all the men, about 60, will be ready to strike. The proposition was made by one of the workers that we immediately elect a committee out of the 19, that this committee should consider itself as the shop committee in case of any discharges on the coming Tuesday, that this committee declares the shop on strike. Another worker said that this committee is not a workable committee, we should wait with the election of a committee, let us wait for two or three weeks later when we will come nearer to the season when the shop will be filled up then we should speak about strike and organization.

What stand could we take on such a question? Our recommendation was that a committee should be elected. In case of discharges, that this committee be one that will know where to go and where to complain but before that committee considers itself a committee of the shop they should Tuesday morning before they go into work, popularize amongst the other workers that such a committee is in existence. The advice was that this committee is not an open shop committee but it is a committee that will have to work secretly but the workers should know about it. If it doesn't come to one of these three points, a wage-cut that will affect all the workers, discharges, or something similar, that this committee should work underground. Only then when it will come to a sharp conflict then the committee should act openly.

The Committee should not declare the shop strike. The Committee is to popularize amongst the other workers, the women as well as the men, that the workers were discharged and that they are going to speak to the boss to reinstate these workers. Before they go they should get the support of the other workers. If they will act by themselves, they will be isolated and even though they may declare the shop on strike, the shop strike will be very ineffective because the workers will not know of it.

The workers felt we were against the strike. They said, what is the use, we come here and say we want to strike the shop and you tell us not. And it took us much time to convince the workers they are wrong. They are right in one sense, they should strike against bad conditions. But how? And they accepted our proposal. That was Wednesday. On Friday evening we called the workers from the other departments to a meeting. When we took up with the workers who they knew, they said you call this and that one and they spoke of 30 workers. And at Friday's meeting we had 30 to 35 workers from the other groups. They were mobilized for Saturday to popularize the strike for better conditions. On Monday the strike was declared with the result that after one week of strike, we had a splendid victory. The workers knew of the strike. On Monday, after one week of strike, we had cut the hours from 50 to 40, recognition of the shop committee, a 10 per cent wage increase and other

improvements in the shop, and an agreement with the Union. Due to our own negligence, we did not get the agreement signed on time. But we finally corrected this and the agreement was signed.

### Bolshevik Seriousness of Nucleus Wins Confidence

I COME from a shop of 200 dressmakers, most of them young Italian-American girls. The problem of organizing that shop is of course a very important one, and a very difficult one, because, in working among these young workers, the fear of not being able to come to our meetings because their mothers do not allow them makes it very hard for us to approach them, and take up their problems.

#### How the Nucleus Organizes Its Work

We have in the shop several Party members and several Y. C. L. members. They are distributed in every department. Our work and methods of work that we carry on there is as follows: Each individual Party or League member has around him a few connections, and they see each other practically every minute of the day. They discuss not only the problems of work, the question of the garment itself, but also the question of organization. The constant agitation against the hard styles, low pay, tremendously long hours, such as 70 to 80 hours a week and at times having to come in on Sundays, cause the workers at the present time to consider the question of organization.

The nucleus discusses the work of each individual member. "To whom did you speak this week?" "What have you found out about this worker?" "How is this worker lined up towards us?" From this we can gather just how our influence is being spread in the shop and how far we have succeeded in reaching the larger number of workers on the question of organization.

#### Many Partial Struggles

We carried through three small partial struggles. One was the character of the work the young workers have to do. Young girls have to do a certain stamping with a certain chemical powder. This chemical powder goes under the skin of the hand and causes blisters. The girls complained to the bosses. The bosses didn't pay any attention at first. One of our Y. C. L. members who works among these young girls spoke to them and said, "We must stick together. We have to go together." These young kids were very much afraid, because they could not imagine going over to the big boss and demanding gloves. This Y. C. L'er said, "I will go over and talk to him, but you

go with me to stand around while I talk." By showing the young workers that the Y. C. L. comrade was aggressive, they felt better and had more confidence about getting gloves. *They got the gloves.*

The rest of the workers said, "Look at those kids, they got what they wanted." Some of them said, "Why can't we get what we want." Thus this struggle of getting the gloves was a very successful one, and these young workers, numbering about six or eight, are under our influence.

Another struggle we had in the shop, in one plant the operators were situated in a room and a row of machines was considered a plant. In one of these plants a worker, an Italian woman, was fired, and the workers in this plant resented it. One of the workers stopped the power and said, "This worker will not be fired." The forelady could give no reason for firing her. The power was stopped and the workers didn't work, and it was a question of a walk-out. The forelady thought this might spread to other departments, so the worker remained in the shop.

Another thing happened in a different plant, where workers were standing around for work the whole afternoon until 5:30, when the boss came over with the bundles and told them to sit down and work. The workers said, "It is now time to go home." So the workers began to walk out, and about 15 to 18 actually walked out from the place. The boss threatened them that if they came back in the morning they wouldn't get any bundles. But they made up that if they didn't get bundles they would get the other workers to walk out with them. When they came in the morning, they had the sympathy of the rest of the workers and the boss gave them work.

This showed the workers that through struggle they can get something. We now have groups in the shop. We called them to a meeting. We took up the question of the wage cut that is looming. In this connection I wish to point out a very serious mistake that is being committed by the union itself. I had it officially from the union, because the representative to our nucleus had this idea. His opinion is that we don't have to have a union group in the shop because the nucleus is sufficient.

The Party and League members understand and carry out the line of the Party, which is to organize the shop around immediate issues that arise every day. His opinion is that we should not have any union in the shop; the union can only be built when the shop is organized. The opinion of the nucleus is to the contrary, that while we must have union members in there, we must definitely build up a union group that is responsible to the union for its activities as well as carrying out the policy of the union in that shop and that the nucleus works through that group, guides the policy and carries out the work.

## Shoe

### A Shop Nucleus in a Shop Controlled by the Revolutionary Union

I AM going to discuss the functioning of the shop nucleus in a union shop. We carry on open activity. Even the boss knows that there are a number of Communists in the shop, but he doesn't know we are organized into a nucleus. We sell the *Daily Worker* and all kinds of literature quite openly. We have all kinds of collections for the Party, the press, and the union, and all campaigns of the Party are brought into the shop.

#### Sell *Daily Worker* Inside Shop

Our shop has about 135 workers. Our unit has about 11 members, and about 3 or 4 old Party members, comrades who were always active in the Party or trade unions. Before we formed this unit, a street unit concentrated on our shop and was selling between nine and twelve copies of the *Daily Worker* near the factory every day. When our unit was organized, we took over the sale of the *Daily Worker*. We succeeded in raising the sale to 23 or 25. The majority of the *Daily Worker* readers are of course, very close sympathizers, including the Party members. However, we got a couple of readers of the *Daily Worker* by our activities and one especially, a young American comrade, who is reading the *Daily Worker* very eagerly and when he fails to buy a copy, he really misses it. We are also selling all kinds of pamphlets and literature.

We were trying to spread the Party in the shop. Of course, we are in a very favorable position, where we can speak to the workers very openly about every campaign the Party is carrying on, about the Communist Party itself.

#### Unit Holds Open Meetings

In order to get the most militant workers closer to the Party in an organized form, we decided to have open unit meetings. Between the militant workers and the leadership of the shop we had a very successful meeting in the sense that all grievances were settled and the workers came out in a better mood and with a healthy mind toward the organization and the leadership in the shop.

Then we had another open unit meeting where we utilized that meeting for pure political purposes, that is, we had a discussion in that meeting on the role of the Party in the shop. The meeting was a success, but we were not satisfied very much with it, because the section organizer who led the discussion made a poor job of it and it was not what we expected from him. We had about 15-19 Non-Party members from the shop. The majority were Italians because the majority in the shop are

Italians and we got them closer to the Party, especially one. The workers who did not know about the Party now speak about the Party differently than they did before.

#### Insufficient Leadership by Section Committee

Our unit is bringing the Party forward to the workers but we could do much more provided we *would have better guidance from the top leadership*. I must say that in activity that the unit is carrying on, it is on our own initiative. The section until now has failed to give us real guidance and leadership. We do not have section representatives to our meetings and when we do have one he sits a minute and runs out for ten and never stays from the beginning to the end of the meeting and does not know what we take up at the meeting.

I think this section is a very disorganized section where the section leadership and the entire section apparatus does not function the way it should. I will give a concrete example. The agit-prop director of the section never bothered to know whether we have discussions in the unit. We are already but one, and that was about two weeks ago. We are already organized about five months as a nucleus. The org. secretary of my unit did not give a copy of the minutes to the section for quite a long time and the org. secretary does not bother to find out why this is not being done. I think that the section does not know and cannot know what our unit is doing. However, we are told, that we are one of the best units in the section. I do not know whether this is so or not, but how can they know about it.

I must say comrades that the District also did not bother to call us to a meeting and find out how we are functioning. Why do I say this? The *Party Organizer* and the rest of the literature stresses the importance of the shop nucleus. But yet the leadership never bothers to find out how the nucleus functions. If the top leadership will not pay any attention to the unit we will not be able to make the necessary advances. We took in three new Party members during a very short time. One was an ex-Party member, one was a very close sympathizer. I say if we should go on with more proper leadership we can draw in more workers and develop our unit to about 20 workers. I wish to say that until now the Party did not show a concrete line how a unit should function in a shop especially in a union shop, where we are in a much more favorable position than in a non-union shop.

The question of a shop paper, our union decided to take up with the leading comrades in the union and the leading fraction. Their opinion was that we should not issue a shop paper because it is a union shop and we gave up the idea. We are not convinced whether this is correct or not. I for one am not convinced whether this is correct.

Comrades, I must say that our unit is becoming a factor in the shop to the extent that the workers look up to it. Now for



instance, there was a certain grievance between a Y.C.L. member and a non-Party member. Those workers know that I am the unit organizer. They know the unit meets on Wednesday. They came to me and asked me to take up the grievance. This in itself shows that we are gaining the confidence of the workers.

### Careless Methods of Work Harmful to Organization

I WORK in a shoe shop. We organized a nucleus there last February. When I came in the shop there were only a few Party members, and during the week we recruited several and formed the nucleus. We had a group of union members, about 35 to 40 members. During this period we issued the shop paper in the name of the Communist Party. We saw that the union members of the shop were in sympathy with this paper.

In this time the union developed many struggles in the shops of the shoe industry. We recruited three more Party members, and we had a nucleus of eleven members. We had three Party members that had been members for a year and about ten months, and the rest were all new Party members. These Party members were all in one department except myself, so our meetings were conducted only on the questions of the one department. Usually we had a long meeting on the questions of this one department, and so we neglected to discuss about reaching the other departments. We mentioned how to reach the rest of the workers in the shop, but every question that was taken up was about that particular department where we had the strong union group.

### Shop Paper Liked by Workers

We issued the first bulletin on May 1st, and the workers were glad to see the bulletin. But this shop paper got into the hands of the bosses. They tried to prejudice the minds of the workers. We discussed this paper and we decided with the consent of the workers to issue another paper in the name of the nucleus. The question came up as to whether to issue the paper in the name of the nucleus or not. In the nucleus there were many discussions in opposition to this shop paper because the Party comrades in the nucleus were afraid of being exposed in the shop and lose their jobs. We discussed this for three weeks, and the majority of the vote was for issuing the shop paper. So in June we issued this paper, and at the same time there was a big strike in another shop, so it made it easier to organize the workers in our factory.

### Workers in Shop Support Shoe Strike

In this period we tried very hard to mobilize the workers in the shop to support the struggle of the striking workers, on the picket line as well as financially. During this period we collected \$600 in the shop for the union. We announced this contribution to the strikers and to the whole membership of the union. The membership was given the impression that our shop was completely organized into shop groups. This was not so, because this organization and the collection of money was only in one department. There were collections in the other departments for the strike, but we had no organization whatsoever of the union or the nucleus.

So what happened? It happened that when the strike was defeated, the result was that the union contacts which we had in our shop were demoralized. There were many discussions about our failing to go on strike at that particular time when the other shop was on strike. After the strike we discussed in the nucleus how to develop struggles in our shop.

The comrades of the nucleus and the union had the impression that our weakness was that we exposed ourselves by issuing this shop bulletin, so the union proposition was that we must issue a union bulletin, not in the name of the nucleus but in the name of the union. The comrades of the nucleus because in opinion that it was foolish to issue a union bulletin because in the union we have much literature that mobilizes the workers, but if we have a shop paper we must have it in the name of the nucleus as we had before.

### Wrong Methods of Work

I want to explain why we failed and why the nucleus was defeated in the shop. The bosses gave us a free hand for the distribution of literature, to collect money for the *Daily Worker*, all kinds of collections in the shop. The bosses gave us an opportunity to be organized. But this was a maneuver of the bosses in order to wreck us. It so happened that the boss, after the strike in the other factory, prepared himself to defeat us. How? He started with the lay-off. He claimed that there was not much work in the shop. So he laid off two men, one a Party member and one a union member. It so happened that the opinion of Party members was that every year he lays off because there is no business but he reinstates them again when the shop becomes busy. What happened? We did not study enough what the boss was doing in order to defeat us. In the union we tried to elect a committee to go down to the boss and demand reinstatement of the fired member. The Party members insisted he does not intend to fire men. He does not mean to defeat the organization in the shop, but it was merely a case of no work. I want to say this: The boss had the chance to lay off 15 members of the organization, including five Party members, and they were not laid off but fired, and this openly

showed that this was in order to defeat us. After that we were in a bad position. What was decided? The union elected a committee mechanically to go down and get the boss to reinstate the men. But when the particular department raised the question of reinstatement, every member of the shop refused to go down to the boss. There was a fight between the members in the same shop. We found out also that in our nucleus we had a stool pigeon. He was also a member of the union. We exposed this stool pigeon right in the open union meeting.

In conclusion, I saw that our failure in the \_\_\_\_\_ shop is that we realized very little that the "liberalism" of the boss wrecked us, and we recognize this mistake. We see that our future task now is—we remain five Party members in the shop, in three departments. Our task now is to reorganize again the few contacts which we have, together with the union.



### The Shop Paper—An Organ of Struggle

AT THE recent shop conferences held in New York and Chicago, numerous reports pointed out how our shop papers, even where there was none or little organization, succeeded in winning certain demands for the workers—safety, shoes, sanitary conditions, water fountains, and often forcing the withdrawal of wage cuts. This, in itself, proves the powerful influence that can be exerted by our shop papers.

#### How We Raise Immediate Issues and Partial Demands

The dozens of shop papers reviewed in the center show that these papers have learned how to expose the wage cuts, speed up, the questions of individual foremen, the spy system, individual stool pigeons by name, unsanitary conditions, welfare schemes, part time work, and unemployment. Each shop paper contains letters from workers on conditions in specific departments. Today we cannot say, therefore, that our papers are abstract. They are beginning to learn how to raise small issues that trouble the workers.

But our shop papers should not merely be a form for voicing these grievances. They should show to the workers how, in what manner, they can defeat these attacks. The shop papers should discuss and consult the workers in the formulation of demands around their grievances.

It is here that our shop papers show serious weaknesses. In many cases the articles on grievances, letters from workers, are printed without any comment, without suggesting and showing to the workers how to combat these various grievances that are raised by us. *We solve all the manifold problems in the shop with one general formula—organize into department committees or shop committees or grievances committees.*

True, in some of the shop papers we have already learned how to raise concrete partial demands. For instance, the *Illinois Steel Worker* in its October issue deals with the grievances and raises demands: "Pay for working after working hours"; "Drinking fountains in 52 Beam Mill Motor Room"; "The reopening of the large toilets", etc. These are good, but how shall the workers present these demands, how shall they organize to win these demands. This the paper does not tell them.

But while this is one of the best examples in raising of the partial demands, in many papers, we do not show to the workers that we have a practical solution for their day to day problems. For instance, the *Head-Light*, a railroad paper in California, exposes the action of a foreman in firing a worker who has been on the job for twenty years. It says: "The only way to deal with this gorilla is to organize and meet him like the Russian people met their blood-suckers." Surely, such an answer only isolates us further from the workers.

The November issue of the *Illinois Steel Worker* deals with the conditions of the part time workers in one department and concludes: "Organize! Only when organized will we be able to force the bosses and government to give us unemployment insurance." But what about conducting today the struggle for more days work, a minimum wage, immediate cash relief, in addition to uniting in the struggle with the unemployed workers for unemployment insurance? This the paper forgets.

Or take the *Chevrolet Worker*. There are many articles on immediate issues: 10 per cent wage-cut, the question of individual foremen, the welfare scheme to which the workers are forced to donate twenty cents a month. But even in the last instance, where already we have succeeded in many plants in defeating schemes of this character, these experiences are not utilized by the paper to develop a struggle in the shop.

But the outstanding shortcoming is that we place in the background the agitation for struggles around general wage cuts. In steel, for instance, there is a contemplated ten per cent cut. In Chicago a united front conference was held recently where tasks and demands were formulated. But the shop papers relegated this issue to the last page. It does not become the issue which permeates the whole paper, agitating the workers, arousing them to the need of organization and struggle if they are to defeat the cut. The workers have not sufficient confidence that they can defeat major cuts. It is therefore the task of the shop papers to be more convincing, to establish and restore

confidence in the fighting ability of the workers. It is precisely this that should be the major perspective of the shop papers, utilizing the victorious struggles and experiences in other plants to arouse the workers to action.

#### The Shop Paper as an Organizer

In many instances the shop papers stimulated organization. In some plants we have examples where workers on their own accord, without our leadership, after reading the shop papers, organized into committees. Our shop papers have not yet learned how to crystallize the earnest desire of the workers to unite into organized action. The shop papers have not utilized the past traditions of struggles of these workers for organization today.

The *Waterfront Worker* in San Francisco has in its first two issues carried articles on the 1919 Longshoremen's strike, drawing lessons from this strike, etc. How is this utilized for the building of organization today? On the San Francisco waterfront there is the company union (The Blue Book) and the I. L. A. The task here is to work inside of these organizations, build up the opposition movement, and at the same time unite all longshoremen, organized and unorganized, in a common struggle on the waterfront despite the resistance of the leadership of these unions. The *Waterfront Worker* in the first issue states: "What is to prevent us from organizing small undercover groups of those whom we know on each dock? This is the only way we can lay the basis for a real union."

It is correct that the first steps in building dock committees is to get a few longshoremen together but the need for unity of all longshoremen, organized and unorganized, regardless of political or religious beliefs, on the basis of concrete grievances, this plays no factor in the shop paper.

The only means of making inroads among these workers and building a real union of the workers will be the development of this organization precisely on the basis of organizing partial struggles on the waterfront. But this is not the perspective of the *Waterfront Worker*. For instance, in the second issue on the question of speed-up, it states: "But what can be done about it (the speed-up)? Some suggest that we slow down. That is O.K. but that requires a high degree of organization." Thus to our San Francisco comrades it is necessary to have a high degree of organization before we can develop such form of struggle as slowing down on the job. Already in some railroad shops, metal shops, this practice has been carried through successfully with very little organization.

Generally, there is serious confusion in telling the workers how to organize. For instance, the *Chevrolet Worker* of December in its leading article on the wage cut gives in three consecutive sentences three different forms of organization. The paper does not agitate around one unified form. There is no differentiation between the united front movement and the exist-

ing union. The key to winning the workers for united action in any shop depends upon our ability to organize even the most backward workers around specific grievances in the shop. The shop papers, while constantly bringing forward the revolutionary unions, should simultaneously emphasize the need for unity and be the initiator in crystallizing this unity in the shop. By doing this the shop papers will help to convince the workers that our unions and the Party have the only correct policy for the workers.

#### The Struggle Against A. F. of L. Bureaucrats and the Socialist Party

If we are to set the workers in motion, the shop paper should be an important means to expose the A. F. of L. leadership and the leadership of the Socialist Party. In our papers we assume already that the workers are convinced that the A. F. of L. is no good. We freely use name-calling—fakers, betrayers, etc. We lump the workers together with the officials into one reactionary mass without explaining and constantly differentiating between the workers and the leadership. The *C. & S. Worker* in Colorado calls the Brotherhood "a company union," the *Packhouse Worker* in Kansas says: "The A. F. of L. is no good and we need a real union." The *Stockyard Worker* of June states: "... but the A. F. of L. does not care for the hard working men, women and youth because the A. F. of L. is a company (bosses) union and not a union of the workers." In addition to that, the article causes a rift between the unskilled and the skilled workers and places the red union, as the champion only of the unskilled worker, and not all the workers.

In all our shop papers we have not taken each action of the reformist leaders, each statement, and showed to the workers what these mean, how these leaders betray the workers. Assertions and accusations are made without explanation. This does not create confidence in the Party, in the red unions. It does not steel the determination of the workers to struggle.

The papers do not show how to carry through a struggle for demands in the locals of the union, for exemption dues for unemployed workers, the election of rank and file officers in the locals, etc. These are still in the main absent from our shop papers.

In our struggle against the Socialist Party, the Negro reformists, and "left" reformists, our papers commit the greatest mistake of all—the mistake of complete omission. During the election campaign we spoke about the Socialist Party in our papers. In most cases we assumed that the workers already understood that the Socialist Party is the third party of capitalism. We spoke of the Republican, Democratic and Socialist Party in the same tone. We did not show the special role of the Socialist Party as the main support of capitalist reaction in the ranks of the workers.

During the past few months not a single shop paper has carried an article on the Socialist Party. The shop papers should expose the position of the Socialist Party on wage cuts, unemployment, its support of various schemes of the government to make the workers pay for the present crisis, bring these into the shop and carry on a constant exposure of the Socialist betrayals. Unless this is done our shop papers will not be a factor in undermining the influence of the Socialist Party.

It is through this method that our agitation will be broadened, its scope widened. Our shop papers as instruments of the Party, must consciously and persistently help to educate the masses of workers whom we reach. This requires the utilization of the concrete issues, the drawing of lessons from concrete struggles for general political conclusions, and to link this up with the position of the Communist Party. The bringing in of the Party into the shop does not therefore mean mechanically repeating, "Join the Communist Party." We must take each concrete issue and show the position of the Party, why and how the Party fights for these demands.

It is necessary to begin today a careful consistent propaganda in our shop papers to enlighten the masses on the basis of their own experiences that the Party has a correct policy and program for the workers and fights daily in the interests of the workers. We should show the connection between the preparations for war and the concrete conditions in the shop. We should answer the question as to whether war will bring back prosperity. We should compare the life of the workers in the Soviet Union and the U. S. A. We should take local community issues, rents and local politics, etc., and show their relation to the conditions of the workers in the shops. Particularly in one industry town or in territories where the workers live around the factory, we should take the issues of the neighborhood and bring them into our shop papers. Every promise of a local politician or reformist politician should be exposed. Every act of discrimination against the Negro workers should be a means of wider education to undermine chauvinist influences in the ranks of the workers.

Our shop papers offer us an important means to reach thousands of workers that we do not reach with our *Daily Worker* or language papers. *The shop papers must become the Communist newspapers in the shops.*

B. G.

### What the Shop Papers Should Emphasize in the Next Issue

THE issues which should be raised in all coming numbers of our shop papers and closely connected with the problems and grievances in the shop are:

*The Detroit strikes*—the wave of strikes that are taking place in Detroit at the present time are of particular importance for the workers throughout the country. The fact that in highly concentrated industry—the auto industry—the effects of the crisis and our leadership has succeeded in organizing a series of strikes, should be utilized to show to the workers in other plants the possibilities of strike struggles today and the winning of the demands. These strike struggles can be utilized for stimulating actions against wage cuts in the steel and other industries. The lessons from these strikes, the fact that in a series of other plants where no strikes took place, wage cuts were withdrawn or wage increases given, shows the powerful effect of these strikes. This should be pointed out to the workers and intimately connected with their specific grievances in the plants.

*March 4*—The political importance of the March 4 demonstrations throughout the country cannot be stressed in this item sufficiently. It is important that our shop papers shall bring out very clearly the need for unemployment insurance concretely linked up with the needs of the part time workers in the shop. The chief point to be stressed in our shop papers is to direct our main fire against Roosevelt who takes office on March 4 and bring back the promises that he made prior to the election for the "forgotten man". It is around this, that we should weave our agitation in the shop.

*Marx Anniversary*—The Fiftieth Anniversary of Karl Marx' death takes place on March 14, 1933. It is necessary that we acquaint the workers in the shops through our shop papers who Marx is, and what he has done. In this connection we should deal with the effects of the crisis today, show the position of Marx on the theory of the crisis and in a popular manner deal in a programmatic manner with the Party as the only adherent of the revolutionary teachings of Karl Marx.

### Smash Sectarianism—Penetrate the Factories

(Summary Speech of Earl Browder of the Chicago Shop Conference, January 1, 1933)

IT IS clear from the discussion of this conference and the contribution of the conference that we are not standing still. We are making certain small moves forward in shop work, or we are at least creating some of the pre-conditions for a move forward. You see I am not boasting very much about what we have accomplished. However, when we examine some of the composition of this conference, we can say that out of 75 or 80 registered for this conference, about two-thirds are directly connected with the work of some particular factory, and about one-third are working factories, or are only recently unemployed,



still are very close to the inside work of their particular factory. This already gave us the foundation which provided us with a better discussion of shop problems than I have heard before. When I say better, it has to be taken in relation with very bad discussions that we have always had on shop work.

#### Conditions Exist for Rapid Development of Mass Struggles in Shops

However, when we examine the improvement of the work in connection with the shop, one thing stands out clearly in almost every report, *that the increased activities of the workers in the shops is to a great extent spontaneous, not the result of our organized stimulation and leadership. That the up-swing of the activity of the workers in the shop is greater than the improvement of our work, and that really we are lagging behind in relation to the workers in the shop even more than before.* When we hear all of the reports that are made about the conditions of the part-time workers, the stagger system workers who constitute a very large proportion of the so-called employed working class, it becomes clear that in the shop there is rapidly developing a condition for a mass strike movement, mass struggles. We have been moving in that direction since the beginning of the crisis. We never fell under that right-wing Trotskyite theory that workers will not strike during times of crisis. We knew it was not so and we orientated ourselves to strikes, and the strike struggles have grown with the deepening of the crisis.

Today we must say the development of these conditions which drive workers into strike struggles are intensifying so rapidly that during the year 1933, we must expect to have great mass strike struggles far surpassing any that took place in 1932. There are thousands of issues of struggle accumulating in the shops, and the combination of all these causes for struggle together with that great outstanding cause, that the workers in the shops are actually facing conditions of eviction, the loss of all of the ordinary means of life, and starvation of themselves and their families, even while they are on the job.

#### Perspective for Developing Strike Movement for Unemployment Insurance

These conditions are not only preparing the masses for economic struggles in the usual sense and on a larger scale, they are giving a necessary political character to these mass strike struggles. *And it is no longer a fantastic utopian idea for us to begin to speak about the possibilities of the development of a strike movement of the workers in the bankrupt industry for the demand of unemployment insurance.* We are having now maturing the objective conditions for a real joint struggle of employed and unemployed, for unemployment insurance, in

which we will have not only the actions of the unemployed on the streets, but around that the strike action of the employed from the shops. In my opinion we should be thinking about this possible development and without any undue haste, we should be preparing in our minds, discussing among ourselves, in just what form we can hasten the maturing of such a movement and bring it to realization.

Certainly our work in the shops as yet is far too weak and too scattered and too fragmentary to give us any immediate basis for practical proposals for action of this sort. But given even a few months of energetic and correct work in the factories and the consolidation of our growing influence in organizational form, this may rapidly be changed.

#### Living Contact with the Workers

To the extent that our work is improving in the shops, it shows itself most clearly in our growing understanding of the methods and forms of workers' democracy, of a close consolidation between the Party and the non-Party workers, in the joint working out of demands and grievances. Growing from this is better connection between leadership and masses, a growing initiative from the lower organizations of the Party and trade unions and growing mass initiative, liquidation of the bureaucratic methods of leadership from above by decree and the development of organic leadership which has less of the artificial about it, a more living contact with the masses.

In this effort which we are making to get close and intimate contacts with the masses of the workers, to form the basis of their immediate needs, even the smallest of these needs, we can see that we also have to guard against certain distortions of this line. These distortions take the form of a certain narrow practicalism or a certain tendency to set up economic questions as against political questions, to exclude political questions, and to set the smallest economic demands not as the path to the larger and greater demands, but to the exclusion of the larger demands.

#### Connecting Up Immediate Needs with Broader Political Issues

We must guard against this narrowing-down tendency, which, if allowed to develop inevitably leads toward the grosser developments of opportunism. It already has been spoken in the discussion, how this tendency sees the raising of political questions in the shop work as an obstacle to the development of our influence and organization. This is not true. This is a completely wrong idea, that the raising of political questions, even of the highest grade of political questions, high politics, international politics, are obstacles to the penetration of the shops. On the contrary, I will say that it is impossible to thoroughly mobilize the workers in the shops if we ignore these high political questions. We must take up these political ques-

tions. We must bring the fight against the war danger in the shops. We must take up all of the questions of the international antagonisms. Especially we must bring out the role of the Soviet Union. We must raise the issue of China in our shop work. *The question is HOW we do it. Not whether we shall raise these questions or whether we shall not raise them. We must raise them. But the question is how.* It is quite true that the usual method of raising these questions does not help the work in the shops. But this is merely because we do not handle these questions in the correct manner. We bring them abstractly. We bring them forward as substitutes for the questions that are closer to the workers. We bring them forward in the wrong way.

It is the proper linking up of the shop questions with the larger questions that is the problem that we have to solve. And the solution of this question is not hastened by ruling the political questions out of consideration in the work of the shop unit. On the contrary.

#### Lack of Attention to Negro Workers

Another outstanding weakness of our shop work is the weakness of our Negro work in relation to the shops and trade unions. In the unemployed work, I think it is possible to say we have made some progress in winning the Negro masses to participation in the struggles and into our organizations and winning the white workers for the struggle for Negro rights. But this progress is not to be seen, to any similar extent, in winning Negroes into the trade unions, and in winning the Negroes in the shops. This is not because the Negro workers are entirely out of shops—it would be absolutely untrue to raise the question in this form. Although the percentage of unemployment among Negroes is much greater than among whites, this does not remove the problems of the Negro workers in the shops. This is a question which, for us, has a significance far beyond that of merely winning a certain number of workers. We attach far greater significance to even winning a small number of Negro workers for active participation in our trade unions, in our shop struggles, than to any similar number of other workers. Because the Negro question is today one of the key questions for the breaking of the imperialist ruling machine. In the Negro question we have one of the weak points in the armor of American imperialism, where the development of struggle registers with ten-fold effectiveness in creating difficulties for the capitalist class and improves our chance of advancement.

#### Our Struggle Against Social Fascism

Then, too, that aspect of politicalizing our shop work, which is represented by the struggle against social fascists, against the Socialist Party and the Musteites, the A. F. of L. leadership, renegades, etc. It is quite true, as some comrades said,

that this has been neglected in the discussion. *As work in the shops comes to a higher stage of struggle, we are inevitably faced with the problem of struggle against the social fascists, and that it can be so much neglected shows the low development of our shop work.* Surely, one cannot speak of winning the miners of Illinois without speaking of an intense struggle against social fascism every step of the way. Neither can one speak of progressing very far even in those industries which are entirely unorganized, except in terms of meeting and defeating the influence of the social fascists. There will never be a time when our work progresses to large mass activities in these industries that the social fascists will not appear. They will appear in a very strong position, because they come in not alone on the basis of getting among the workers themselves, but they come in with the cooperation and assistance of our class enemies, the bosses. The conquest of the shops by our forces can only be accomplished as a result of the defeat of the A. F. of L. and the S. P.

#### **Each Shop Calls for Specific Methods of Work**

It is correct, as one comrade remarked, that we have given insufficient attention to the different aspects of the problem of large shops and small shops. Perhaps it would be a little more correct to say between centralized, trustified industries, especially the industries of mass production, on the one hand, and the small competitive industry, on the other hand. The conditions of penetrating shops in these two main categories are quite different. The methods whereby we can organize struggles, win struggles, build organization in needle trades shops, gives us very little to go by in tackling the steel industry—very little. They give us very little guidance in the penetration of the automobile industry. The tactics and strategy of economic struggles in these small decentralized industries to a large degree cannot be followed in the development of the struggles in large trustified industries. *We must give more attention to examining the concrete problems that have to be solved in these different shops and industries and not try to answer questions with single broad generalizations.*

#### **Some Wrong Tendencies in our Shop Work**

I think it is necessary to point out two wrong ways to approach shop work which one meets everywhere. First, there is a tendency to explain all of our shortcomings in the shop work on the ground that our Party members are afraid to work in the shops, that they are cowardly, they are not sufficiently ready to sacrifice themselves. This tendency tries to find the answer to our weaknesses by methods of shaming our Party members and driving them into more intensive activities. That is the wrong approach. The other and opposite kind of wrong approach is the conception that one must not be active at all, one must conceal oneself so thoroughly as to remove all pos-

sibility of discharge and thereby remove all activity and possible influence in the shop. These two wrong approaches are opposites, but they both achieve the same result. In the last case it is clear nothing happens in the shop. We have had many shops where we had shop nuclei for the past six or seven years. Nothing ever happened there. The membership of the nuclei have never changed unless somebody died. No new members were recruited, no leaflets were issued, no shop papers, and if there were any, it was something written outside the shop and the workers did not respond. Such shop nuclei are worse than useless because if we did not have them we would recognize we would have to find some new workers there, and we would establish the new nucleus that would live and grow. But as long as we have this nucleus on the records we refer the shop questions to this nucleus.

Nor, is it any use to merely drive our comrades into action. In most cases we will find that the lack of activities can be overcome by showing the comrades how to become active and how to do the work. And also, to show the comrades that we do take seriously the question of maintaining our unit in the shop. When we do not take up seriously, with real Bolshevik seriousness the problem of safeguarding the unit in the shop, then we achieve the same end as in shop units which exist for years and do nothing, since in such cases, our unit is destroyed by ill-planned activity and lack of safeguard. One can therefore say that in most cases our best shop units are still those that live the shortest length of time, and those that live the longest are the most useless. We must solve this contradiction. We must find some way to give our good active units a longer life. It is intolerable where we have conditions that a shop unit has an active life of one or two months. As soon as it begins to work it is destroyed by the enemy.

#### Safeguarding our Members in the Shops

We must learn how to safeguard the existence of the shop nuclei, not by stopping them from working, but by giving them the correct forms of work and giving them safeguards. One of the worst crimes is a careless attitude toward the safeguarding of our work. We have to realize that we are illegal in the factories, even though we still maintain certain legalities in the streets and elections. In the factories we are absolutely illegal, and it is entirely necessary to get the same degree of attention to preserve our units from destruction by stool pigeons, shop spies, etc., as we give to the most important political questions of the Party. We have to take it with the same seriousness that we would take preparations for a strike or other major class battles. We must study and learn the methods of conspirative work in the shops. The safeguarding of membership rolls, the safeguarding of contacts and learning the technique of hiding our personnel from the boss without hiding the existence of our organization from the workers. The very worst thing is to

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have a shop unit destroyed not through its shop activity but merely through exposures by stool pigeons.

It is quite true that the degree of spy systems in the factories is greatly exaggerated. The spy systems are much smaller than the general popular idea gives them credit for. And if we were correctly approaching the problem we could defeat most of the efforts of these spy agents. It is not impossible to meet them and defeat them, but as long as we neglect them, as we do now, they will continue to spread the impression that the spy system is a highly invincible, terroristic organization. We can only break this fear of the spies by really taking up the struggle against spies very, very seriously.

#### A Poisonous Conception for our Movement

Then, I would give special mention to the necessity of struggle against this idea that the workers in the shops have not starved enough yet, that after they have starved a little bit more maybe they will fight. This idea absolutely separates us from the workers. You can not organize workers when your reaction to wage cuts is "good for him." This is a very de-generate form of opportunistic leftism. It is just running away from the problems of the struggle of the working class. This idea is poison to our movement. Such ideas will destroy any organization of the workers unless they are immediately chal-lenged and driven out. We have to declare an intolerant war against the attitude that we get satisfaction out of the mis-fortunes of the workers. Our attitude toward every reduction of relief, reduction of wages, worsening of conditions has got to be an attitude of anger, rage, hatred against the bosses and demand for immediate action of struggle against it.

#### How Initial Groups Can Continue to Live and Grow

The next problem. Several comrades have pointed out that we have to a certain degree learned how to make contacts in some factories and built up small groups that grew to a cer-tain point. Then we were not able to pass that point and the groups stagnate, fall apart and disappear. What is this prob-lem? This problem is essentially that of learning how to politi-calize our small beginnings of organization and make them the center of mass interest and real activity inside the shop. If in a shop of 1,000 workers you build up a group of 4, 10, 15, 18, 25, the moment you begin to get in those numbers you can no longer feed the members of that group merely with the mechani-cal task of increasing its size. The movement can grow beyond this first initial stage, the first small grouping, only if we im-mediate find the political activities for this group whereby they will feel they are affecting the masses of the entire factory. If we don't find that, then this group will stop growing and it will disappear or will stagnate and become inactive. This means to find the issues of struggle in that factory and to raise these

issues before the main body of workers in the factory. Every factory group that has learned how to do this has continued to live and grow. It is when a factory group does not learn how to do this that it stagnates and declines.

#### Shop Papers Help to Extend Influence in Factories

The lack of attention to this problem is shown in the lack of attention to the shop papers. What are the shop papers? They are the instruments for politicalizing the life of a shop group and extending its influence to a mass of workers. Our shop papers are too much looked upon in a routine and mechanical fashion; we draw an abstract table of contents that should be put into this paper as if we were producing a national news bulletin of some kind. But a shop paper is not worth anything at all if it is merely to carry general news of the movement, general agitation and propaganda of the movement in the shop; that can be done much better by our pamphlets and the *Daily Worker*—much better. The shop contributes in the specific raising of the issues of the shop, and the linking up of the shop life with the larger political situation.

#### Developing Workers Correspondence

After the shop paper, comes the use of the language press and especially the *Daily Worker* in connection with the shops. In this respect, the future development of our shop work depends upon a much more systematic and energetic development of workers' correspondence dealing with shop problems, shop conditions, shop struggles and their relation to the trade union life, and the unemployed councils. We hope that it will be possible in the next month or two to show a decisive change in respect to workers' correspondence in the *Daily Worker* and in the language press. If we can't do this, we can not make the turn towards shop work. Every comrade who wishes to be taken seriously as a shop worker, or as one who contributes in any serious way to our shop work, must set himself the task to be a worker-correspondent, that is, send in to one of our papers or many of our papers, periodically, a certain number of stories about shop events, shop struggles, shop conditions. A definite task should be undertaken in this respect. Each one should assume the responsibility of sending in once or twice a week, or if that is too much, once every two weeks, at least one small item, 100 to 300 words, a third to a full typewritten sheet of paper—that is all.

#### Building the *Daily Worker* in the Shops

Having improved the contents of the *Daily Worker*, we have to extend the circulation of it and of all of our language press. The problem of our press is also the problem of penetration of the shops and the dealing with shop problems in such a way as to transform these papers into necessary instruments for anyone who wants to do shop work. The coming campaign of

the *Daily Worker* for circulation and for sustaining funds, which is going to be one of the major tasks of the Party beginning in January, is a task which we must succeed in or we are not going to have a *Daily Worker*. This campaign must be carried through, not merely as a routine money-raising activity, but as a political activity in connection with unemployment and our shop and trade union work. One means of making the best possible use of these shop work conferences is to begin the transformation of our papers; in this way, that the best contributions to the discussion, of which we have a fairly satisfactory stenographic record, should in my opinion be published in the *Daily Worker* and as much of them as possible in the language press over a period of three or four weeks. I think this will probably be done, and I hope everybody will understand the great value of printing these records of our discussion and of continuing the discussion, making this conference the beginning of a broad discussion involving all members of the Party, red unions and all friendly workers organizations—a real mass discussion of problems of shop work.

#### The Significance of the Shop Conference

This conference and a similar conference being held in New York is an example of how the Party solves very difficult and complicated problems. We cannot solve these problems by decrees from above, by resolutions of the Central Committee of Polburo or Secretariat, by a series of instructions, through a circular letter. One of the weaknesses in the past has been our reliance on such bureaucratic methods of solving difficult problems like shop work. It is quite clear, in order to solve these problems, we have to create conditions for collective work of all the leading members of the Party and through them a large section of the workers—these conferences are examples of working out such most difficult problems. On this basis, we are going to make much more definite steps forward in our work; we are going to begin to find the solution of many problems that have hitherto baffled us, and in the process of learning how to work ourselves and how to ourselves solve these problems, we are also learning the proper method of guidance and leadership of the entire working class in the mass struggles that are developing.



## International Experiences in Shop Work

### Germany

A. E. G. Henningsdorf. There are about 1,500 workers there. The factory section of the red trade union of metal workers of Berlin reacted to the smallest requirements, and has grown, in a short space of time, from 250 to 315 members. In the preparation for the political twenty-four-hour protest strike, the section succeeded in getting all but 200 workers to join the strike.

A month later thirty-three workers of the welding machine factory, members of the reformist union of metal workers, carried out passive resistance to reduction of wages under the leadership of the section of the red union; the administration made concessions, agreeing to pay for the time spent by the workers awaiting issue of piece work also. The section of the red trade union then organized passive resistance in the tool department, against the 15 per cent wage-cut and was successful here also.

Once again the section of the red trade union successfully organized passive resistance in the press department (135 workers) when the company attempted to cut the piece rates in the production of radio cabinets, with the result that the old piece rate was retained. All this work caused a split among the reformist members of the factory committee (from the materials of the R. I. L. U. brigade, which investigated the A. E. G. Henningsdorf plant).

What does this prove? It proves that even during a crisis, in the presence of tremendous unemployment, if there is an initiative group, which sees to it that at least the collective agreement should be observed, the workers follow them, even the reformist workers. Whenever we do something in the factories and shops, we can defeat the reformists. It is certainly not a trifle when all the factories around do not strike; while our Party cell and revolutionary trade union opposition succeed in organizing a twenty-four-hours strike, during which only 200 out of 1,500 workers remain on the job. This was a tremendous success, and such successes could be achieved everywhere, if only we worked properly. This example shows us also the necessary method of work, the proper approach to the workers; not by shouting, not by general political slogans which do not explain anything, but by concrete work based upon the needs existing in the factories and mills. This is the way to mobilize the workers for political action.

Unless you do this you will not move a single step forward.  
(From the Report of Piatnitzky to the Twelfth Plenum E. C. C. I.)

## Poland

A peculiar form of the strike movement is the *seizure of factories*. This is the second basic form of struggle against the capitalist offensive, especially against dismissals. The movement has assumed a mass character and is extending to a number of factories and tens of thousands of workers. Owing to our agitation and above all as a result of their own experience, the workers became convinced that it was not enough to remain passively in the factory, but that it was necessary to get into contact with the workers of other factories and the unemployed and to carry the struggle beyond the confines of the factory which had been seized.

An example of the seizure of a factory accompanied by the struggle in the streets and sympathy strikes, was given recently by the workers in Pabianitz. While 800 workers occupied the factory, a crowd of 300 workers demonstrated and fought stubbornly with the police at the factory gates, after which the struggle was shifted to the territory of the factory.

From this we see how acute was the character of the resistance of the workers, which, in a way, contained the *elements of civil war*. Similar elements were observed in other actions of the working class. The strike movement, bringing the working masses more and more sharply into conflict with the apparatus of fascist dictatorship, draws them into political life and sets before them the question of power, the question of the revolutionary way out of the crisis. (From the Report of Comrade Lansky, Twelfth Plenum E. C. C. I.)

## Czechoslovakia

*The fourth question is concerned with the revolutionizing of the economic struggle, or the uniting of the economic with the political struggle.* In my speech I said that this problem cannot be solved, by mechanically attaching any political slogans to the economic demands. Was I right in this? I think I was. For the problem is a complicated one, and it consists, generally speaking, in this, that we, first of all, know how to put forward such political slogans during the economic struggles as have immediate connection with the conduct of the economic struggle; secondly that we employ such political slogans as are directly connected with the economic struggle. But the *most important thing* is the use of *revolutionary forms of struggle*. I once again base my remarks on our practice. *Take the case of Freiwaldau.* That was originally an economic struggle of the workers, both employed and unemployed. The state power opposed this struggle. It forbade strikes and demonstrations. The workers would not submit to this, they went on strike and demonstrated under our leadership, despite the prohibition. It came to shooting. Eight workers, men and women, were shot by the gendarmes. What was the answer? Political mass

strikes throughout the whole district, lasting for three days. The whole district stopped work, until the burial of the workers, who had been shot. Throughout the country, there was a wave of over 150 political protest strikes, hundreds of demonstrations, thousands of protests and proclamations from all sections of the working population. This happened under *our* leadership, in response to *our* appeal, under *our* slogans. And the result. A respite in the terrorism, throughout the whole country, for a certain period. Freiwaldau became an affair of high political importance. (From the Report of Comrade Gockvald, Twelfth Plenum E. C. C. I.)

### England

In the Cowlairs factory in Glasgow (2,500 workers, the cell has nine members), the cell put forward the demand that the basis of calculation of piece work should be explained to the workers, also that the workers should control the fixing of piece rates, and that wages should be paid according to collective agreement. After the rejection of these demands by the manager, the cell got several hundred workers to stop work, and attracted the other departments to the movement forcing the management to make concessions. As a result, the influence of the cell greatly increased, and the next issue of the factory newspaper had to be reprinted (from the report of the organizational instructor in England).

In the Troedyrhiw colliery (South Wales) immediate demands were put forward affecting wages, firewood and better ropes. One good letter from the pit, published in the *Daily Worker*, was sufficient to occasion a strike, which ended successfully. The cell then issued a leaflet with new demands (for firewood, for the blowing of the whistle at the end of the day, without delay) and the management immediately gave way. (From the Report of Comrade Piatnitsky to the Twelfth Plenum, E. C. C. I.)

\* \* \*

Take another strike—the London lightermen. We had not a single contact with these men when the strike began. The question was how to get this contact. Finally, comrades were selected to go down and try to get some idea of what the lightermen's conditions were, to get the story written up in the *Daily Worker*, and then try to get the *Daily Worker* among the strikers. This was done and the *Daily Worker* was sent to the chairman of one of the lightermen's locals and this man, who had never had any use for the paper before, took it to a meeting of 500 strikers, read the story to them and the strikers said: "That is the only paper which has told the truth about our fight." That gave us our first break. As a result of the interest aroused by the first story, we were then able to build up a big influence, and in two of the most important branches a special meeting was organized at which twenty lightermen joined our Party.

In one of those branches we still have a big influence. But the important thing was the role of that the *Daily Worker* began to play among a number of workers who had never heard of the paper before. (From the Report of Comrade Pollitt.)

\* \* \*

The masses want to fight. They are seeking leadership, and, however weak the work of our sections may be, they come to us.

The course of the Lancashire strike may serve as a clear example of the strong tendency towards the Communist Party, of the masses entering the struggle. Take the beginning of this strike, the strike in Burnley. In this town there are 87 textile factories, and the number of workers reaches 25,000. In Burnley the Communist Party had 9 members and 9 non-Party members of the Minority Movement. In addition, our Party was not popular among the organized workers because it had obtained a firm reputation for being against the trade unions. On July 24th, owing to the growth of strike sentiment among the workers, our Party held a meeting in Burnley. Unexpectedly, 5,000 workers came to the meeting, which was an unprecedented event in Burnley. This meeting was decisive. On the next day, July 25th, the strike commenced, and the leadership was practically in the hands of the Party, although the Party had not prepared for this. The workers demanded that the members of the Party should give them instructions about the further extension of the strike. In two days the strike pickets under Party leadership closed all the 87 factories. In the night of July 27-28 the Party organized a march to the neighboring textile centre of Nelson, with the aim of extending the strike. 15,000 workers took part in the march.

Does not this example of the Lancashire strike and the example of the American Communist Party, which last year, led the big miners' strikes in Illinois and Ohio, show that the masses are ready for the fight, and are seeking the leadership of the Communist Parties and the Red Trade Unions; that Communists need only to exert even slight efforts and the leadership will fall into their hands? (From the Report of Comrade Gusev, Twelfth Plenum E. C. C. I.)

### On the Leading Role of the Party

Comrade Stalin has rightly said: "The masses must convince themselves, on the basis of their own experience, of the correctness of the Party's policy." Thus, we must do all we can, by our slogans, and our policy, to convince the masses, on the basis of their own experience, that there is only *one* workers' Party, only *one* revolutionary Party which demands and upholds the class interests of the proletariat and all toilers—the Communist Party! Precisely for this reason, we must bring the leading role of our Party to the political and revolutionary con-

sciousness of the proletarian masses, because we must raise them, and educate them in struggles for the great aims that are ahead of us—for the victory of Socialism. We must not allow any false ideas about unity, or drivel about "unity at any price" to make headway among the masses, just as we must fight most sharply against all syndicalist conceptions, as, for example, the idea that it is possible to achieve the victory of the dictatorship of the proletariat, without a revolutionary Party. International examples have shown that the working class is tremendously sensitive, when the principle of a revolutionary Party and of its leading role is in any way obscured, neglected or set aside. We have seen, for example, in France how the C. G. T. performed manouvers in the question of the policy of a united front, and how, for a long time, hundreds of thousands of workers were thus led into confusion, so that our Party and the C. G. T. U. sustained a certain loss of tempo through the skilful tactics of the reformists. Let us recall what has already been said at the Second World Congress. There, in the theses and statutes it is said:

"Under certain historical conditions it is quite possible that the working class may be permeated by numerous reactionary strata. The task of Communism does not consist in adapting itself to these backward elements of the working class, but in raising the entire working class up to the level of the Communist vanguard. The confusion of these two conceptions—Party and class—can lead to the greatest mistakes and to chaos."

What real, proletarian leadership means has been shown by the victory of the October Revolution in 1917. Without a firm, implacable, vanguard, always connected with the masses without the Party of the Bolsheviks in the foreground, the masses would not have been convinced of the correctness of the Bolshevik policy, in the then situation. Any weakening, even the smallest weakening, of the leading role of our Parties among the masses may lead to the most fatal results in the present tense situation. (From report of Comrade Thalmann to Twelfth Plenum E. C. C. I.)

### The Positive and Negative Experience of the United Front

We must ourselves know with whom we are organizing the united front, on *what basis* and for *what purpose* we are organizing it. This must be explained to the workers in popular and simple language. Frequently the united front is established by us in this way: representatives of the Party, the I.L.D., the W.I.R., the R.T.U.O., the Y.C.L. and the Communists of all these organizations form a united front. This, comrades is a *united*

*front with ourselves!* The united front in a Bolshevik sense signifies joint action against capital of the Communists and the members of the revolutionary Trade Union with the workers belonging to the Social-Democratic Party, the members of the reformist unions and the unorganized workers. Such is the real united front. We could quote a mass of such examples from the factories in Germany, from the times of economic and political strikes in Poland, Czecho-Slovakia, France and a whole number of other countries. We have already splendid models of the united front (Brux, Vienna, the tramway workers' strikes in Poland, anti-fascist action in Germany, the strike in Belgium, etc.) But these are only models and not general phenomena. And yet, the task is to convert such models into every-day phenomena, into the every-day method of struggle. An all-embracing instruction cannot be invented for the correct organization of the united front. Bolshevik sensing of the position is what is necessary here. A different specific approach is necessary in each factory, in each industry, in each country. What is important is to have a definite line of policy. This was formulated at the VIII Session of the R.I.L.U. Central Council as follows:

"The forms of united front which existed up to the present are not enough because there is too much sameness about them, and because they are too much of one type; the forms of organization and the names may and should change. The thing does not lie in the form and name. What is important is that the organs of the united front should be:

- 1) Formed for struggle against the employers.
- 2) Elected by the workers in the factories.
- 3) Consist of workers of various tendencies, and
- 4) Not replace revolutionary trade unions.

The maximum organizational flexibility must therefore be displayed in the form of organization and names of the organs of the united front."

\* \* \*

The task of the Communist Party is to raise the backward workers to a higher stage, but not to echo their backward views. To take up a comradely attitude to the rank-and-file worker, the social-democrat, the syndicalist and the non-Party worker, but not to give up our positions. *Bolshevism has nothing in common with the worship before spontaneity.*

This is why such a united front will be a Bolshevik one, in which we march together with the workers, fight for the same demands, but do not forget for a single moment that we are Communists, that we have further aims and tasks than the backward social-democratic and non-Party workers, who in this particular action are going hand in hand with us. The task is

to lead them further on the basis of their own experience. This is why we must again and again emphasize that the tempos of winning a majority of the working class depend upon the correct methods of our work in the masses. How to win a majority of the working class? In which way, by which methods and by what means? Our reply to this must be by the Bolshevist application of the tactics of the united front from below; international Bolshevism knows of no other ways and methods.

The most careful control on the part of the Party organizations is necessary in the application of the united front, how they are to conduct themselves, and in which way they should take advantage of this united front for the consolidation of the revolutionary position of the proletariat. But if we will leave our members of the Party, our lower functionaries to their own resources, they might commit many errors. Is it the case that the considerable number of errors which we register are due to bad intentions? No, they are not due to bad intentions. And this is why the Bolshevist training of our members and lower cadres, particularly at the time of the application of the tactics of the united front with social-democratic workers, is highly necessary and is a condition requisite for the correct application of the united front. (From the report of Losovsky at the Twelfth Plenum of the E.C.C.I. published in the *R.I.L.U. Magazine* Vol. 2, No. 21-22.)

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# Party Organizer



*From the Contents:*

- Building the United Front For Struggle.
- Experiences in Building a Department Committee in a Large Plant.
- Preparing a Struggle Against a Wage Cut
- Organizing on Forced Labor Projects.
- Who Shall Lead the Children's Movement?
- Some Proposals to Improve Our Trade Union Work.
- The Unit—the Center of Mass Work.
- Overcome the Fear of the Masses.
- Build and Activize Fractions in the Trade Unions.
- How District Two Stabilized Literature Distribution.

Vol. VI.

March-April, 1933

No. 3-4

*Issued by*

CENTRAL COMMITTEE COMMUNIST PARTY, U S. A



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# PARTY ORGANIZER

Vol. VI

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## Building the United Front for Struggle

*"The Executive Committee of the Communist International firmly believes that the social democratic and non-party workers regardless of what attitude the social democratic leaders adopt in setting up the united front, will overcome all obstacles and, together with the Communists, set up the united front not in words but in deeds."*

THE Twelfth Plenum Resolution of the Executive Committee of the Communist International and the Fourteenth and Sixteenth Plenum Resolutions of our Central Committee place in the center of the activity, the necessity of speeding up the intensity of the work of the Party to win the decisive sections of the American working class for revolutionary action. In all the directives of the Party it has been continuously pointed out that the Party cannot successfully rally the masses for struggle unless we react to every problem which agitates the workers. The key to setting the masses in motion is the correct application of the united front tactic—uniting the workers, regardless of their political or religious beliefs, in a struggle around their most immediate demands.

The Manifesto of the Communist International and the call of our Central Committee for united action against the capitalist offensive furnishes us with a powerful weapon to mobilize the masses for struggle to resist the capitalist attack. We must apply it in the immediate struggle for the freedom of Tom Mooney and the Scottsboro boys, for the fight against wage cuts, for unemployed relief and federal insurance, in the fight against fascism and the growing war danger. May Day, furnishes the possibility for the widest application of the united front for struggle. Through the correct application of the united front tactic, we can break through our narrow circle and rally thousands of workers from the factories, neighborhoods, labor organizations in struggle. At the same time this weapon will enable the Party to convince the workers, members of the Socialist Party, American Federation of Labor and other reformist organizations on the basis of concrete facts and the experiences of the struggle the role played by the Socialist Party and A. F. of L. leaderships.

The Districts, sections, shop and street nuclei, the fractions in the revolutionary and reformist trade unions, in the mass organizations must go forward and boldly apply the united

front policy to each concrete situation. They must weigh each experience, draw the lessons of the struggle, analyze the many problems which arise, work towards overcoming all difficulties, and combating any distortions of the application of the united front.

\* \* \*

What are some of the problems we face? After the Central Committee's call we printed in the *Daily Worker* a number of letters written by members of the Socialist Party were received. The main point in these letters was how can anyone think that the Central Committee is sincere on the united front when already in the call the "violate" the C. I. instructions, according to which "the E. C. C. I. considers it possible to recommend to the Communist Parties during the time of common fight against capital and fascism, to refrain from making attacks on social-democratic organizations." It is necessary to make clear to every Party member that a united front with other organizations is not a non-aggression pact. The Communist Party will never stop exposing those who have betrayed the interests of the working class, before, during, or after the agreement is reached for a united front.

If, and when, the representatives of the Communist Party agree on a common fight, on a concrete program of action against the bourgeoisie with the representatives of the Socialist Party, A. F. of L., Conference for Progressive Labor Action, or with any one of them, the Party will refrain from making attacks against them during the time of the common fight. This we agree to do in order to make it impossible for those who refuse to fight for the interests of the masses to hide behind the excuse of being attacked. But the most ruthless fight will be conducted against all those who violate the conditions of the agreement.

We should at all times make public before the masses the proposals we make as well as those of our opponents. In reaching an agreement the Communist Party representatives must and will fight for a "concrete program of action," otherwise "any agreement will be directed against the interests of the workers." The united front is not a non-aggression pact between the Communists and the Socialists. It is a proposal for united action against the attacks of the capitalists.

In the course of efforts to reach an agreement we will have meetings with the representatives of the various organizations, on a national, district, city or neighborhood scale. These meetings cannot be secret dealings. Every step, proposal must be brought to the attention of all workers. Every step that is being discussed in these conferences should be made known to the widest strata of the workers.

\* \* \*

We enter into a united front for a common struggle against

certain grievances or for certain demands on a minimum program of action. But the C. P. cannot and will not give up its program in fighting capitalism. The Party must bring forward this full program to the masses. The Communists must prove to the masses that because the C. P. stands for the overthrow of bourgeois dictatorship, it is the only Party working for the revolutionary unity of the workers. In its everyday struggle and in the performance of its historical mission the Party works to unite the workers, for without establishing such unity on the basis of class struggle, the working class will be unable to defeat its class enemies. Speeches, leaflets, pamphlets must state the Communist program in every action. The united front cannot be viewed as a new organization in which the Communist Party will be dissolved, in which the independent role of the Party is submerged.

The Districts, sections, units, revolutionary unions, mass organizations should immediately initiate calls for conferences of the executives of labor organizations in their given territory to achieve the unity of the workers in the May Day demonstration. This does not mean that if a Socialist Party branch or A. F. of L. local or a city committee of these organizations invites us for a united action for struggle on a burning issue concerning the workers in the territory or in the shop, that we should not go into this united front because we were not the ones who initiated it. We have an example in a city where a Socialist Branch invited us to unite all the forces for the May Day demonstration. The Party leadership hesitated to accept the invitation and decided to ignore it and "initiate" the united front. This mistake was checked in time. We have to keep in mind that the Communists have nothing to fear. We should enter into any united front with workers if the aim is to fight for the interests of the workers against capitalism.

\* \* \*  
We have to emphasize all the time that the unorganized masses must be approached and won by us exactly through our united front tactic. Nobody will deny that a successful united front action of the organized workers in a given city will have tremendous influence on the unorganized workers. They will be drawn into the struggle. But at the same time everything should be done to unite the unorganized workers with the organized. In our preparation for May Day, for the Tom Mooney Congress, in our fight against fascism, against war, we have to penetrate the factories where as yet the workers do not belong to any organizations; penetrate in the neighborhood where the unemployed are outside of any unemployed organizations. We have to build up committees in the factories, in the neighborhoods. These committees will be united front bodies embracing all the workers in these places, including organized workers.

The Party committees in the districts, sections, cities, shops, neighborhoods will approach the respective committees of the Socialist Party, A. F. of L., C.P.L.A., and unemployed organizations. At the same time, however, while working out proposals for united action in these conferences the call should be printed and distributed among the members of these organizations and to the workers generally, informing them what steps have been taken by our Party and asking them to support the united front actions. It is not obligatory to build a united front around all the demands laid down by the Central Committee call. It is possible that in a shop, in a certain territory or city to build up a wide united front on one or two issues concerning the workers. With the utmost energy the Party everywhere should immediately begin to develop the united actions of the workers proving to them that:

"The Communists have proved through their long years of struggle that they stand and will stand, not in words but in deeds, in the front ranks of the fight for the united front in class actions against the bourgeoisie."

—J. P.

### Experiences In Building of a Department Committee in a Large Plant.

**T**HE Packing House Workers Industrial Union, which is already established in one of the small plants, elected a committee to concentrate on one large plant where about 1200 workers are employed. Many of the workers in this plant knew about the Packing House Workers Industrial Union. The sentiment for our union was created by the action taken by the union in the small plant, when they carried through a stoppage for a few hours because the company laid off one man.

The Committee had made many previous attempts to get together a group of workers from the large plant, but on account of the terror the workers were afraid to get together. The conditions in the plant were steadily growing worse, wages were cut left and right. The burning issue in the large plant was the breaking of the 40-hour week guarantee.

#### We Take the First Steps

At the regular meeting of the Packing House Workers Industrial Union we took up the question of organizing the large plant primarily around the issue of the 40-hour week guarantee. A few workers volunteered to bring workers from the large plant to the next meeting of the Union. To this meeting we succeeded in getting one worker from the large plant. Here we discussed the problems in the plant with this one worker and he agreed to get some more workers from his department to a meeting. He promised to bring about 8 workers

from his department, but to our surprise he brought down 15 workers, half of his department.

We had a good discussion about the conditions in the plant and the workers decided to meet again. A committee of 5 was elected to issue a leaflet on the basis of their grievances. They also decided to write up some slogans on the basis of the grievances on the walls of the plant. Most of them were young workers and they all volunteered to write on the walls in all departments possible.

Next day there was a turmoil in the plant. The workers after reading these slogans all began to talk about the union and their grievances. It went so far that the assistant Superintendent of the plant had to go around himself to wash the walls. This inspired the workers to further action. Through their own initiative and suggestion they got sheets of sticker paper and made more slogans that were harder to get off the walls. The committee that was elected to draw up a leaflet met and made up a good leaflet. It was short but dealt with three grievances: 1. *Stop the breaking of the 40-hour guarantee*; 2. *Stop all wage cuts*; 3. *For a return of the 15 minute rest period.*

#### We Make Progress

At the next meeting of the workers from the large plant we had 97% of the workers from the first department and some workers from other departments. All the workers joined the Union and they elected a department Committee of 5 to which they added 4 workers from 2 other departments. This Committee was instructed to draw up demands and bring recommendations for the next meeting.

We took up the question of getting a group of workers from another plant which is the largest in the section with the most active workers from this plant. In this plant there are close to 2000 workers employed.

A few interesting experiences that we had is that the young workers are the most active and willing to do organizational work as well as to sacrifice their time to visit workers, etc. It was the young fellows that helped to organize the first department committee in the large plant. Another important lesson is that when we get workers together, we must establish friendly relations with the most militant workers. It is necessary to visit them in their homes, discuss the problems with them, give them proper advice in every day work.

After the first meeting, we visited some of the workers in their homes, asking how they liked the meeting, whether all of them were satisfied with the meeting, whether they think that everyone there was O. K. so nothing would happen to their jobs. Through this personal and friendly relation we were able to establish confidence among the most influential work-

ers in the department. *We must show the workers that we are just as interested in improving their conditions as they are.*

A significant experience is that in this plant a number of workers that had dropped out of the A. F. of L. on account of the A. F. of L. betrayal of the 1921 strike, joined up with our union.

The workers wanted to know how we are going to prevent the unemployed workers from taking their jobs in case of a strike. We explained to them that our union is organizing the unemployed as well as the employed and pointed out the necessity of carrying on struggles for the interests of both. We explained to them that we are already carrying on work among the unemployed in this particular city where most of the packing house workers live. The workers were well satisfied with our program.

N. H.

### Report on Wage-Cut Defeated by Miners at Ironton

THE miners of the Ironton Mine were notified that a meeting called by the Superintendent of the mine would take place in the dry house on the following evening.

National Miners Union members immediately got busy. A meeting of the Bessemer local of the N. M. U. was called at once to lay plans as to what the Union should do. The Union realized that this meeting was called by the company only for the purpose of cutting down the miners' standard of living, the same as was done in other mines owned by the same company.

The Union members decided that a leaflet should be issued the following morning when the miners go to work, to warn them of what would take place and what they should do. It was also decided that non-union members must be visited and the situation explained to them.

At once, three comrades began the work of putting out a leaflet, both in English and Italian since many of the miners are Italians and cannot understand English.

Other comrades visited non-union members and discussed with them the situation and pointed out that a wage-cut would take place the same as in Crystal Falls. The miners at once realized that they were facing a wage-cut. Everybody began to agitate and prepare for the wage-cut. The rumor was passed from miner to miner. Everybody knew it.

But, what were the miners to do? How could they stop this cut? Next morning the leaflet was distributed. We did not get to the mine in time to reach all the miners. Leaflets were however placed in the washrooms and the lockers. But even

these few leaflets were the beginning, and the news spread fast. The leaflet explained what would take place: that the miners would be compelled to work on the twenty day a month basis at the rate of \$2.00 a day and also explaining that whether the miners worked eight or twenty days a month, it would take an equal number of days to fill the stockpiles, and the mines would then stop running. The wage of \$3.50 a day and 8 days a month was already a starvation wage to the miners. The leaflet called upon the miners to vote against the wage cut, to organize anti-wage cut committees.

The Union members agitated all day in the mine and told the miners to vote against the wage-cut. Very little work was done that day in the mine. Every miner was boiling mad. All the miners regardless of their religious or political beliefs were as one man ready to vote against the coming wage-cut. Only a few company suckers were trying to do work amongst the miners to vote for this new scheme of the company, but they failed to gain any influence.

On the evening of the 7th when the day shift had come up and the night shift was ready to go down, miners were grouped together discussing in loud voices the conditions they were facing. Leaflets were seen all over. Miners were reading them. The miners were very tense and angry.

The superintendent came in at this moment and began to talk to the miners laying the proposition before them in exactly the way the National Miners' Union had explained in the leaflet. Those miners still doubting the N. M. U. leaflet and its explanation were convinced there and then that the N. M. U. knew what would take place and had warned the miners correctly.

The Superintendent asked for the opinion of the miners. The miners hesitated. One of the N. M. U. members, a District Board member, and also a former miner of the Ironton Mine, immediately after a slight hesitation of the rank and file, answered to the Superintendent's proposal with a "No, we don't want a wage-cut." This at once gave the miners a start. Other N. M. U. members began protesting and also the rank and file. Comrade M. began to speak and pointed out how the same thing happened in Crystal Falls and the promises that the company made and did not carry out, but instead fooled the workers into taking this wage-cut.

The Superintendent called Comrade M. from the crowd to come forward and back up his statement. Comrade M. without hesitation walked in front of the Superintendent, rose upon a bench and began to speak to the miners, exposing the mining official's statements. He pointed out that the proposal for a "bonus" was only a method to speed up the workers, thereby filling the stockpiles so much sooner and the laying of the



miners. The "bonus" was to be given after a certain tonnage of ore was dug. The tonnage was so large that the miners immediately saw that the company was trying to blind the wage-cut with this "bonus" proposition.

A miner began to speak and pointed out how 12 days of the 20 days that the miners worked would only rate at 90 cents a day which would mean more starvation and misery. This miner called for a vote. All those against the wage-cut to signify by saying "I." The dry house echoed with the miners voices "I."

Comrade M. called on the miners to go home and to come to the meeting at the Swede-Finn Hall that night to lay plans to combat any attempts of the bosses to put through this wage-cut.

The miners began to leave and Comrade M. stayed till the last. Comrade M. stayed to see that the Superintendent did not get a chance to speak to any of the remaining miners.

Leading comrades had a meeting that night to prepare for the meeting of the miners. About 30 rank and file miners turned up at the meeting, the first time that miners were gotten to the hall. Comrade M. spoke pointing out what we had succeeded that day and how through organized mass pressure we were able to vote the wage-cut down. The National Miners Union was brought forward as the organization that was leading the miners, also pointing out to the miners how the N. M. U. in its leaflet had correctly stated what would take place at the company meeting.

The miners were willing to discuss and willing to accept the leadership of the N. M. U. They themselves clearly pointed out that if it had not been for Comrade M. they might have failed to combat this wage-cut.

The comrades stressed the importance of organizing united front committees to fight against further attempts of the company to put through this cut. After a thorough discussion a United Front Committee of 8 was elected to begin work and lay plans for future activity and winning the miners in united action against the company cut and to fight for relief from the city, county and company.

Plans were laid to put out a series of leaflets in four different languages to explain to the miners that the company will attempt to use different methods to push through the wage-cut, and calling upon the miners to organize in a united struggle. Also house meetings to be held in every location, forming united front groups of miners, explaining the fact that we must organize against the bosses' attempts to put through the wage-cut. Plans to be laid next week for mass meetings to enlarge the United Front Committee, so that we will have miners from every shift on this committee.

We can say, that in the short notice that we had of the wage-cut, the very little agitation and propaganda that we have carried on among the miners before the proposed wage-cuts, that we reacted very quickly to the issue. We immediately began to agitate and spread at least a little propoganda and explained to the miners what this meant to them. We were able to organize a united front of part of the miners, with prospects of getting more miners in an organized struggle against the company.

We were able to get 30 miners of different nationalities to a meeting and discuss the problems facing them.

But, we also have shortcomings. They will be seen, especially when the struggle develops further, unless we overcome them immediately.

1. We did not spread as much propoganda, that is, leaflets, as we should have due to difficulties.

2. We must admit that at the meeting in the dry-house, we should have called for a vote at once. Our N. M. U. members by doing this, would have further convinced the miners that the N. M. U. is the leader of the miners and the leader in the miners' struggles.

M. M.

### Preparing A Struggle Against A Wage Cut

THE workers of Alfred Bleyer Co., manufacturers of paper plates and bags, located in Brooklyn, N. Y., had taken steps in preparation to fight against a possible wage cut, long before the intentions of a cut were announced.

The workers of the Bleyer shop belong to the International Pulp Sulphite and Paper Mill Workers Union, affiliated with the A. F. of L.

Conditions in the Bleyer shop are better than in any other shop of its kind. These conditions, had been obtained through strike struggles, led at first by a group of militants, later by the Communists. They have a 45½ hour week; \$20 weekly minimum wage for girls and \$25 weekly for men, etc. The shop agreement calls for May First as an official holiday, for which the workers get paid.

In spite of a strong desire to do so, the bosses have been unable to force through a cut of the weekly wage rate during the entire period of the crisis. The shop nucleus knew, however, that the bosses had made a few dollars less in profits in the last year. They also knew that the bosses wanted to maintain profits at the expense of the workers. They, therefore, foresaw that a wage-cut was coming even though as yet the bosses had not hinted such action. They expected the cut when the agreement expired.

After a thorough discussion the nucleus decided that a campaign should be started to explain to the workers, first, that a cut in wage rates was coming and the need to fight against it; and second, that a tax to fight the cut should be levied on every worker and that this tax be paid in weekly instalments.

This campaign was carried on for six weeks. In addition to discussion in the nucleus, the question was discussed in the Young Communist League nucleus; in the Trade Union Unity League group; in the Shop Committee; in the International Labor Defense and Workers' International Relief; in the Shop Forum (held weekly inside the shop); in personal conversations between the leading workers with the rest; and, finally, it was taken up in the Union local, where the proposals were unanimously accepted. As a result of this campaign the nucleus even succeeded in winning over to its program of preparation and tax a group of workers ("the opposition") who thought the bosses were nice fellows, etc.

A few weeks after the vote for a tax was taken, Mr. John P. Burke, president of the International Pulp Sulphite and Paper Mill Workers, with which the Bleyer shop local is affiliated, walked into the shop. He informed the Shop Committee that the bosses told him they couldn't afford the existing scale and wanted the workers to take a cut. Mr. Burke said nothing for or against the bosses' proposals. He left it up to the local!

Mr. Burke came to the shop after a conference with the bosses, held *outside of the shop*, without representation from the Shop Committee. To make sure that a representative of the local should *not* be present at the conference, a letter about the conference was sent to the secretary so that he received it *the day after the conference was held*.

The Communist nucleus immediately reacted to this new danger of behind-the-scene negotiations by Burke. Special meetings were called where it was decided to speed up the payment of the tax and to meet a cut with a strike, if necessary. The workers were shown that Burke's actions proved that neither he nor the supporters of his policy could be relied upon to lead the fight against the threatened wage cut. That, it was therefore necessary, to build up the strongest possible united front of all opposed to the wage cut right in the shop. This need for the broadest united front was explained daily. This was done concretely in connection with the regular complaints made by the employers in the shop in which "opposition" workers were involved and by fighting for their rights. The complete winning over of the "opposition" is now the major task which the revolutionary leadership faces and which it has set itself. The winning of these workers will mean a solid front of the workers against the bosses' threatened cut.

Burke's "report" was discussed by every organization and

every committee in the shop. Everywhere the results were unanimously against Burke. Already the strike sentiment is becoming very strong.

At the moment of writing we find the workers of the Bleyer shop with higher wages than elsewhere in the trade. We find that they have not yet received a wage cut in the last 3-4 years of the crisis. Further, we find the revolutionary leadership in the shop preparing them for the effective defeat of the proposed wage cut.

What is the situation elsewhere in the International Union? Lack of revolutionary opposition has enabled the International officials, with Burke at the head, to put over cuts of 20%-30% and more in all of the other locals. About a month before the agreement with the Bleyer bosses will expire, an International Union convention will be held. This convention will find the Bleyer shop local calling for a rank and file united front against wage cuts and for mutual support of the strike struggles which may be waged against the cuts, for militant mass picketing, etc., the program of the revolutionary trade union movement.

The Bleyer shop has by actual example shown that their policies (the policies of the revolutionary trade union movement) maintain the standards of the workers. The A. F. of L. bureaucrats have shown by example that they are enemies of the workers. By revealing these facts to the workers the Communists will succeed in winning support for their policies. The Communists in the Bleyer shop are pointing the way by actual example not only to the workers in the Bleyer shop but to the workers and Communists in other shops. That is true Communist leadership!

DAVE GORDON.

### Recruiting Is a Daily Task

"...the Bolshevization of the Party includes first of all the rooting of the Party deep into the great masses of the proletariat in the workshops, mills, mines and factories of the basic industries of the country..."—Resolution of Sixteenth Central Committee Plenum.

What has your district, section, unit, done since the publication of the resolution to accomplish this task? Have you recruited any new members in the basic industries of your territory? How have you done it?—Let's hear about it in the next number of the PARTY ORGANIZER!

### Organizing On Forced Labor Projects

**M**ANY comrades have written articles on the various forms of organization of the unemployed on the neighborhood, block and ward scale, but nothing has been written in our periodicals about forms of organization among the unemployed workers on the forced labor projects that are being established throughout the entire country.

While we generally speak of the necessity of organizing for struggle against forced labor, we are at a loss as to the exact form of the organization on these projects and what relation this organization would have to the unemployed movement in a given territory. In this article I wish to discuss the function of a model organization of the above type as it is practiced in Providence, R. I.

The unemployed situation in Providence is typical of any other large city in the United States. While the State statistics show some 35,000 unemployed in this city only some 6,000 are receiving relief from the Department of Public Aid. Those who receive aid must put in a certain amount of work on so-called Relief Projects. There are some 12 such major projects, each employing from 100 to 300 men at a time. There are also numerous small projects employing from 10 to 50 men.

About two months ago a group of workers from one of these Relief Projects, which the workers named "Hungry Hill," took the initiative in organizing an unemployed club. They conferred with a couple of members of the Executive Board of the National Textile Workers Union, formed their organizing committee and began organizing right on their project. At the first meeting, they decided to name their club the "Right to Live Club" and to make it a city-wide and later state-wide organization. The Right to Live Club grew like wild fire all over the city, so that today it is the largest organization of its kind in New England. There are over 1,000 members in the city of Providence proper, with about 500 more in the outlying districts. The Club takes in any unemployed worker who needs relief, laying no barriers as to religion, race or political beliefs. The club as such carries on activities for cash relief and other issues on a city scale. It functions with regular weekly meetings and regular meetings of the Executive Board. It also attempts to establish functioning organizations on the job, with particular activity on the project itself; this activity to be independent of the regular activity of the club, and to center around issues arising on the job.

Let's examine the function of the members of the Right to Live Club on the project, they call "Hungry Hill." This is the project where the club originated and where the organization functions best at the present time. The project is a large

park, and the men make paths, build stone walls and stairs, dig up stumps, bury large boulders, etc. The men pride themselves on being 100% organized on this particular project; and the organization is similar to a union organization in an organized shop. Some 300 men work here divided into working gangs of from 25 to 40 with a straw boss over each gang, and a head boss over the whole project.

The workers use these gang divisions for their own organization. Each gang elects a captain who is in charge of collecting the dues from his gang. He is in charge of taking up any grievance of his gang, etc. The captain of all gangs on this job form a "Job Committee," similar to a Shop Committee. This job committee meets daily on the job to check up on any grievances on the part of the men. If a grievance arises in a certain gang the captain tries to settle it with the straw boss of his gang, if this grievance happens to be a small one. If no satisfaction ensues, he reports to the Job Committee which acts for the entire body of men. For instance, the men report to work on a certain morning and it is very cold. The men do not want to work in freezing weather. The Job Committee gets together and decides to walk off the job that day. They take up the issue of being paid for that day with the project boss, or if he refuses to take the responsibility for the men not working, they take it up with the Director of Public Aid and force these officials to agree.

The Department of Public Aid followed a policy in the past of forcing the men to make up days they don't work, but through the militancy of the workers on all projects under the leadership of the Right to Live Club, this practice was stopped. Now the Department of Public Aid has issued a formal statement that no days will have to be made up.

Numerous other concessions have been won through this strike action on the jobs and the Right to Live Club is gaining in popularity and importance among the unemployed workers of Providence. It would be well for comrades active in unemployed work in other cities to study the function and forms of this organization and apply it similarly elsewhere.

A. B.

### Who Shall Lead the Children's Movement?

THE recent Polburo resolution on children's work served to mark a change in the general approach and response of the leading Party bodies to the question of building a mass children's movement. One of the first steps taken in District Two in the direction of carrying out the resolution was a discussion held with the section organizers and fraction secretaries. The discussion raised two basic questions which are generally unclear in the Party as a whole. These must be understood before any steps can be taken in developing the work correctly.

1. The first question is: Who shall lead the children's movement? The resolution answers that work among the children is not as was considered in the past, the work and property solely of the Young Communist League. It is an important task every Party unit, and the Party is to lead the children's movement by making work among the children an important task of every mass organization. Especially must the Party understand that the struggle for the demands of the children is essentially a task of the adult workers and parents, and not as it has been, a task of the children alone. This means that every Party member and unit, and the Unemployed Councils, Unions, etc., as well as the other organizations, are the leaders and the initiators of struggles for the demands of the children, in the neighborhoods and in the schools. Then and only then can a serious campaign be waged in behalf of the children; and not as in the past, half-hearted propaganda approaches to the question made solely by the Pioneer movement (Child Hunger Delegations, Lawson and Forrestville schools, Chicago, lower Harlem-Gonzales, etc.).

2. The second question which was raised that of the role and purpose of our Pioneer movement. The Polburo resolution points out very definitely that "the workers children's troops ... must then be made into instruments and centers of proletarian class education among their members... It will be the part of this education as well as an object of it to involve the children more and more into the struggles of the parent organizations."

Generally throughout the Party there is a very abstract and general approach to the question of struggle of the children, "child struggles," etc. The Polburo resolution gives a very definite answer to all of these vague approaches to the question. The major task of our children's movement becomes therefore, a very clear one—that of organizing a mass movement of children in which we will undertake to give them a proletarian class education and train them to develop into class conscious youth on the side of the working class. This education cannot and must not be an academic education, but based essentially on its connection with the life of the child

and his participation in struggles for his and his parents' demands. This necessitates the developing systematically of a trained group of leaders capable of seeing to it that these tasks are carried out.

It is, therefore, a task of each Party unit and fraction to check up regularly and systematically on the type of comrade who is leading the children in his neighborhood or organization. In this way the work will be continually strengthened.

If these basic problems are understood, then the Party as a whole will really be taking the first steps requisite for building a mass movement of children, and through doing this widening out of its own influence.

### Some Proposals to Improve Our Trade Union Work

*We are reprinting here an article by Comrade F. F. from California raising the problem of how the Party can do trade union and factory work, and an article answering these questions raised by Comrade F. These articles deal with a burning problem of our Party. We call upon all district, section and unit functionaries to send in articles based on their experiences in the units, concerning this problem.*

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**F**OR the last three years the Party seriously raised the question of trade union work. Such slogans as "Every Party member a trade union member", "Every Party member must give 80 per cent of his time for trade union work", etc., were heard everywhere. Yet the reports at plenums—section, district and national—show that the big stumbling block in our work is our failure to make headway in trade union and factory work. Now then, where does the weakness in our trade union work lie? Why don't our trade union fractions function?

My several years of experience in the Party, especially in District 13 has led me to the conclusion that the main fault with the Party's trade union work does not lie in the methods or approach but in the basically wrong structure of the Party units.

Our present territorial units are ideologically and organizationally divorced from any practical trade union work. The units exist in territories comprising scores of blocks and thousands of people. With the small membership they are like a drop in the bucket. The regular Party work which consists of visiting contacts, help build the unemployed councils, open air meetings, affairs, etc., and special campaigns—elections, *Daily Worker*, *Western Worker*, Scottsboro, Mooney, hunger marches, etc., cannot artificially be linked up with the trade union work.



While it is hard but possible and necessary to build block committees and territorial unemployed councils, it is impossible to organize unions on such a basis. Yet the whole Party's (District 13) orientation, with very few exceptions, is toward the neighborhood. The result is, when a worker joins the Party and is assigned to a unit the member is immediately faced with a vast territory, which could absorb hundreds of activities, with problems (street meetings, leaflet distribution, visiting for subs, affairs, etc.) which are exclusively territorial and have no direct, immediate, connection with the building of a specific revolutionary trade union.

Now not to go into any lengthy analysis of the composition of our membership and the units unsystematic and improperly organized distribution of work amongst the membership I want to make the following proposals:

1) That the territorial units be reorganized, to distribute the work on a percentage basis, not according to the individual member (that each member is to give 80 per cent of his time to trade union work) but according to the unit membership as a whole. For example let us say 55 per cent of the unit membership is to do trade union and factory work, 25 percent unemployed neighborhood work, 20 per cent fraternal and other work. (Of course, I am just suggesting a rough figure.)

2) But a mere mechanical reorganization of the unit is not enough. Comrades will raise the question if only 25 per cent of the unit membership is to carry on Party work in the neighborhoods what will the rest of the membership do? How will they carry on the Party work and the special campaigns? The answer to this is, that all Party work, general and special campaigns must in an organized and planful manner be carried over to the various fields of activities the members were assigned to. In other words, the members assigned to trade unions (A. F. of L. and T.U.U.L.) and factory work, must carry out the Party's campaigns there, and so must those assigned to fraternal and other work. It means that when a member is assigned to a trade union or factory he or she should not be sent in the unit territory to visit contacts or get *Western Worker* or *Daily Worker* subs, etc., but do this in the organizations they were assigned to, in the trade and industry they work. Even leaflet distribution and signature drives should be carried out on this basis where possible, without endangering the job or the holding of membership in the particular organization—the fractions to correct late both Party and specific organization work of its members.

In my opinion, if we reorganize the units on the basis of the above proposals we will be able to overcome the stumbling block in our trade union and factory work. However, comrades must not think that this will work like miracles—over night. It will be necessary to conduct a persistent ideological campaign for

a long time and where necessary take disciplinary action and we will be able to convince the membership of the importance of attending fraction meetings and to build the revolutionary unions. F. F.

### The Unit—the Center of Mass Work

COMRADE F. F. from California raises the question of the building of the trade unions and rooting the Party in the factories. The question of directing the Party to work in the factories, in the revolutionary and reformist trade unions, developing the struggles of the workers around their day-to-day grievances in the shops is a burning problem for our Party. Comrade F.'s desire to find a solution to this problem compelled him to write this article. But will the solution offered by Comrade F. help the situation? Is the question of rooting our Party in the factories, organizing the workers in the factories, building our trade unions merely an organization question of assignment of Party comrades to various phases of work? Or, is it a problem of changing basically the work of the units from inner work to work among the masses?

Of course, it is correct, that if our Party were based on shop nuclei, the task of winning the workers for struggle, for the organization in the shop around the immediate demands and grievances would be easier. The shop nucleus working directly in the shop, sensitive to the problems of the workers, knowing their day to day needs and interests, responds to the issues in the factory and can give direct and immediate leadership to the grievances of the workers and win them for struggle.

But we must face concrete facts. Our Party today is not based on the shop. While a large number of Party members work in factories, the Party has still no foothold in these workshops and is removed almost completely from the decisive industries. These members still belong to the street nuclei and carry on their work in the territories. Our task is to create the basis through the activity of these street units reacting to the problems in these shops, in the factories of concentration and in the territory to root our Party in the factory and strengthen our revolutionary unions.

#### Nine-Tenths of All Work Among Masses

The Fourteenth Plenum of our Central Committee states: "The work of the lower Party organizations must be basically changed. Nine tenths of all the work of the lower organizations must be concentrated directly on the work among the masses. . . ." Can the street unit accomplish this by reorganizing the unit and assigning so many and so many for trade union work, so many and so many for unemployed activity, etc. Will this

mechanical division between Party work as such and trade union work or factory work bring the necessary change in our Party. The street nucleus is the Party in the territory, it is faced with the various questions of mass work. How shall the street unit proceed with its work?

#### The Work of a Street Unit

A street unit works in a territory. It cannot proceed to organize all the workers in the entire territory at once. On the basis of its knowledge of the conditions in the territory, it picks out one, two or a few blocks. In these blocks, there may be a factory—or no factory. In the unit there are comrades employed in factories. The unit concentrating on a territory where there are no factories, proceeds on the basis of organizing the workers in the territory around the issues arising there—unemployment, evictions, housing, rent, etc. The unit deals with these problems, discusses the issues, decides what has to be done with the view of winning the workers to struggle around specific burning issues in the territory and begins its work. *It is precisely by reacting to the most elementary issues of the workers in the territory, developing the struggles on the basis of these issues, that we can win members for the trade unions, establish an unemployed council and aid in the establishment of shop grievance committees.*

By building an unemployed council in the territory we get contacts with workers who know others employed in factories. We recruit direct from the unemployed council for our revolutionary unions. Here are also workers who may belong to A. F. of L. locals, we draw them into the opposition groups. Thus all phases of mass work are interlinked even in territories where there are no factories.

At the same time, the unit should deal with the problems of the comrades employed in factories—deal with every issue and help these comrades directly to establish a shop nucleus and shop organization in the factory of employment. Thus if in a unit of 20, five comrades are employed in shops, the unit should discuss regularly how these comrades can carry on their activity to root the Party in the factory. The unit leadership especially shall give personal guidance and aid to these comrades.

In territories where our units are working and there are factories—the unit must deal with the problems of the workers in the factory chosen for concentration and the problems of the workers in the territory. Its aim is to develop organization in the shop and in this way establish the leadership of the Party. And here, by building a grievance committee in a shop, we can through these workers get contacts for the building of an unemployed council, win adherents to the trade unions, get con-

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tacts with A. F. of L. workers, recruit workers direct from the shop for the Party and establish a shop unit.

Thus, if instead of viewing each phase of Party work as a separate task, we would consider every phase as an integral part of the whole work of the Party, we will soon find that *once the unit begins to deal with the concrete needs of the workers, it will strengthen all fronts of the Party's work.* And this is the chief problem that faces our Party—to transform the work of our Party to work among the masses.

#### Organizing the Activity of the Members

The problem arises how to organize the work of the Party unit to enable it to get the most effective results in the territory, in the shop of concentration and the shops in which our comrades are employed. In determining the work of our Party members, there exists a wrong conception of what comprises Party work in our units. This conception maintains that comrades who work in the territories are "good Communists"—those who work in the mass organizations and devote little time to the work in the territory are "bad Communists."

Comrades in mass organizations *are doing important Party work* and should be responsible for their work to the unit. While the fractions in these organizations guide and direct the work of our comrades, the comrades at the same time should report regularly to the Party unit on their activity. The unit should know what the comrade is doing to bring the Party campaigns into the organization, how he is drawing new workers into the trade unions, whether he has recruited unemployed workers from his organization for the unemployed council, whether he is getting *Daily Worker* subs, recruiting members for the Party, etc., and whether he participates regularly in the fractions. In this way the individual activities of the comrades in the trade unions and other mass organizations are discussed in the unit and the unit helps directly in strengthening and improving the mass activities of our comrades. This in turn will create a better understanding in the Party units, that these comrades are involved in Party work and overcome much of the demoralization and fluctuation resulting from this erroneous conception.

Who then shall do the work in the territory? In this connection flexibility should be used by the unit. A comrade who has influence in his mass organization, who is active, cannot be mechanically instructed that he is to leave this field and devote his time to the work in the territory. Comrades who are busy in mass organizations can devote some time to the work in the territory, but primarily comrades who are not active in these organizations and comrades who belong to no organizations at all carry on the day-to-day work in the territory. But the activity in the territory should not be limited only to a few Party comrades. They should immediately build around themselves a

*cadre of non-Party actives who can assist in this work, who can help to visit contacts, help to call meetings of workers together, help to establish an unemployed council, help the work in the factory, help sell the Daily Worker, etc. In this manner the activity in the territory chosen to start the work can be organized effectively and the unit give direct leadership to the issues of the workers.*

Thus it is not a mechanical division of tasks—on a percentage basis. This particularly cannot be applied to the trade unions, since all members of our Party, if eligible for a trade union, should and must become active in the existing revolutionary or reformist trade unions.

The essential point is that the unit discusses and deals with all the problems of mass work. And only by the street unit dealing with the problems it meets in the direct sphere of its activity—the territory—by controlling the activities of the comrades in the mass organizations, by giving guidance and direct aid to individual comrades employed in the shops, can the unit be transformed from a routine body dealing with petty problems into a live political body—the leader of a specific section of the working class. It is only in this manner that the initiative of the unit and the individual members will be developed. It is only in this manner that the Party will establish “permanent and intimate contacts” with the masses of workers and strengthen its roots in the shops.

B. G.

### Write Your Experiences for the Party Organizer

#### COMRADES IN THE DISTRICTS, SECTIONS AND UNITS!

We again appeal to you to write up your experiences for the PARTY ORGANIZER. The experiences of the various lower Party organizations, in shop work, work among the unemployed, united front actions, etc., must be utilized to improve the work of the entire Party. This must now be done to a much greater extent than in the past, in view of the greater tasks facing our Party at the present time, and also in view of the coming Party Convention.

The districts, sections and units must consider the task of bringing their experiences before the entire Party as part of their work. The leading organs of the districts and sections, and unit bureaus should take the responsibility in carrying out this work.

Send your experiences to the PARTY ORGANIZER.  
ORG. COMMISSION, C. C.

### Overcome the Fear of the Masses.

**I**N Conneaut, Ohio, there was a person J. who had been agitating for Communism for a full year previous to the presidential election. Comrade J. did not know if there were any Party members in the town. Comrade J. was given collection lists to aid the *Daily Worker*. J. sold five copies of the *Daily Worker* twice a week. Being eager to study Communism Comrade J. began to inquire about a Workers School. He finally discovered such a school through personal inquiry at the District Office in Cleveland. He registered, paid his own tuition, and then went back to Conneaut. During the presidential campaign Comrade J. with other non-party comrades was active in agitational work and also in distributing pamphlets. The results were that in the fourth ward precinct the Communist candidates received 25 votes. All these facts were fully known to the Party comrades in Conneaut. As a matter of fact there were even Party members living in the precinct where J. canvassed for votes. Yet in spite of this at no time did Comrade J. receive an invitation to join the Party.

However, Comrade J. did succeed in getting into the Party but not through any fault of the Conneaut Comrades. When the National Hunger March was being prepared, a comrade from the section was sent to help carry through the preparatory work. While in Conneaut he came in contact with Comrade J. and filed out an application for him. Shortly after the section organizer came there and he was accepted.

Recently through Comrade J's efforts the unit agreed to accept two new members. The old members however proposed that the new members should be put in a separate group with one or two of the older comrades teaching them Communism. Further, that these new recruits should not attend any of the unit meetings for about three or four weeks. Fortunately in this particular instance the plan was not carried out. Comrade J. was instrumental in getting besides these two members, another one; also he was indirectly responsible in getting a fourth recruit. All these new members are native born.

In conclusion I wish to make an appeal to all Party members. When you see and know of a good worker do not hesitate to ask him to join the Party. Also it is not a good policy to accept new recruits and then to keep them from a unit meeting for a given time. These are sectarian tendencies and we as Party members must overcome them.

K.

### The Deadly Routine Which Must be Overcome

Our influence among workers has increased tenfold within the last few years, but the membership of our Party has remained practically stationary. Why do the workers come and leave our ranks? What is wrong with us?

Here is the life of my unit—District 2, Section 6, Street Nucleus 6. The unit meeting took place on December 21, 1932. The order of business; Unit Buro Report, "Daily Worker"; Dues; Literature; Assignments; Discussion. Out of 27 members only 7 are present. The organizer reports for the Buro: One member of the Buro moved to New York, the Buro recommends another comrade. The financial secretary is sick, the Buro recommends so and so. The Buro decided to donate \$3 for the Workers' Center. The first beginnings in building the block committee have been made. A meeting was held with eight workers present, good sentiment, elected a good and responsible worker as the chairman of the committee. The workers at this meeting came only from one house canvassed by the unit organizer. The other five comrades assigned to canvass other houses, did not follow-up their contacts and did not come and bring the workers to this meeting, etc.

Did we take up this block activity with the greatest seriousness? Did we devote the whole evening to a discussion on the building of the block committee? Not at all. The other comrades gave their excuses for doing very little, and that was all.

What did we take up? Here it is: two posts are to be filled. None of the designated comrades would accept. We argue. We discuss. We get excited, and, some of us, disgusted. No results. We leave the question for another meeting.

We make a motion that we donate only two dollars for the Workers Center since we have no money. We discuss and carry the motion. Some one remembers that we must send greetings to the Daily Worker. Motion that we donate from the unit. But there is no money. So we discuss what to do. Finally, a bright idea comes to our heads and we decide to pass around the blank and collect from the comrades. Some of them have no money. They feel uneasy.

The point on the literature. The agitprop was sick and didn't bring the Communist and Party Organizer. But she has all kinds of 1 and 2-cent pamphlets. She tries to sell these. The financial secretary complains that the agit-prop either does not understand or does not want to give her the account every Tuesday. The agit-prop speaks; the secretary speaks; everybody speaks; no one to listen. Arguments, explanations, persuasions fly back and forth. Order is finally restored. The agit-prop must submit the account every Tuesday.

The organizer has a bundle of tickets. One set of tickets—the *Daily Worker* affair. These tickets to be sold at 5 cents, and the owner of the ticket will be admitted to the affair for additional 40 cents. The tickets are divided, some take five, some three and two. Then our good organizer pulls another batch of tickets—the section affair. The tickets sell for 25 cents each and must be sold. Some comrades protest and object. Two sets of tickets for one meeting is too much. More arguments. But the tickets win and we again divide them up.

A letter from the district is read instructing the units to make all attempts to get back into the Party those workers who have been in the Party and dropped out for one reason or another.

At last, the last point on the order of results of the election campaign. The discussion to be held is on the results of the election campaign. But it is too late. It's no use. Everybody is tired and wants to go home. A comrade takes the floor and informs the comrades that before we adjourn there is a special edition of the *Daily Worker* on the Alabama situation which must be sold tomorrow. All comrades are instructed to go out. One hundred and fifty copies to be distributed by our unit. Some comrades fail to understand how we can mobilize the unit overnight. The organizer remarks: we must carry out the decision first, and discuss it later. We divide up the *Daily*—some take five, others 10, still others 20. The meeting is adjourned and we rush home.

While going home I considered this meeting. What did we accomplish? Did I like the meeting? Did I get any inspiration and enthusiasm at the meeting? What would the new members think about the meeting? Could a new member remain in the Party after several such meetings?

I leave it to the comrades to answer these questions. And meetings like these have been going on since I remember. No political life, no real discussion, no mass work. This particular meeting had at least one redeeming feature: the report of the organizer that we have started something on the block. But most meetings of our units begin and end with the wrangling over the technical, petty, ticket or financial matters.

There should be an operation—a very painful operation made upon our units.

J. A.



### Build and Activize Fractions in the Trade Unions

WHILE numerous directives of the Comintern have called to the attention of our Party the importance of the systematic functioning of our trade union fractions it has not yet been taken seriously in many districts, resulting sometimes in serious opportunist mistakes and in other instances in almost liquidation of our revolutionary unions.

In the Comintern resolution on the work of the trade union fractions it is stated:

*"This most important sector of the mass work of the Communist Parties still continues to be the weakest one, and this weakness of the work of the C. P. in the trade unions is now one of the main hindrances for their further development."*

I will only deal with two examples. First our fraction in the Needle Trades Union in Boston. Here we conducted a victorious strike of some 400 sheep-skin and leather goods workers. But during the strike and two months after the strike the fraction failed to meet and map out any concrete policy and not a single member was recruited into the Party. The union policy was directed by one comrade and the result was that due to our failure to really carry on systematic work among these workers for the Party policy, the union even failed to acquaint the workers with the program of the Communist Party and its candidates during the presidential election. What is still worse, certain backward workers threatened to tear down the election posters for Foster and Ford and our leadership was for a time capitulating to this pressure instead of fighting for the line of the Party.

Instead of throwing the union and its membership wholeheartedly in the hunger march preparations, instead of convincing the membership of the need of struggle for relief and unemployment insurance, our union leadership not only failed in this but was actually in opposition to carrying on any struggle and was satisfied that "division of work" would solve the problem of the needle trades workers. Thus during the entire period of the crisis the Boston Needle Trades Union failed completely to carry on any unemployment work whatever.

Why was this possible? Only because our fraction did not function and did not carry on a struggle for the line of the Party in the union. Whenever meetings were held of the fraction the entire time was taken up discussing petty issues but the District Bureau of the Party failed to give the necessary guidance to the political development of the fraction. While the leading comrades in charge of the union must be called sharply to account for their failure to carry out the line of the Party and their opportunist line, it is necessary to state that the Organization Department of the District Committee (and this is true

in most districts) only checked up on the functioning of the units but forget to check up on the regular functioning of the trade union fractions. It would be in order to ask every district organizer and org. secretary in the respective districts, how many fraction meetings of the trade unions they participated in and helped to give political guidance guarding against opportunism which will develop in mass organizations unless firm Bolshevik guidance is assured.

In Lawrence the fractions failed to function in the textile union with the result, that all union policies were left in the hands of the organizer and no collective work was possible. This resulted in almost complete liquidation of the union as leader of economic struggles. In Paterson, N. J., the fraction in the textile union, while functioning weakly, made decisions in a mechanical manner and failed to understand the proper relationship between Communists and non-Party workers. Our comrades in the union meetings attempted to monopolize the floor on all questions and even on small insignificant issues insisted on speaking. It is necessary to understand that the Communists carry on a struggle on principal Party policies. But it is incorrect to decide mechanically on all problems of the union before the meetings of the union. The role of the fraction must be to carry into life the Party line through the trade unions—not in a mechanical manner but by understanding the importance of certain actions of the Party (hunger march, election campaign, etc.) linking up these issues with the every day grievances in the shops and the unemployed and convince the non-Party workers of the importance of such actions. Unless we do this we will not be able to mobilize these workers for our campaigns.

It is also of utmost importance, that the higher committees of the Party (district bureaus, section committees, etc.) discuss problems of the union, together with the representatives of the respective fractions, and work out concrete proposals for the fraction. This is particularly important in connection with national or district campaigns, so that the best possible results can be obtained and every member of the Party be mobilized for certain tasks within the union. That such decisions shall not be worked out by our Party section and district leadership without consulting with the comrades involved in the trade unions and mechanically shoved down their throats (as some times has been done) but all possible steps must be taken to convince these comrades of the correctness of the policy. This is necessary so that the Communists will be able to act as an intelligent and collective body with firm discipline that can become the real leader of the masses organized in the trade unions and looked up to as such by the non-Party workers.

ANDREW OVERGAARD.

## Agit-Prop Work

### "A Week In Detroit."

THE Detroit district approached the commemoration of the Fiftieth Anniversary of the death of Karl Marx with a bang. They set aside the week of March 19 as a concentration week for the purpose of carrying through a series of classes and lectures in the theory of Marxism-Leninism. At the request of the district the Central Committee of our Party assigned me to this work. This week of concentration on the education in Marxian theory proved in my opinion, that although a week is a short time, the results obtained are of inestimable value. With little effort on the part of other districts such weeks could be carried through from time to time and help to strengthen our Party cadres.

The entire program consisted of a Marx Memorial Meeting on Sunday, March 19, five classes in the theory and practice of Marxism-Leninism every morning from eleven to one, and five public lectures on topics of Marxism-Leninism in the evenings. The latter were open to the public at large, while the classes were only for Party and League members, comrades chosen by each section.

The comrades in Detroit figured on twenty five to thirty students for the class, but the attendance was more than double. The average attendance was 62,—the maximum 69. The average political level of the comrades was not very high. Nevertheless, there was a good sprinkling of well developed comrades but who needed clarification on many problems. Due to the shortage of time, half or more than half of the time of the class had to be consumed in lecturing, a method which is not employed in courses of a longer duration. The questions and discussions which followed dealt very often with topics not directly pertaining to the subject of the class, but here we had to be flexible. Our aim was not to restrict them in the questions but rather give them an opportunity to ask any question which bothered them and thus get the information they wanted. The same line was pursued during the lectures at night.

The topics for the classes were:

- 1) The historical background of scientific Socialism, beginning with the end of the Eighteenth Century.
- 2) Dialectic materialism as the revolutionary philosophy of the working class.
- 3) The economic teachings of Marx and Engles.
- 4) The class struggle of today in the light of Marxism-Leninism.

At the first glance this program appears too ambitious,

but it was carried through with great success. This was due primarily to the fact that we simplified the subject-matter, by using the everyday language of the worker at the same time not over-simplified, because over-simplification very often leads to vulgarization and does not elevate the members. Our aim should be to make our explanations very simple at the same time teaching the comrades to understand certain terminology, certain scientific words and expressions. This can be done with the most difficult scientific subject. It was especially gratifying to see comrades who were considered raw material, come over and say: "Comrade Markoff, you made the subject so clear and simple that we understood everything and we have learned a lot."

The reason I state this in the article is to point out to our teachers, lecturers and speakers the importance of using a language simple enough for every worker to understand.

Literature used in connection with the classes consisted mainly of the *Communist Manifesto*, *Wage Labor and Capital*, the *State and Revolution*, the *Resolution of the Twelfth Plenum of the E. C. C. I.* and other similar pamphlets.

Many members of the classes discovered for the first time that there is much more to the *Communist Manifesto* than they thought there was. This is because they never really studied the document; they just "read" it.

These four lectures, though successful, mean very little if the work started should end abruptly. The District Agitprop Commission decided therefore, to continue with the educational work for six more weeks, once a week with the same students. It is also the aim to choose more advanced comrades and organize them into a special group for the purpose of training them as leaders for study groups, instructors for new members classes etc. In Detroit it is essential that such program be carried on with all seriousness. The Socialist Party, the Socialist Labor Party and the Proletarian Party are active in disseminating their distortions and misinterpretations of Marxism. Our comrades without a Marxian training are unable to combat those false theories. The composition of the class was, as far as I could judge in the short time, good.

The four public lectures were as follows:

- 1) The Paris Commune and the Marxist-Leninist theory of the state.
- 2) Marxian theory of crises.
- 3) Leninism as the further development of Marxism.
- 4) Social democracy, fascism and the struggle for Socialism.

The comrades attending the morning classes also attended the evening lectures thus getting additional information through the lectures. The attendance at the evening lectures was on an average of 200 to 250. A much larger attendance

could have been secured with the proper advertising. The comrades admitted that very little had been done and, whatever was done, was carried through three or four days prior to the beginning of the series. The greatest shortcoming however, in my opinion was the failure on the part of the comrades in Detroit to secure the attendance of a large number of the auto workers who participated in the recent strikes. Very few of those, if any, were present at the lectures. Greater effort should also have been made to bring Negro workers to the lectures. There were Negro men and women present, but not in sufficient numbers.

\* \* \*

The lack of a central forum is a great shortcoming on the part of the Detroit district. The comrades stated that since the city authorities refused the Party the use of the High School building there was no central forum. There certainly are other halls besides the High School. Better a smaller place than none at all. While section forums are both necessary and desirable, the central forum must be established. The Workers Educational Association can help in hiring a hall and run the forums under its auspices. The John Reed Club and other organizations can cooperate. A Workers School similar to the one in New York, Chicago, Boston and other places must be established in Detroit. The Workers Educational Association discussed and has now worked out plans for such a school. The task now is to carry out these very excellent plans.

In an other issue of the *Party Organizer* we shall deal with this question more in detail.

The space will not permit to go into the discussion of other phases of agit-prop work in Detroit, this will have to be done at some future date. Generally speaking there are infinite possibilities in the district for the Party to become a real mass Party, the leader of the present struggles of the workers, farmers and the urban petty-bourgeoisie. It seems to me that the Party machinery needs lubrication, somehow the motion is too slow, the machine is clogged in many places. New forces must be developed and this must be done quickly. The elements are there, the masses are crying for leadership; the Party must take cognizance of this situation at once. We cannot permit ourselves the luxury of proceeding at a snail's pace. The tempo must be increased and the problems tackled in a real Bolshevik manner. Let us develop the Bolshevik style of work. Comrade Stalin characterizes this style of work as: a) revolutionary zeal, inspired by the Russian spirit; and b) businesslike practicability, inspired by American spirit. The combination of the two, says Comrade Stalin is essential to develop our style in work.

A. MARKOFF.

## How District Two Stabilized Literature Distribution

UP to August 1, 1932, when the Org. Department of District 2 decided to really establish a Literature Department, the sections of this District were getting their literature directly from the publishers. The district gave practically no attention to this problem, giving little guidance to the sections and units on the sale of the literature, to help in developing further methods in the literature distribution.

In establishing the Literature Department, it was found, (1) that there was a lack of political understanding as to the role literature plays in our work; (2) that there were no literature committees functioning in the sections; (3) that practically no literature funds existed in the units; (4) there was no sale to mass organizations; and (5) there were no organizational attempts to sell at mass meetings, open-air meetings, etc.

A step in the direction of tackling the first problem, was made through articles in the *Daily*, explaining the value of literature. The section bureaus and committees were visited, and the unit agit-props were called to meetings, at which this problem was discussed. The literature directors of each section were called together. A plan and program of work was mapped out providing for the establishment of literature committees in each section, that each unit have a literature fund so as to be able to buy the literature for cash, and the issuance of a monthly bulletin explaining various ways and means of not only selling literature at unit meetings, but also at street meetings, mass meetings, house to house, etc. This bulletin also took up the question of the problem of raising money for literature funds, local experiences, and the use of literature to bring workers into the revolutionary movement.

Also, there was instituted a constant check-up on what each section was doing, how many pieces of theoretical and propaganda literature, and how many pieces of agitational literature were being sold, the amount in dollars, all of which was published every month and used as a sort of competitive chart among the various sections. In the case of a specific drive, for instance in the drive for election literature, prizes were awarded to the section selling the highest number of pieces in proportion to the membership of the section.

The main insistence of the District Literature Department was that the units sell outside their own unit meetings, using the cheaper pamphlets. The result of this was, that during the election campaign, over one quarter of a million election pamphlets were sold. Since the election campaign over 100,000

propaganda pamphlets were sold to those who had already read our more popular pamphlets.

Mass organizations were visited constantly and today we find a large number of individual branches and clubs with well-functioning literature departments, serving as a tremendous outlet for literature that had not been tapped before.

Every large meeting in the District is carefully planned and arrangements made not only as to the types of literature to be distributed, but also as to the efficient handling and distributing of it. Parades are also carefully organized in the same fashion.

As a further means of satisfying the demand for literature among the workers, the District, through the profits of sales, has financed the opening of section bookstores in Section 4 (Spanish Workers Center), and in Sections 5, 8, 9 and 12; that is, these places carry not only pamphlets but a full stock of theoretical books and proletarian novels.

Because of the organization of an apparatus for the distribution of pamphlets, it is very easy to gauge the number of pamphlets of a given character that can be sold, and also the planning of an additional wider distribution is facilitated. For instance, it was possible to put out approximately 10,000 copies of the *Communist Manifesto* through this apparatus, and much easier to place the same amount of the *History of May Day* in a shorter period of time, and as issue after issue comes up, the extent of distribution will be greatly widened.

The sale of literature in the New York District has practically tripled both in the number of pieces and in dollars. The sale of the *Imprecor* has risen from approximately 500 a month to about 1500 to 1600 monthly. The sale of *The Communist* has risen from 700 to 1700. The *Party Organizer* has risen from 700 to 1200. While there has been improvement in the District Literature Department, there is no question that this is just scratching on the surface and that with the continual following up of the plan of work with a constant checking and re-checking of the sections and units, we can go much further in this tremendous field of organizational work for the movement than up to now.

One last thing we wish to point out, that it is quite possible to sell books through the sections and the units, and quite a good many of the Marxist-Leninist books ranging in price from \$1.00 to \$2.50, have been distributed, this serving as a means of further educating our Party membership.

Another last point is that there must be a constant checking and re-checking on all the decisions made in the Literature Department. Very little progress can be made unless this is done. Also, plans must always be made ahead of time so as to never allow a stagnant moment, for once things become settled, then a move is made backward instead of forward.

R. F.



HARVESTER WORKER, *March, 1933*. International Harvester Company, Chicago District.

A very attractively gotten out issue of the *Harvester Worker* is on hand. The issue contains some excellent features, particularly the article from a group of Soviet tractor workers, an item on the production of tractors for war, a number of articles by worker correspondents, and an article on Karl Marx.

The article from a Soviet Tractor Shop outlines the life of the workers in the tractor machinery plant, Krasny Aksai. The note calling upon the workers to write to the Krasny Aksai is good, but there should have been a short article explaining why it is possible for the Soviet workers to make these advances and counterpose their conditions with the conditions of the Harvester workers.

The article on the Detroit strike, while bringing forward that the automobile workers succeeded in defeating a 20 per cent wage-cut under the leadership of the Auto Workers Union, does not draw the necessary lessons for the workers in the plant. It is not sufficient to merely report that the workers in Detroit succeeded in winning their demands. It is necessary to point out the lessons from this struggle for the Harvester workers and how they, too, can defeat the cuts taking place by organization and struggle. From this standpoint the paper confuses the various forms of organization to be established in the shop. We find, for instance, a call to organize in the departments, a call to build the Sheet Metal Trade Union (?) and the joining of the T.U.U.L.

It is necessary to differentiate in the articles between the union and the united front action committees to be established in the departments. Furthermore, the T.U.U.L. does not recruit individual members. We should explain the role of the T.U.U.L. as the revolutionary trade union center.

An outstanding shortcoming of the paper is the fact that while it is issued by the nucleus of the Party, there is not a mention of the Party in the entire paper. In essence the paper although issued by the Party, has become a trade union organ. While the Party shop paper should deal with the immediate problems of the workers, show the workers how to fight against their conditions, at the same time it must contain an explana-



tion of broader issues confronting the workers and on the basis of the experiences of the workers, convince them that the program of the Party is the only correct program for the workers. This necessitates the connecting up of every immediate issue with our struggle for proletarian rule as the only means through which to permanently improve the material conditions of the workers. Such systematic propaganda articles would differentiate a Party shop paper from a trade union organ.

The Twelfth Plenum of the Communist International emphasized the necessity of improving and intensifying the propaganda of the Party on the "principles of Communism, the dictatorship of the proletariat and the Soviet State." This as yet is not a factor in the shop paper. The article on Karl Marx could have been utilized as a means of bringing forward some of the programmatic questions, but the article does not explain any of the basic revolutionary teachings of Marx.

What about an article in the paper on the Roosevelt anti-working class program? There is not a mention of this in the paper.

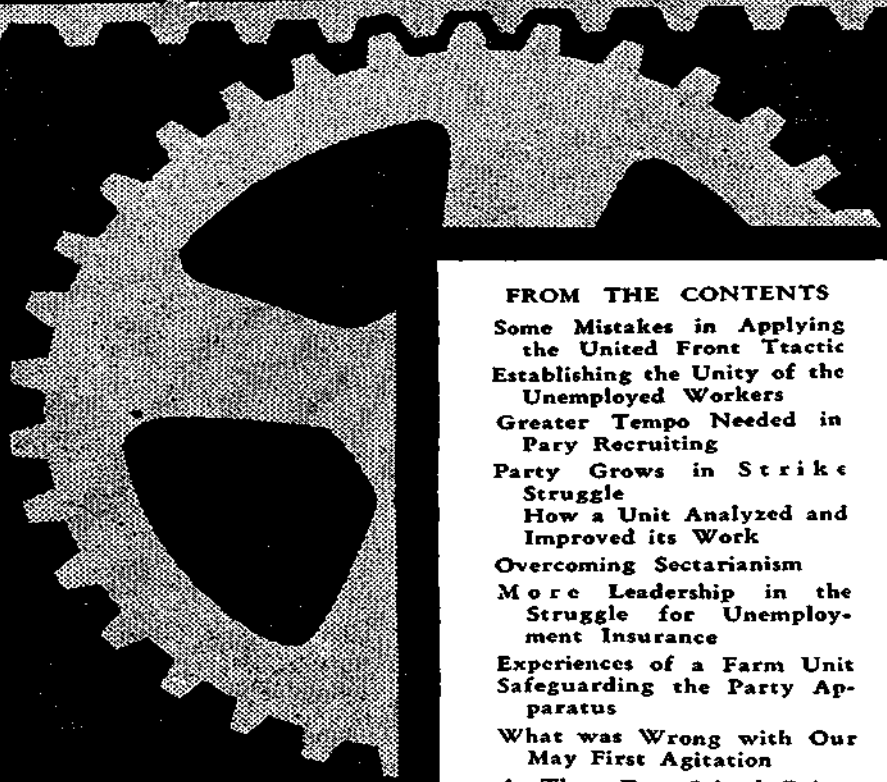
*J. & L. WORKER, March, 1933. J. & L. Steel Company, District Five.*

The third issue of the *J. & L. Worker* is at hand, issued by the Steel and Metal Workers Industrial Union. It contains articles on the necessity of fighting the coming wage-cut, for the increase in unemployment relief for the part-time workers, and a whole series of letters from worker-correspondents as well as an article drawing the lessons from the Detroit strike for the steel workers. The *J. & L. Worker* is the first paper received that contains an article on the "new deal" of the Roosevelt government. This is good and should be followed up in the coming issues by taking up concretely the various phases of the Roosevelt program.

A weakness of the shop paper is that while it contains a number of letters exposing the conditions in the various departments of the factory, these articles are still too general and are not used to arouse action on the part of the workers. It is not sufficient to tell the workers to organize a delegation to go to the company. It is necessary to show the workers how such a delegation can be organized and how it was organized in other plants. The partial struggles in the shop and in other plants should be reflected in the paper.

While placing in the forefront the building of the Steel and Metal Workers Industrial Union, the paper should stress the necessity of building the united front action committees in the departments. This is not done in this issue. The union should come forward through the shop paper with a call to the workers in the factory to establish the unity of the workers as the only means of combatting the coming wage-cuts, the cuts in relief, etc.

# Party Organizer



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Vol. VI.

May-June, 1933

No. 5-

*Issued by*

**CENTRAL COMMITTEE COMMUNIST PARTY, U S. A**

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# PARTY ORGANIZER

Vol. VI

May-June, 1933

No. 5-6

## Some Mistakes in Applying the United Front Tactic

The increase in the sentiment of the masses for united struggle has its roots in the objective situation—the deepening of the crisis and the measures sponsored by Roosevelt for a way out through placing still greater burdens on the masses (economy measures, increased militarization, measures against unions, increased terror, preparations for a new year now sensed by the masses, etc.). Together with this there has been the application of the united front tactic with greater boldness by the Communist Party on the basis of the united front manifesto of the Communist International.

The road to the further development of broad united front struggles is the energetic taking up of *the day to day needs* of the workers as they are affected by Roosevelt's hunger and war program and there, in connection with these most vital issues, exposing the reactionary role of the reformist misleaders. This point must be emphasized: *There are no issues which are more favorable to the development of mass struggles on a united front basis than these issues which daily affect the lives of all toilers—the workers and farmers, Negro and white.*

The Mooney issue, Scottsboro, May Day and similar issues can often serve to set the masses in motion, bringing them possibly for the first time in contact with Communist leadership, but these actions will only serve their purpose and result in the greatest benefit to the workers, if they result in bringing the masses into struggle around the vital economic and political issues that daily confront the toilers as a whole. In other words in our further efforts to develop mass struggles the *first consideration must be given to strengthening the work in the factories, in the trade unions and among the unemployed.* Here is where the broadest united front can be set up and here the class-collaboration policies of the reformist leaders on all questions can be most effectively exposed to the masses. United front actions on other specific issues must serve to draw the masses into these most basic struggles.

While, in the main, the united front tactic has been applied correctly by the Party, thereby forcing the issue of *a united front of struggle* into a central position in the whole working class movement, there have been numerous and serious shortcomings, and also

dangerous opportunist errors. These shortcomings and errors—both the right and “left” varieties, as well as the Party’s deep-rooted sectarian tendencies, have seriously hampered the Party in its efforts to take the fullest possible advantage of the present favorable opportunities to create a great mass workers’ movement.

The sectarian tendencies—the chief *obstacle* to successful mass work—have shown themselves most clearly in a more or less openly expressed resistance to the united front, on one hand, and in an ill-concealed tendency to get out of any united front at the earliest opportunity, on the other. One frequently hears a sigh of relief after an action is finished; the comrades afflicted with these tendencies are always glad to crawl back into the quiet solitude of their own sectarian shells. In this connection a rigid formalism sometimes serves to conceal (possibly even from the offenders) the sectarian essence of their actions.

#### Sectarian Tendencies in Application of United Front

In one district, for example, a Socialist branch, convinced of the need for joint struggle, took the initiative in proposing united action to the Communist unit in its locality. Our unit correctly favored accepting this proposal, and wanted to confer with the Socialist branch on the common struggles to be undertaken. But the District Bureau decided, *No*. The Central Committee in its united front directives, they pointed out, had instructed the Communist bodies “to take the initiative in approaching the lower Socialist Party bodies for joint struggle.” The District Bureau reasoned, therefore, that at all costs the “initiative” must be taken away from the Socialist local. They instructed the Communist unit “to ignore the offer of the Socialist branch,” and to send another offer of its own for united action “in order that we retain the initiative.” Obviously, the proletarian instincts of the unit members would have done more to give the Communists real initiative in the development of local struggles, than the rigid formalism of the District Bureau which would have made the unit the laughing stock of the workers.

In another district, one of the neighborhood reformist unemployed organizations invited the revolutionary unemployed council there to enter into joint struggle for more relief. The invitation was refused. The reformist local was informed, contrary to our policy, that “we want a united front only on a city-wide scale”—this at a time when we are fighting precisely against limiting our united front efforts to the upper committees of the reformist bodies.

Such examples could be cited from every district, and from

almost every section, in varied forms of course, to prove concretely the need for continuous efforts to clarify the Party comrades and to uproot this sectarian resistance to serious mass work.

Sectarian tendencies hamper us most in our efforts to enter into work among the masses on a united front basis, but when we have once entered into such activities the greatest danger arises from mistakes of an openly right opportunist character. Then, in our anxiety to set up a united front, there is the tendency to capitulate to the demands and maneuvers of the reformist leaders, thereby weakening the effectiveness of our efforts to expose these leaders and to destroy the illusions among the masses, created by these leaders, which are the principal barriers to a united front of struggle together with the Communists. In other words, in our over-anxiety to achieve united action, by our own capitulation to reformist influences, we make it more difficult for the masses to find the only road to effective joint struggle—the road which takes the masses over the political corpses of these leaders.

#### Right Opportunist Errors

Other mistakes of a right opportunist character have been made, and also from the failure to realize that *we desire a united front with the masses on the basis of energetic class struggles for their day to day needs*. Some comrades interpret our policy as one based on a desire for a united front of "tendencies," of "organizations," etc., when what we want is a united front of *the masses* regardless of tendencies or organizations. In the course of the united front struggles it is our aim to win the masses for *one* "tendency"—the revolutionary fighting policies of the Communist International, and for *one* Party—the Communist Party. *Win the masses*, this is our objective in the united front.

Some comrades have interpreted the manifesto of the Communist International as a "new policy" based on a united front with the *leaders*. But this is not correct as can be seen from the following excerpt from that manifesto:

"The Communist International, in view of fascism which is unchaining all the forces of world reaction against the working-class of Germany, calls upon all Communist Parties to make yet another attempt to set up the united front of struggle with the *Social-Democratic workers through the medium of the Social-Democratic Parties.*"

Here the Comintern policy is very clearly stated: "with the *Social-Democratic workers through the medium of the Social-Democratic Parties.*" What we want is *the united front of struggle with the Social-Democratic workers*" (read also A. F. of L.,

C.P.L.A., and all other *workers*). This is our objective. All other questions such as "through the medium of the Social-Democratic Parties," etc., are only tactical questions, and should never be permitted to blur over a clear view of our objective in the development of the united front struggles. Above all, such confusion should never cause us to lose sight of the fundamental social-fascist character of the *leadership* of the reformist bodies. And they should not cause us to fall into the renegade chatter about a united front of "tendencies." These conceptions can only serve as brakes on the development of our mass work.

But these opportunist conceptions have influenced our mass work. In some cases the effort to set up the united front "through the medium of the Social-Democratic Parties" and other reformist bodies has caused us to neglect the basic task of winning the masses in the factories, in the trade unions, and at the relief bureaus. This reliance on appeals to *top committees* of the Socialist Party, of the A. F. of L., etc., manifested in some instances, can only be based on the misconception that these bodies, *as such*, will change their basically reformist character and adopt a policy of class struggle. This is a false outlook. As organizations they will remain social-fascist. If they come into the united front, even on a limited number of issues, it will be because they are forced in by the mass pressure for a united front of struggle. Waiting at the door steps then of the social-fascist leaders and neglecting the basic mass work would lead to failure all around. It will lead to a weakening of our efforts to win the masses for our policies. It will lead to a relaxation of the mass pressure on these leaders, thereby destroying even the faintest possibility that they would enter the united front. The main task, now as ever, is the work in the factories, in the unions and among the unemployed—*directly with the workers*. This is the way a *united front of struggle will be built*.

When the Communist International urges us "to make yet another attempt" to win the workers "through the medium of" the reformist organizations, it does not do so with the expectation that these reformist bodies (except of course the lower units) will enter a fighting united front. It makes this proposal in the sense of calling the bluff of the reformist leaders, with the viewpoint of exposing these treacherous misleaders as the opponents of united action, as the enemies of the workers. In this way, "through the medium of the Social-Democratic Parties" the masses will become convinced of the anti-working class character of these bodies and of their leadership. They will be won for the Communist policies, and for the Communist Party.

## Establishing the Unity of the Unemployed Workers

**I**N THIS article we will relate some of the experiences in the application of one of the essential features of the United Front—the unification of separate groups of unorganized workers for joint struggle—in a small steel town in Ohio.

The population of the town is between four and five thousand, mostly steel workers. For years, although carrying on “mass work,” holding mass meetings, affairs, etc., the comrades here never succeeded in attracting the local workers.

When the question of holding an unemployed mass meeting was raised in the Masury unit, the unit made the following decisions: “That first they must go out and find out if workers were willing to attend such meetings, and if they did, then to call a meeting.”

In the meantime, in our search for new contacts, we made connection with one local worker who was considered by our comrades as a “reactionary,” who could not be trusted since he had voted the Democratic ticket in the last election, and still goes to church at times.” We spoke to this worker and asked him if he was willing to cooperate with us in building the Unemployed Council. He expressed willingness to help, stating: “I myself am an unemployed worker, and am desirous of improving my conditions.”

### Township Committee Elected

Within two days he brought seventy workers to a meeting. At this meeting we explained the aim and purpose of the Unemployed Council, and the local conditions of the unemployed. Many of the workers present took part in the discussion and enthusiastically endorsed the idea of building up an organization of the unemployed. A committee of eleven was elected to be known as the Brookfield Township Unemployed Committee. The date for the next general meeting was decided. The committee was given the job to go out and investigate the cases of those who had been denied relief, etc., and to bring back a report.

### Discuss Immediate Demands

At the meeting the following week there were over one hundred workers present. The committee made its report. After the discussion following the report the following concrete demands were worked out:



A half-pound of meat per person per week.  
 Six fresh eggs for each child up to the age of six.  
 Hot lunches in the schools for the children.  
 Separate days for the distribution of the food for the different sections within the township, etc.

A Committee of fifteen was elected to present these demands to the township trustees' meeting, which was to take place within three days after our meeting. In addition to the committee about fifty people, among whom were some local storekeepers and farmers, but mainly workers, attended the meeting. At first the floor was refused to our committee, but at the insistence of the committee the floor was given to the spokesman of the committee, whose speech created a real sentiment among those present—even among those opposed to the committee being granted the floor.

One of the trustees, a typical Pinchot type, sensing the sentiment of those present, took the floor and placed the blame for the existing bad distribution of relief, on the chairman of the trustee who was a Republican. We quite skillfully utilized this demagoguery on her part and further provoked sharpest exposure of themselves.

#### Win Demands and Extend Influence

After a lengthy discussion they promised to fulfill our demands. The news spread outside the township like lighting and at our next regular meeting over two hundred workers were present. At this meeting over seventy workers were involved on various committees such as, a committee to go to the special meeting to be held by the trustees where a "noted" speaker invited by the Commissioners was to speak on the relief question; another committee was to go to see the school board to permit the unemployed to hold a meeting in one of the school auditoriums; still another committee to visit the Trumbull County commissioners about water and gas question.

The following week at a meeting at one of the school auditoriums we had over eight hundred workers present.

Today we have about two hundred workers coming to all our weekly meetings of the Unemployed Council, and the influence of the Council extends to about seven or eight hundred workers.

#### How Forces Were Developed

It is quite significant to note how we tried to solve the question of forces in the Unemployed Council. We have no Party members to take a leading part in the work. Most of the workers

are participating in a class struggle organization for the first time. The only medium through which we had to work was the Executive Committee of the Unemployed Council, which consisted of all non-Party members, who belonged to different organizations such as, the Democratic Party, Republican Party, some belonging to church organizations and so on. Only one on the executive committee had any previous connections with us. We had to apply the tactics of boldly pushing to the forefront, and strengthening honest, energetic non-Party elements, developing them into a real leading cadres. To accomplish this we concentrated on a few, sending them to various conferences, electing them to committees, sending them to bring their reports to other workers in the nearby vicinity.

The workers seeing our daily contacts with them, our confidence in their ability, pushing them forward and trusting them with various tasks, not only accepted our leadership, but came to us to seek information, consulting us on the various duties such as how to outline their speeches, etc.

Today we have an active cadre of workers, who only yesterday were local leading elements in the Democratic, Republican and other similar organizations. One of these workers held a position in the Democratic Party, being the secretary of the local party. Today he is one of our most outstanding leaders of the Unemployed Council, daily coming into closer contact with the revolutionary movement.

This experience brings out very clearly that the test of Communist leadership in the United Front consists precisely of our ability to draw in and develop non-Party cadres, who will accept the guidance and leadership of the Communist workers in the particular movement.

—OLGA MASON

## Greater Tempo Needed in Party Recruiting

**O**UR Party membership is now about twenty thousand. This is the largest membership since the formation of the Party except for a brief period between the split in the Socialist Party in 1919 and the driving of the Party underground. But the quality of the membership is much higher today. At that time the bulk of the membership consisted of the language federations. These workers are now identified with the various mass organizations sympathetic to the Party. Only the genuine Communist elements that

stood the test of the Bolshevization and reorganization of the Party remained members of the reorganized Party. The membership today is greater than at the time of the reorganization of the Party eight years ago. Since that time the membership hovered around the 10,000 mark. This was even true as late as a year ago. Today the membership of the Party, however, is definitely around twenty thousand. This is a big achievement for the Party. It reflects the growing radicalization of the masses and the growing activity of the Party in the leadership of the struggles of the masses.

This membership of 20,000 does not by any means correspond to the tremendous increase in the radicalization of the masses and the influence of the Party as a consequence of its activity. The Party still lags far behind. When we consider that in the city of New York alone 120,000 workers demonstrated on May First under the auspices of the United Front May Day Committee in which the Communists were the most influential as well as the strongest and decisive forces, and compare this with the membership of about 4,500, then we can clearly see this lagging behind. When we bear in mind that the T.U.U.L. unions in New York have a membership upwards of 25,000, that the fraternal organizations contain additional tens of thousands of members, that the influence of the Party in the A. F. of L. unions is today stronger than ever before, then we must ask ourselves why the membership of the Party does not grow faster. The situation in New York City is duplicated in Detroit, Chicago, and in almost every other city. The influence of the Party is growing at a faster pace than the membership of the Party.

### **Recruiting Not Yet a Systematic Task**

Even a very casual analysis will disclose that the Party does not as yet make recruiting a serious and systematic day-to-day activity. This is especially emphasized if we study the specific struggles in which the Party played an important role. Let us take the recent struggles of the unemployed and the National Hunger March. Hundreds of thousands of workers not only unemployed but employed as well, were reached through the preparations and the carrying through of the hunger march. Many workers read about this action and were sympathetic. But the number recruited into the Party was very small. The recruitment in this period was almost the same as for any other period. Very often, even the reverse takes place. When the Party is engaged in big mass actions, the recruitment falls off. This is due in the main to a neglect of

the organizational activity of the Party, except that which is immediately bound up with the most routine carrying thru of the given actions. In strike struggles, this weakness is even more pronounced. In the Chicago District for example, in the course of the months of struggle in the mining fields in the last year there was very little increase in the Party membership. Almost the same is the case with regard to the important and in the main successful strike struggles of the auto workers in Detroit. The fight for the freedom of Mooney and for the Scottsboro boys is another illustration.

### **Independent Role of Party**

What is the reason for this? Surely there can be no argument that in the course of such struggles the workers are not more ready than ever to learn about our Party and to become part of it. No one will even dare bring forward such arguments. Where then do we find the cause? It lies in the fact that in the first place the Party as a Party does not come forward independently and show to the masses who are in struggle, how they can strengthen their fighting capacity by building the Communist Party. We are afraid to come to the masses and openly explain to them the role of the Party in the struggle. Our comrades hide the face of the Party. Their own conception of the Party as a selected sect keeps them from bringing the Party forward for fear that through this, the struggle will be hurt. But this false position is in reality an expression of the right sectarianism which is so deeply rooted in the Party.

What is the result? Our enemies attack the Party. They give to the masses a distorted picture of our Party. We through our failure to bring forward boldly the position of the Party help to maintain this distorted picture. The difficulty here arises also from the conception that the Party can come to the workers only with "high politics" while it is the business of the unions to take up the every-day struggle. This social democratic division between trade union work and Party work fails to consider that the Party must come to the masses not to replace the unions but nevertheless as the organization which leads them in the every-day struggles, which through its superior tactics, knowledge and guidance brings them to the realization of the correctness of the Party line in the immediate struggle as well as the need to struggle for the abolition of capitalism. In such a manner we convince them of the necessity of not only following but building their Party—the Communist Party.

Furthermore, even the workers who already are convinced of

the correctness of the position of the Party are kept out of the Party for fear that they are not wanted, or because they believe the requirements are so great that they will not make the grade; of that it requires giving up everything they now cherish, family, jobs, and religion in order to be eligible to join the Party. They have received not only through our enemies but even through us a distorted picture of Party discipline. We ourselves through our sectarian approach frighten away excellent proletarian elements from joining the Party.

### **Poor Life and Work of Party Cause of Fluctuation**

Next we must look to the tremendous turnover in the Party. Tens of thousands of workers in the course of the last few years joined and left the Party. This is not due to the bad composition of the new recruits. This may account for only a very small number. The main cause is the life and work of the Party, especially the lower organizations. Here we see the fruits of the sectarian life of the Party organizations and the mass of the Party membership. Here we have the fruits of the separations of the Party work and trade union work.

How shall we solve this question? In the first place it is necessary to not only involve the Party membership and the Party organizations in mass work, but bring forward clearly the independent role of the Party. It is necessary to develop more extensive agitation and propaganda in connection with every struggle. We must consider every struggle that does not result in the raising in the political level of the workers and the building of the Party as not a success, even though the immediate demands may be won. *Building the Party must be a necessary counterpart of every struggle.* This must be deeply ingrained into the consciousness of every Party member and every Party organization. Recruitment cannot be left to chance. The recruitment must be well planned and prepared ideologically and organizationally.

Next, it is necessary to give the most serious attention to the work of the lower organizations. To reduce the routine work to a minimum and to justify the expectations of the new members as to what they think the Party is and should be.

It is necessary to explain to the masses the program of the Party, its form of organization, the requirements of the members, the kind of discipline and reasons for it. It is necessary to make the workers feel that we are not a sect; that we want them to join; that it is not our Party but also their Party.

In connection with the problem of fluctuation we can not

stress too much the necessity of always keeping the members in good standing. Looseness on this question inevitably leads to a shaking of the ties to the Party. Recently one of the reasons for the increase in membership was due to more attention to the payment of dues. But this question is far from being solved. There are even indications of falling back to the old neglect of this question in some of the Party organizations.

The possibilities for building the Party were never greater. Are we going to take advantage of them? If we don't we will not only not grow, but will be unable to meet the growing tasks placed upon us. If we do take advantage of the possibilities we are in a position to double our membership in the course of the next months.

J. S.

### Party Grows in Strike Struggle

**A**T THE time the Protective Shoe Workers Union began preparations for the strike of the seven thousand shoe workers of Haverhill, Mass., we had a unit of five members in this town. The unit was then active in establishing contact with workers in the shoe factories. Three weeks before the strike began we succeeded in organizing a group of 15 workers, all from one factory.

Before we met with this group to take up plans of action during the strike, we discussed our policy to be followed, at a special unit meeting, with a representative of the leading fraction of the revolutionary Shoe Workers Industrial Union, who had previously taken up the strike situation with the Party District. A meeting of the group was then held at which a thorough discussion was held of the demands to be proposed, role of the reformist leaders and role of the opposition group.

We agreed to put up the following three main demands: 1) a definite increase in wages, amounting in some cases to 15 per cent and in others 20 per cent, as against the general talk of increase by the reformist leaders; 2) for the election of a rank and file strike committee, and strike committees in each shop; 3) for mass picketing of all shops.

In addition to this the group meeting made arrangements to issue a leaflet, selected spokesmen for the first meeting of the strikers, organized a defense group to defend our speakers, subdivided itself to mingle with various groups of workers, and also made arrangements to meet daily during the strike, each day in a different place.

At the first meeting of the strikers the reformist leaders attempted to get a free hand to sell out the strike. They proposed that the strikers go back to work and the question of an increase be left in their hands to negotiate with the bosses. Our group succeeded in defeating this by putting up a counter proposal that the strike shall go on and that all negotiations with the bosses should be held only by a committee elected by the strikers themselves, that will be responsible to the strikers. This was overwhelmingly endorsed by the strikers.

While mingling with the strikers our comrades noticed that some workers react more favorably to some of our demands, while other workers react more favorably to other demands. We therefore organized small meetings of strikers around various demands as they reacted to them. This way we succeeded to broaden the base of the group and win wider support for all demands.

As the strike developed, thanks to our activity, we built up our group from 15 to 90 members, organized on a concrete program of struggle. We also began recruiting the more advanced into the Party. At an open unit meeting held during the strike seven new members joined the Party and at the time of the end of the strike a group of 15 young workers were being organized into a unit of the Young Communist League.

Our activity during the strike, although failing to prevent the reformists from selling out, did succeed to force some gains for the workers in the form of raising the wages of the lower paid workers to the level of the highest paid factory workers in the town.

After the strike was over we organized our group on the basis of their craft to continue the work started. The group is also carrying on educational activity among the workers, issuing a bulletin and carrying on classes in strike strategy and in trade unionism.

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### **How a Unit Analyzed and Improved Its Work**

**U**NIT 2, Section 10 was a territorial Unit which included Long Island City, Woodside, Jackson Heights, Corona, Flushing, College Point and Bayside. On record, we had nineteen members. The attendance at Unit meetings varied from twelve to as low as seven.

At the meetings, the Unit would discuss directives from the Section and District, make assignments and there would be a discussion on whatever topic the Section would assign. Meetings

started late and lasted long. There were efforts to sell the *Daily Worker*, organize an Unemployed Council and concentration on a shop. But the reports from these committees were very unsatisfactory. The *Daily Worker* Agent had the usual complaint that comrades don't call for their bundles and that the *D. W.* is stacking up. The Shop Committee did not seem to be getting anywhere. The Committee for unemployed work was groping in the dark, working hard, but getting nowhere. The Unit Buro was not functioning regularly nor properly.

### **Discuss Reasons for Inactivity**

As a result, the spirit of the Unit was low, enthusiasm was lacking, discipline was very lax. Unit 2 was another one of those Units which was going around in a circle getting nowhere. Finally we decided at one of the meetings that we have the subject of the discussion the Unit itself. "What is wrong and how can the Unit improve its work?" This discussion proved to be the turning point of the Unit. The discussion brought out the following facts:

1. That the Unit was not acquainted with its own territory.
2. That we were not part of the life of the workers in our territory.
3. That there was entirely too much laxity.
4. That we were very mechanical in our efforts.
5. That there was no plan.
6. That our political discussions were abstract and were in the main disconnected from the work we were trying to do. No efforts were made to concretely apply the lessons of the discussion to our work.

We were doing no work in the very neighborhood in which the comrades lived.

### **Take the First Steps to Overcome Weaknesses**

On the basis of this analysis we decided to take action at once and to reorganize the Buro by electing the best comrades for leadership in the Unit. This was done.

The Buro at its first meeting took up the following subjects:

1. Drafting a one month's plan of work.
2. Organization of the Unit on the group basis.
3. Registration of the available time for Unit work by each member.
4. Meetings to start not later than 8:15 and adjourn not later than 10:45 P. M.
5. Assignment of tasks to each and every comrade according to time available.
6. Strict enforcement of the rule that no one is exempt from



Unit work. Comrades assigned to mass organizations to give at least one night to Unit assignments.

7. Strict check up.

8. Unit organizer to meet with committee to show them how to carry out their work and train them for leadership in their particular task.

9. Thorough study of our territory and its problems.

10. Concentration upon one shop and one neighborhood

These questions were discussed by the Buro and the Unit and when adopted the Buro began to carry them into effect.

### Discuss Plans of Work

We drafted the following plan of work for one month:

1. To increase membership by 10.
2. To secure new *Daily Worker* readers.
3. To build one more International Labor Defense branch.
4. To organize one Unemployed Council.
5. To organize a Women's Council.
6. To organize a shop committee.
7. To register 90 per cent attendance.
8. To register 90 per cent dues payments
9. To have 5 functioning groups.

### Unit Grows in Members and Influence

We elected committees for the various tasks. Other comrades were assigned to the Buro.

In getting new members, we began to show our members how to select and concentrate upon the most promising comrades in the International Labor Defense; how to search out, approach and contact workers at open air meetings and affairs; how to approach and propagandise friends and acquaintances. This was done by personal conversation with the comrades. The result was that we have recruited not ten but 16 new members among whom was one Negro woman worker, the first Negro to join the party in the whole section. This process of recruiting continues. Seven weeks after the plan was introduced, 41 comrades attended the Unit meeting and the Unit is now divided in two.

The Committee in charge of the *Daily Worker* secured 30 new readers through personal canvassing of the International Labor Defense members and their friends. The paper is delivered to their doors.

The building of another I. L. D. branch was assigned to the I. L. D. fraction comrades, who were instructed to involve the existing I. L. D. branch in this task. The Negro territory of

Corona was previously selected by the I. L. D. and this was also made our concentration point. The I. L. D. arranged a Scottsboro mass meeting jointly with the local of the National Association for the Advancement of the Colored People in a church. A Scottsboro Defense Committee later developed out of this meeting. This Committee then gave a dance. The I. L. D. was popularized and the Committee soon turned into an I. L. D. branch which now has 125 members mostly Negroes (5 have since joined the Party in the new Unit.)

### **Decide on Developing Struggle for Lower Rents**

The question of unemployed work was one that gave the unit the most trouble. One comrade has been making desperate efforts long before in this work without success. The Committee given this responsibility, now met to decide what can be done. It analyzed the local situation very carefully which brought out the following facts:

1. That within the last two years there has been only one actual eviction.

2. That bourgeois ideas are widespread in the ranks of the workers, that they will not openly acknowledge their suffering.

3. That 56 per cent of the population is a home owning people of the white collar workers and others who have made fairly high wages at one time.

4. That unemployment is not as prevalent as in other parts of the country, but wage cuts have effected the workers very seriously. On the basis of this analysis we decided that what is actually needed at once is a struggle for lower rents and in behalf of the worker-home-owner who was in great danger of losing his home. It was just about this time that we have first learned about the already existing Sunnyside home owners association which has since created so much publicity in the press and which is under the leadership of the mortgage concerns which are using these home-owners in trying to get the government to guarantee the mortgages to them. Because the work was new and correct policies had to be worked out, plans had to be formulated and comrades had to be trained, we have not succeeded to organize the home-owners nor the tenants in the time allotted, but a good start was made.

We have failed to organize the Women's Council.

We have failed to organize the shop committee because of lack of experience, but we have made quite a number of contacts who are already convinced of the necessity to organize.

Our dues payments and attendance has reached 80 per cent.

### Party Members Work With Enthusiasm

Although the plan has failed in some respects, we have accomplished more than our quota in some, but the morale of the comrades has been raised tremendously and the results have inspired them to much bigger aims.

The discipline of the comrades has been raised greatly, not through bureaucratic orders or punishment, but through political explanation of the importance of the tasks assigned, consideration for each comrade and his abilities, understanding and development, and through very close check up on work given out. The Unit Buro has before it at all times when members are available and thus assignments are made to fit-in with the comrade's time. Sunday is set aside as a day of relaxation or for very special work. One evening a week of study is compulsory.

At no time is an assignment made unless the comrade has a clear understanding of why he is to do the work and how to do it. The organizer meets with the committees that need this information until the committee is able to proceed by itself.

What Unit 2 has done can be done by any other unit. Plan your work, understand the political content of your tasks, know the methods to be used, practice proletarian discipline and proletarian democracy, analyze shortcomings, popularize achievements, create responsibility, enthusiasm and self-confidence within each comrade. These shall be uppermost before the Unit Buros and the Units can become the leaders of the toiling masses within their spheres of operation.

### Shop Work Still Lags Behind

The main shortcomings of the Unit are that we have failed to materialize sufficiently in the most important tasks of the plan—shop work and the tenants' committee, and there has been insufficient mass work. While the Unit has been holding open air meetings and was doing considerable work in the Scottsboro case, we have not yet developed local struggles. In the next plan of work, the Buro should concentrate upon final realization of a shop committee and a tenants' committee, and at the same time develop struggles of the tenants, small home owners and in the shop upon which we are concentrating.

M. STEIN

### Overcoming Sectarianism

**O**UR comrades in Kansas City have in the past developed a theory of exceptionalism. They said: "You might be able to rally workers and build organizations in other cities, but not in Kansas." Now, however, as a result of successful activities, this theory is losing ground. Here's an example.

We have a small unit of seven members in the north end of Kansas City, Kansas. Most of the members are Negro workers. We have often taken up with this unit methods of reaching the Negroes with the Scottsboro case, suggesting as one of the means the visiting of Negro churches to speak on the case. Our comrades always replied that we could not speak in Kansas City Negro churches because the Negro preachers were reactionary and well paid by the packing house bosses to keep their members in subjection, and that the workers were afraid to go against them.

However, the comrades decided to call a meeting in the Negro neighborhood and to utilize the meeting to build a Scottsboro Club. The meeting was very successful and a number of workers signed up for the club. A meeting of all who signed up was then held and the club was properly organized and a regular meeting night agreed upon. Among the members of the club and in its leadership there were workers belonging to the Non-Partisan League and to the local Democratic Clubs. These workers have also contact with various churches and church and fraternal organizations. Through them we succeeded to speak in the biggest and most influential Negro churches and get the support of the congregations for the Scottsboro campaign. Even the preachers of these churches were forced to come out in favor of the Scottsboro fight.

As a result of this activity we now have two Scottsboro Clubs and a third is in the process of being organized. Our comrades are finally convinced that the workers are willing and ready to fight for their needs.

Upon investigation, we found that our comrades had never really tried to speak in the Negro churches before. They had simply built up the idea that it was impossible but now we see that they are getting on the job and are making appointments to speak in other Negro churches.

This experience shows that our comrades did not have faith in the masses, they seemed to think that the Communist program is good for Communists, but that workers in general do not care for our program. It further shows that workers, regardless of

what political party they may follow at present, are willing to fight in behalf of the Scottsboro boys; and that they have enthusiasm and initiative.

The unit is now taking up the question of building the Party, of recruiting the best elements in these clubs for the Party so that we can continue to grow and to guide these organizations in the proper channels. Our comrades had meetings last year among the unemployed in this same neighborhood, but they failed to build the Party and develop local leadership, and as soon as the police attack came, the organizations were smashed completely. Our comrades blamed the workers and called them cowards instead of blaming it upon the Party members who failed to prepare the organizations for struggle.

K. E.

### More Leadership in the Struggle for Unemployment Insurance

**T**HE capitalist class led by the Roosevelt government is trying to create the impression that employment is on the upgrade and that unemployment is passing away. Continual reports in the capitalist papers about the hiring of new men and of wage increases (published with the clear intention of having the workers forget the starvation wages they have received in the past three years and of keeping them from struggle cannot offset the fact that relief agencies point out the increasing number of those on the relief rolls and the diminishing amount of relief. The relief directors also admit that *the situation during the coming winter will be more severe than before.*

The industrial "recovery" bill, which will have been enacted into law before this is published, involving an expenditure of \$3,300,000,000 over a period of two years, also aims to blind the workers to the actual situation. *Wages, hours and conditions of work will be determined by a control board—which means forced labor on a large scale.*

While the capitalists are ballyhooing about returning prosperity, let us not forget what Roosevelt said a few months ago: "If we should return to the peak production of 1929, from 5 to 10 million workers will not go back to work." While the capitalists point to the increased production in the steel industry, let us quote the N. Y. Times of May 25, 1933: *"The producers themselves are in a somewhat incredulous frame of mind; they do not know whether the*

*upturn has behind it the force needed for a permanent improvement."*

With steel production up to 38 per cent; with auto production and building construction mounting; with power output increasing, one would be blind to state that there is no change. But is this production for use? A glance at the car loadings will show clearly that it is not,—*it is for stock*. Taking advantage of the low prices and fear the rising prices, the manufacturers are turning out material for stock. Some more workers have gone back to work at miserable wages: soon again the stocks will be built up and these workers will be fired. There are no markets for production, neither domestic or foreign—and therefore the basis for the renewed production is the laying in of stock.

In this situation, with diminishing funds for relief; with complaints of the big taxpayers against the rates; with the bankers demanding "economy" and dictating terms; with the U. S. government appropriating a measly \$500,000,000 for unemployment relief, on the basis of \$250,000,000 being available to the states and cities provided they raise \$2 for each dollar they obtain from the federal government; with the number of applicants (not recipients) for relief increasing; what is doing in the unemployed movement?

Everywhere there is a cut in relief. Everywhere they are trying to substitute food tickets and commissary for cash relief. A wave of evictions is crossing the country. There were sentimental and economical reasons for not carrying on wholesale evictions during the winter months, but now they are beginning on a very large scale, as for instance in New York, where the city administration is refusing to pay any rents.

In face of this situation, with an admitted 17,000,000 unemployed, with conditions progressively becoming worse for the masses of unemployed and part-time workers—and for large sections of the full time workers—it must be stated that our Party work is *very deficient*. The main shortcomings are:

1. Failure of the Districts to explain the situation and lack of belief of the Party members in the Party position that *large-scale unemployment is a permanent phenomenon*; that conditions are not improving; that the municipalities *can* be compelled to furnish more adequate relief—that real Unemployment Insurance can be secured.

2. Consequently, inability of our Party members to explain to and convince the workers of the possibility of obtaining proper relief and unemployment insurance. A consequent acceptance of

vast masses of the workers of the conditions of pauperism in which they are living.

3. Lack of attention of the Districts to the proper orientation of the Party fraction in the Unemployed Councils; little heed to organizational problems; little effort to put the Unemployed Councils on the *committee* basis (block, neighborhood, ward, flophouse, forced labor project, etc.) Building up neighborhood councils, as delegated bodies.

4. No effort made to penetrate the A. F. of L. unions (leaving this task to the A. F. of L. Committee for Unemployment Insurance).

5. Not even a start in raising the question in the mass American fraternal and mutual aid organizations, which have a membership of 26,000,000, which are losing their members because of unemployment, and in which the question of unemployment relief and insurance can be made live issues. Work only in "our" organizations.

6. Failure to make the revolutionary unions the initiators of unemployed work, although every Party member in the unions accepts the Prague resolution. (In Youngstown a correct theory, but wrong application—the Union to organize the employed, the Unemployed Council the unemployed!)

7. Little attention to the young workers, and relief for single workers. (In St. Louis, the organizer of a branch, in which there are some live Italian boys, wished to throw them out for their "monkey business," because they also wanted sports!)

8. No struggle around the special grievances of the Negro workers: discrimination in relief, work relief, etc. Failure in Chicago to note that on the Southside, the Negro and white workers were compelled to line up separately at the relief buros, with the result that there is a serious weakening of support among the Negro workers.

9. The Districts appoint and remove functionaries of the Unemployed Councils, without any regard to the democratic rights of the workers. (If a Party member is needed for other work, he is simply instructed to resign from the Unemployed Council and another comrade is put in his place, even if he has not participated in the unemployed work.)

10. Little effort to develop new forces, and to put non-party elements into leadership that have come out of the struggle and have the confidence of the workers.

11. No systematic education of the workers; little or no social and cultural life in the blocks and councils.

12. A tendency to demonstrative actions, instead of steady, hard

work in the neighborhoods, building up organization and conducting concrete struggle.

13. Finally and *most important of all*, the units of the Party in few instances are responsible for unemployed work, but assign a few members to do unemployed work in a most haphazard manner.

Of few of the Districts covered in my recent tour can it be said that the District Committees are giving proper attention to the unemployed work. During the recent hunger march in Illinois—a tremendous undertaking—the District left the matter to the Unemployed Council, with the result that there were outstanding weaknesses. In Ohio, the Unemployed work is very weak, the District paying attention because of the contemplated state hunger march. In Detroit, the District Committee has allowed the work to slump—even in Detroit itself, with little outside. In Pittsburgh, the situation is much better, but with the metal workers union only now getting a proper position on its role in unemployed work. Surely it has taken a long time! In Buffalo, little attention, with our influence among the Negroes quite low. In Boston, only now a slight awakening to the needs of the situation.

Altogether, it is imperative that the Districts put unemployed work on the order of business and that it be made a matter of *regular discussion, review and check-up*. The situation of the workers demands it. The moves of the united front and for unity make it imperative. But above all, our Party must become conscious of the fact that unemployment is a permanent phenomenon today and no zigzag course of industrial production will eliminate it. The struggle for Unemployment Insurance is the immediate issue. It must be made clear to the Party members first of all. The workers are willing to fight, as the innumerable struggles led by all Unemployed Councils testify. We have only a small fraction of the unemployed and part-time workers involved in struggle. We are not building the unions on the basis also of the unemployed struggles. The Prague and Central Committee resolutions must be read and studied again, and be popularized among the membership and the workers at large.

## I. AMTER



## Experiences of a Farm Unit

**F**OR more than six months the Party unit here was looking around for something to do. A farm unit in a small locality in Upper Michigan, composed of farmers in summer and lumber-workers (chopping pulp-wood) in winter, has quite a problem to function as a real Bolshevik Party unit. Until recently most of the activity was around the Cooperative and the struggle against the Halonenites.

How to draw all the poor workers and farmers away from the renegade-controlled store was the problem of the Party. And we found the "key" to be in the fact that the right-wing co-ops do not fight for the interests of the farmers, especially against foreclosures.

### Winning Rank and File in Struggle Against Foreclosures

Over 60 farmers in Maple Ridge Township were facing foreclosures on their farms. We issued leaflets calling upon the farmers to come to a mass meeting to stop the foreclosure of N——'s farm. 300 farmers, including the sheriff, came. The sheriff was exposed. The farmers booed him when he tried to explain that he is the farmers' friend. We took up the question of getting the farmers to the County seat at the time of the sale. The school board members were present and evaded the issue of allowing the use of the school buses to transport the farmers, under the excuse that the state helps to finance it. This fell flat. A committee of 22 was selected to organize the march. The majority on the committee were poor farmers with many of Halonen's supporters since at least 150 of the 300 at the meeting were followers of the renegade. But all on the committee were ready to fight against the foreclosure.

### School Strike Decided Upon

At the Party fraction meeting before the Farmers Committee of Action meeting, we took up the question of extending and broadening out the struggle. It was then decided to call a School strike. With the help of the Y. C. L. Bureau a Student Committee was set up, and with the approval of the Farmers' Committee a school strike was called in protest against the action of the School Board in not helping the farmers. We called it a "Foreclosure Holiday."

The strike was a success. Half of the students stayed out, including the overwhelming majority of the children from the

right-wing farmers. Three car-loads of state troopers came on the day of the strike, the same day on which we were preparing to leave for the county seat. The cops followed each bus around on its route, since a rumor spread that the farmers would take the buses by force. Of course the cops came in with the aim of intimidating the farmers. The rank and file Halonen supporters "persuaded" their leadership to give the co-op truck for transportation of the farmers.

### Foreclosure Postponed for Five Years

We compelled the Delta County authorities to give five years time for N—— to pay for his farm. The county prosecuting attorney answered our committee that there will be no more forced foreclosures in the county. We made him understand that we do not trust the lawyers but are calling a meeting of all mortgaged farmers and a representative of the Federal Land Bank where they will definitely agree to stop foreclosures. And if not, we will organize a march to the county supervisors' meeting. They did not like it since they don't want to see 700 farmers camped on the court house steps.

This action raised the prestige of the Party and the "reds" generally and will help in winning over the rank and file farmers from the right-wing leadership. But the greatest difficulty is that only a few of the comrades are participating in these actions and giving leadership in these struggles.

A. B.

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## Safeguarding the Party Apparatus

ON a number of occasions the Central Committee brought to the attention of our Party the necessity of preserving the Party apparatus, that the work of the Party be organized in such a manner that during the times of mass actions and struggles of the masses, we will not leave the apparatus of the Party open to attack on the part of the government forces. This warning and advise of the Central Committee is not taken seriously. Constantly, in different parts of the country, one can see the reports to the contrary. Thanks to our negligence and disregard of the warning of the Central Committee, we are paying heavily.

In connection with May Day preparations, the *Daily Worker* of May 3rd reports the following:

"Pittsburgh, Pa., May 2.—Two hours before the demonstration, police swooped down on the Communist Party office

and arrested sixteen. Most of them leaders of the workers in this city. They are held incommunicado.

"Those known arrested are Lena Davis, District Organization Secretary of the Communist Party, Ben Careathers, Negro worker and an outstanding leader of the Pittsburgh workers, Phil Frankfeld, secretary of the Pittsburgh workers, Ernest Careathers, Jack Stone, George Kutz, J. Romango, Mary Subina and J. Stark."

In this news report of the *Daily Worker*, two things stand out. 1) That the leaders of the Party and mass organizations in Pittsburgh, instead of being with the workers on May First, that is, in the neighborhoods, around the shops, in workers' halls to help mobilize and organize workers to march to the central demonstration, these leaders assembled in the Party office, *isolated* from the masses of employed and unemployed workers. 2) That by this they violated the second principle, namely, they placed themselves open to attack by the police.

It is well known that at every mass action the police aim to arrest recognized leaders of the masses for the purpose of crippling preparations and if possible, to prevent demonstrations by these acts. Different methods are used. In Chicago, bomb explosions occurred on May First and Communists were accused of being the ones who threw the bombs, for the purpose of intimidating masses, to frighten them and by this also to lay the basis for an attack.

In Pittsburgh, the police raided the office and very conveniently arrested the whole leadership because of the neglect on the part of the leaders. However, it would be wrong to single out Pittsburgh as the worst example in this respect. By no means is it the only example. I will enumerate a number of similar negligences and disregard of A. B. C. principles of Bolshevik work of our Party in this regard. Here are some additions to Pittsburgh.

During the preparations for the Illinois State Hunger March, the state authorities mobilized all their armed forces to break up the Hunger March and aimed to arrest leaders of the march. Our comrades in Illinois did the very same thing that our comrades in Pittsburgh did. Two days before the Hunger March, 9 organizers and leaders, and among them a member of the Central Committee, went to a dance hall and the police very conveniently arrested whom they wanted and prevented these organizers to work in mobilization of the workers for the Hunger March and to give guidance and leadership, therefore, to some extent crippling the work of the Hunger March.

In the State of X where farmers are stopping evictions and foreclosures of the farmers, comrades prepared a leaflet to the farmers

in a house of a well-known revolutionary worker. Four of them gathered to prepare the leaflet and also brought with them a complete list of farm connections. The police raided the house, confiscated the leaflets and the list of the farmers and arrested the comrades.

In a big industrial city, a member of the Central Committee, carrying very responsible work, was picked up on the streets by the police and in his pockets was a list of workers who are working in a very important industrial plant.

Some time ago, in the Illinois coal fields, in preparation for the August First anti-war demonstrations, the District Organizer made a final trip in checking up on preparations, and instructing comrades to "put aside" all important material and addresses the comrades had. It was quite obvious that the police prepared an attack. The comrades gathered every piece of material, every letter and every connection and wrapped it in a paper and left it in a place so that when the police raided, they had no difficulty in looking for the material. Everything was wrapped nicely in a paper and all communications were in the hands of the police.

In an important industrial city a strike took place recently. Our Party was engaged in the strike and was the leader in the strike. During the strike, in a house of a worker, a complete registration of the Party members and other workers was brought for mailing out some letters. The police raided the house, took possession of the registration list.

The above, by no means, is a complete list known to me of such negligence and the results of every such raid is well known. Workers are fired from their shops. Some are arrested, some charged with Criminal Syndicalism and others deported. One may ask a question, how much longer can we tolerate in our Party such an irresponsible attitude toward these organizational questions? How much longer will we permit through our negligence to give to the police names and addresses of workers in the shops, mines, members of the unions, etc.?

It is our opinion that an example of such negligence must be made, dramatizing before the whole Party a most strict account to be made on every such occasion. This, by the way, does not confine itself to the lower Party units and sections. It is also members of the Central Committee, District Committees, Section Committees, units, fractions—from the top down—everyone violates the very principle of Bolshevik organization. Such irresponsibility must be treated equally with the political irresponsibility against which our Party carries a vigorous struggle—expelling members of the Party

who violate political and theoretical principles of the Party. It is about time that our Party shall fight just as vigorously those in our ranks who violate the basic principle of the Bolshevik organization of our Party.

B. GEBERT

## Agit-Prop Work

“Opportunistic capitulation means renouncing revolutionary agitation among the masses, it means giving ground before the petty bourgeois prejudices, illusions or temporary feelings of depression among the majority, it means hushing up, or glossing over the fundamental differences between Communism and reformism.” (Kuusinen—Prepare for Power.)

### What Was Wrong With Our May First Agitation

**T**O what extent has our agitation helped to develop the political consciousness of the workers and helped to rid them of petty bourgeois prejudices and reformist illusions? How has our agitation aided in enlightening the workers on the program and tactics of the Party as the leader of the day to day struggles, the organizer and leader of the decisive battles against capitalism? Is our agitation systematically educating the masses to an understanding of the principles of communism—the historical necessity of the dictatorship of the proletariat—the fundamental differences between Communism and reformism?

To carry through a “steady activity with a view to raising the class consciousness of the broadest masses” (Kuusinen) we must learn how to link up these specific issues, these partial demands and slogans, with propaganda for the principles of Communism. We have to learn how to combine an exposure of the economic conditions with an exposure of the broader political issues, tasks and slogans, with the aim of raising the understanding and political consciousness of the workers. It is necessary to carry through the most systematic propaganda and agitation to make accessible and comprehensible the program of the Party to large sections of workers.

Let us discuss these problems around the May First agitation. Here the Party was faced with several tasks. To unite the workers around the burning issues confronting them; to expose the anti-

working class character of the Roosevelt program, to bring forward an immediate program of struggle and to explain our revolutionary program as against the policies of the reformists.

### **Necessary to Explain Roosevelt Program**

The Party could not merely repeat on this May First what it has been saying for years. It had to start on the most concrete issues—the issues brought forward in the Roosevelt program, show that the various measures of the administration will not bring “American recovery,” will not alleviate the desperate situation of the masses. The blatant demagoguery accompanying every act of the Roosevelt administration necessitated the most specific and explicit detailed exposure on the part of the Party in every district. The Central Committee Manifesto for united action issued March 29th, made as its starting point the conditions of the masses under the Roosevelt administration and the general sharpening of the world situation. While many of the district leaflets make reference to the Roosevelt program, it does not permeate our agitation, dealing specifically with the promises made prior to the election and the actions today.

Take the Philadelphia united front call for May 1st. Under a sub-heading “We hoped—but are disappointed” (??) the call continues to say that “the new deal of Roosevelt is the same raw deal of Hoover” and then a few general remarks. The Roosevelt program is not the same as the Hoover deal. It is far more vicious, more intensive. To the masses it however, appears as a panacea which will bring about the turn. Precisely because it is couched in “prosperity” promises, does it require more detailed analysis to present these facts “as convincing, intelligible and as easy of assimilation as possible” (Lenin). But the “exposure” of the Philadelphia comrades only helps to strengthen the illusions and not to shatter them. The Party united front call from Chicago, a very good call, formulating a whole series of concrete demands among which we find “Against Roosevelt’s forced labor military camps,” but not a mention in the body of the call on the essence of the “new deal.” Many calls are merely a general reference to May First as a traditional day of struggle without dealing concretely with the present problems and tasks.

### **Party’s Agitation Cannot Merely Duplicate Merely United Front Demands**

Throughout the country the Party participated in united front conferences. The Party endorsed the united front demands. But the participation of the Party in united front actions does not mean hiding the independent role of the Party. On the contrary, these actions should make possible reaching wider sections of the

toiling masses with the program of the Party and convince them on the basis of our leadership in the united front of the correctness of our policy. Instead, we find that the Party in many important centers lost itself in the united front and repeated only the general united front demands. Thus for instance the Party leaflet in Pittsburgh does not differ from the other leaflets. It does not explain the relation of the Party to the united front. It does not bring forward the central demands of the Party and does not even mention the slogan "For a Workers and Farmers Government."

Take the shop papers issued in Chicago. The *Stockyard Worker* has for its chief demand the release of the Scottsboro boys and Tom Mooney. The other shop papers have demands against wage cuts, war, etc., but none of the papers deal, if only briefly, on the Party. Only the leaflet issued by the comrades in Milwaukee analyses the Roosevelt program in some detail, brings forward the revolutionary way out of the crisis as the only working class solution, contrasting the building of socialism in the Soviet Union to decaying capitalism.

#### Must Not Blur Over Negro Question

In the South we have some of the crassest examples of glossing over the central programmatic demands of the Party. A whole series of leaflets were issued by the Southern comrades for May First. In the Party leaflet for May First, not only is there no mention of the struggles of the Negro masses, the role of the Party in the liberation movement of the Negro people, the tasks of the white toilers, but the sole demand which has even the term Negro in it reads: "For the right of the white workers and poor farmers and Negro masses to vote without payment of poll tax. For the right to sit on juries." There is no doubt that these are important issues in the South—issues which can arouse large sections of the Negro masses for action. But to make this the central demand of the Party in the South is to blur over the national issues of the Negro people and give concessions to white chauvinism within the ranks of the white working class.

The slogan for self-determination in the Black Belt is the central demand of the Party in the South. In our leaflets to the white workers this demand should have been explained in relation to their own problems, and show them why they must be in the forefront of the struggle for the rights of the Negroes if they are to liberate themselves from capitalist exploitation. The white workers of the South will never be won by toning down on the Negro question.

#### Unemployment Insurance—Central Demand

For the past four years the Party has led courageous battles for

unemployment relief and federal unemployment insurance at the expense of the government and employers. This should have been the central demand for May First. But it was not prominently explained in our agitation. Leaflet after leaflet completely forgets the struggle for unemployment insurance. Leaflets issued by unemployed council (Pittsburgh, etc.) call for action on May First for immediate relief. In California the demand reads: For cash relief, bonus and jobless insurance Bill No. 1910. Not a word in the leaflet nor in the demands for federal unemployment insurance. Many of the leaflets issued in the Chicago district, Pittsburgh, Ohio, etc., put forward the demand for unemployment insurance, but do not state at whose expense let alone explain the need for unemployment insurance and why the workers must unite to win this demand.

Roosevelt prior to his election promised "compulsory state unemployment insurance reserves based on sound insurance financing." He promised "generous federal unemployment relief." Every act of the administration has been directed to cut even the meager relief, to introduce forced labor projects and ignore the previous promises. The reformists — the A. F. of L. and the Socialist Party speak of unemployment insurance. Many so-called "progressives" mouth phrases about the need for unemployment insurance. Yet our leaflets assume that by some magic the workers will be able to differentiate between our demand for unemployment insurance and that made by the reactionaries.

### **Struggle Against War Weak Feature in Agitation**

Or take the struggle against imperialist war and for the defense of the Soviet Union. We have emphasized on numerous occasions in directives, articles on various phases of agit-prop work, the need to deal concretely with the developing events which are heading the world towards war. But what is the character of our agitation. The same day in and day out—a repetition of the regular formula: "The capitalist class is preparing to plunge us into a new world war." How this is being done, what are the forces driving towards war, what factors exist which sharpen the present situation, to really alarm the workers on the imminence of war and the imperative need for struggle, that is entirely lacking. But leaflets that attempt to deal more concretely with the problem show a serious failure to follow regularly the editorials in the *Daily Worker*. The Canton leaflet speaks about the recent Roosevelt conference with various representatives of capitalist countries. It does not explain the purpose of these conferences, does not show the bitter antagonisms existing between the imperialist powers. But how does it explain why the Soviet Union was not invited. Quite simply. "They dare



not expose themselves to such an able spokesman for peace as Litvinov, Foreign Commissar of the Soviet Union." Not only does this not answer the struggle of world imperialism against the Soviet Union, nor explain the basis for the peace policy of the Soviet Union and the official pacifism of the American government under cover of which it is inaugurating a powerful armament construction program, but it does not convince the masses of workers of the real danger of an attack upon the Soviet Union and why they must defend the Soviet Union.

### Fundamental Difference Between Communism and Reformism

We deal only with a few important problems. We raise these sharply because they emphasize in the most decisive manner the lack of seriousness with which the districts approach the question of Party agitation and propaganda. Leaflets are rushed out at the last minute—carelessly written, without a definite aim. No careful attention is given to investigate how our leaflets are received by the workers, whether they bring forward in a convincing manner the true facts, etc. This is especially necessary today in view of the "left" phrases used by the Socialist Party. We quote the following excerpts from a leaflet issued by the Socialist Party of Ohio for May First:

"Labor is challenged by the forces of capitalism. Labor must accept the challenge. On this May first, the day which labor all over the world has declared to be its own holiday, we must pledge ourselves to renewed service in the defense of the working class, and to concentrate and unite all our forces for the final struggle against the capitalist system which breeds fascism, unemployment and war."

How can workers differentiate between the above presentation of conditions and the struggle against capitalism and our position? How can they differentiate between these words and actions of the Socialist Party unless we explain clearly to the workers the "fundamental differences between communism and reformism" as it reflects itself even on the most elementary issues. It necessitates that we clearly explain to the workers how the working class can gain power, why it must struggle for power, and who leads them in the struggle for power. It must show to the workers what the dictatorship of the proletariat will mean for the working class of the United States and the oppressed toiling masses, showing the advances made by the Soviet Union. It requires a systematic exposure of the words and deeds of the reformists. Our agitation and propaganda does not as yet meet these tasks.

Propaganda alone will not win the masses for Communism. But propaganda can be an important force in convincing the workers on the basis of their own experiences that only the Communist Party can lead them in the struggle against capitalism.

B. G.

### A Three-Day School Brings Good Results

THE school, recently held in the Ironwood Section School, was conducted in such a manner that all subjects taken up were mostly discussed by the students. The method of lecturing on the subject or the instructor answering all questions was replaced by the method of student discussion in question and answer form.

The subjects taken up were unemployed work, farming work, and shop work. Each subject was allowed an hour and 30 minutes. Besides this an hour and 30 minutes was spent for current events. One class was devoted to the Finnish Daily subscription drive for the Finnish comrades while the youth and other elements in the school held a class on the Young Communist League Plenum Resolution.

#### The First Day

In unemployed work we took up the structure of the Unemployed Council, how an unemployed group and committee is formed (to many of our comrades this was very unclear). A chart was used to clarify the comrades on this. Each comrade was given a copy to study. After a short talk by the instructor on this the students took the floor and asked questions and other students answered. The instructor then summarized the discussion answering those questions not clear to the student body.

The same was done in farming work—taking up the committee of actions and how we must proceed to organize those bodies—how to build the United Farmers League and our policy in other farm organizations. The subject was brought up by the instructor and the students then discussed from their own experiences in farm work and how they have organized committees of action.

The shop work was conducted in the same manner—building of shop groups, the National Miners Union. It was noticeable that the subject on shop work was the weakest because the comrades did not take part as enthusiastically in this discussion as in unemployed and farming work and had very little experiences to relate.

#### The Second Day

This day was spent mostly for general discussion on each subject. All comrades were asked to bring up any question they did not

understand or the instructor asked questions as to what the students would do if certain problems arose the students answering and asking questions.

For instance in farming work—we took up the beer question and how we should answer to workers who are misled by the propaganda that beer will bring back prosperity—what our policy should be towards the moratorium on debts and taxes, the Frazier Bill and other bills. How we should conduct meetings of workers and farmers, how we can keep those organizations that are organized by us from going into the hands of betrayers, how we must act at farmers' meetings, etc.

### The Third Day

This day we organized dummy meetings. Four comrades were picked out to organize a Committee of Action from the student body who acted as unorganized farmers. This committee of four planned out how they were going to proceed beforehand.

This committee planned to make a few blunders to see whether they would be noticed. It is our advice that this method should not be followed since quite a number of mistakes were made and the discussion on this took quite a long time.

After a committee of action was organized. The student body analyzed the shortcomings as well as the good points of this committee. After this the instructor summarized and brought out the points omitted and what should have been done.

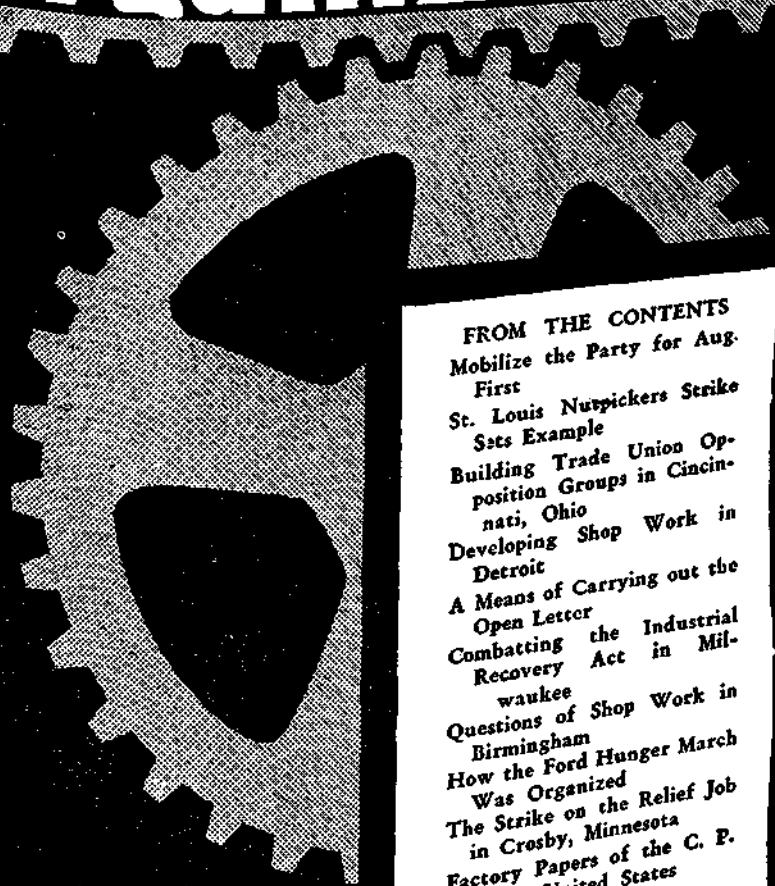
The same was done in unemployed and shop work. Dummy meetings were held showing the organization of an unemployed committee and a shop committee.

Through this method, we found we were able to get even the most backward students to discuss. The discussion was always lively and full of interest and in the short time we were able to take up lot of problems and clarify the students on many questions. Some comrades were assigned to oppose the organizing of the committees of action. This pepped up the students in fighting back and learning how to fight any opposition that arises at meetings whether in the farming, unemployed or mining field.

In current events we took up May Day, Tom Mooney Conference and the Plenum Resolution of the Young Communist League. One class was held for Finnish comrades only on the Finnish Daily subscription drive.

Of the 110 students, most of the students were well satisfied and as a school for only three days, they said they learned a lot. Some said they learned more in the three days of this school than in three years in a capitalist school.

# Party Organizer



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Vol. VI.

July, 1933

No. 7

Issued by  
CENTRAL COMMITTEE COMMUNIST PARTY, U. S. A.

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# PARTY ORGANIZER

Vol. VI

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## Mobilize the Party for August First

The Party in preparing for August First this year, is faced with more vital and insistent tasks than ever before in its history. Ever deepening crisis, economic chaos, grips the capitalist world. Mass unemployment and wholesale degradation of their conditions of life are the lot of the workers and farmers. War, the inevitable result of the effort to find the capitalist way out of the crisis, is daily being prepared. Faced with the glowing achievements of the Soviet Union, confronted with the menace to the capitalist world of exploitation in the very existence of the Soviet Union, gripped with deathly fear of the splendid example and leadership of the Soviet Union to the workers of the world to take the revolutionary way out of the crisis, the bourgeois world with all haste prepares a war of intervention against the workers' fatherland.

The World Economic Conference in London exposed more than anything else the efforts of capitalism to "solve" the crisis at the expense of the workers. The conflict of the imperialist powers for the redivision of the world market is leading to real armed conflict. Each country seeks for a way out of the crisis at the expense of the other. The advent of fascism in Germany further intensifies the conflicts for the redivision of the world markets, and provides the bourgeoisie with a concrete example as to how to enforce the iron fist of dictatorship over the working class and its revolutionary organizations in order to unload the burden of the crisis on the shoulders of the workers. At the same time, concrete preparations intensify for an armed bloc against the Soviet Union. War is the order of the day.

## Build the Party in the Shops in the Struggle Against War

In this situation class lines become clearer and sharper. The Industrial Recovery Act proves to the workers that the capitalist way out of the crisis means the lowest destitution, the meanest degradation of the whole working class—that only by means of the most vicious attack against the workers and their revolutionary organizations can the bourgeoisie even attempt to save its profits. In order to effect this the bourgeois State is even more closely welded to finance capital than ever before. More clearly and openly than ever does

the State come forward as the instrument and central committee of finance capital. The betrayers of the working class within the ranks of labor—the Socialist Party and the American Federation of Labor continue and carry still further their deception and treachery in the service of capitalism. Slashed wages, increased speed-up, unemployment—this is the program of Industrial Recovery Act and the whole Roosevelt regime.

In this situation, the development and growth of the Party is the all important factor. The workers can take the revolutionary way out of the crisis only when the Communist Party confidently, unhesitatingly, leads it in every phase of its struggle. The question of building the Party, developing every phase of its activities is therefore the decisive question. Furthermore the Party can only be built as a real leader of the masses, if it is built in the shops. The main instrument for carrying on the struggles of the workers and building the Party in the shops are the revolutionary unions. These tasks cannot be viewed separately. They are all interrelated. Without building the Party in the shops, the Unions cannot grow. Detroit, Pittsburgh and other places are concrete examples of this. Without building the Union in the shops the Party cannot win the workers under its leadership.

The struggle against war must have as its main arena—the shops. In taking up the demands and issues facing the workers, in exposing the Industrial Recovery Act before the workers, the immediate burning issue of the war and the defense of the Soviet Union must be raised. Every action of the capitalists in preparation for the war should be exposed. The Public Works Program can be exposed through our daily shop activity as mainly an instrument to be used for the building of war materias. The entire program of the Roosevelt regime, particularly the Industrial Recovery Act is to be concretely shown to the workers as definite preparation for war, as creating a machinery to prepare war.

**The Party Nucleus as the Leader in its Shop and Territory in the Struggle Against War**

The principal guarantee for the development of a real struggle against war is the activity and initiative to be developed by every Party nucleus and unit in raising issues to expose and fight against the war preparations of the bourgeoisie. While showing the workers concretely how to fight against the war how they defend the Soviet Union, the Party develops its leadership on the concrete basis of the workers in each department in the union locals, in the mass

organizations of the working class, among the farmers the struggle of the workers for their economic conditions, for unemployment insurance and on every front of the class battle, can and must be linked up with the struggle against war.

### Win the Forces for the Fight Against War

The concrete activities of the Party against war must with all speed be developed within the actual war apparatus of the bourgeoisie. On the basis of the struggle for their conditions and taking up their needs in their daily life, the Party must really begin its work among the armed forces. The work among the ex-servicemen must receive a real impetus in the struggle against war connecting up their demands with the general demands of the whole working class. At the same time of the utmost importance is the work of the Party on the waterfront, where a strategic section of the working class are centered especially in the struggle against war.

### Build the Party in the Struggle Against War

In the struggle against war and for the defense of the Soviet Union, the Party brings its program before all sections of the working class. The Young Communist League especially is the organization which reaches and should receive all the assistance of the Party and its mass organizations in reaching those young workers which will be and are today the backbone of the preparations for war. The struggle for Negro rights, the work among women and children,—all these are specific struggles among certain decisive sections of the working class which must receive the full support and assistance of the Party and all its organizations in the struggle against the coming war.

Throughout all the activities on this front of the utmost importance is that the Party build itself and recruit new members for its ranks. On the basis of its program and on the basis of organizing and leading struggles for the workers in the shops, among the unemployed and in the armed forces, the Party builds itself and strengthens its leadership over the masses. These are the tasks of every Party unit, every nucleus, and must be viewed in the light of concretely preparing the Party for the coming war.

The center of gravity of Party work must be shifted to the development of the lower organizations, the factory nuclei, local organizations and street nuclei.

--From The 'Open Letter' to Party Members



## St. Louis Nutpickers' Strike Sets Example

This strike is a splendid example of Party leadership and initiative in organizing workers for struggle. The nut picking industry in the St. Louis territory consists of 16 factories, employing about 3,000 women, 90% Negro. Working hours are 9 per day, five and a half days per week. In the past two years they received two wage cuts. Negro women earned from \$1.80 to \$3.00 per week; while white girls, from \$3.00 up. 60% were on the relief roll. Many grievances existed, and slight attempts were made to organize these workers in the last two years. But the assignments were made to "concentrate" and that was all.

### How the Strike was Organized

Actual organization of the strike took two months. One of our comrades was assigned to the factory where he had connections. Since the largest factory in the city was hard to penetrate due to an unsuccessful strike in 1927, we decided to start in a smaller plant and use it as a wedge for getting into the others. The first meeting of the shop group consisted of three Negro women. We showed them how to select the best contacts in the shop. We explained the lessons of the Scottsboro case, dealt with the unity of Negro and white workers. The shop group steadily grew and when the number reached 20 we discussed the concrete demands to be raised. not yet, however, for a strike. The question of connection with other shops was taken up. The women finally decided to demand an increase of 4 cents to 10 cents per pound for halves and from 2 cents to 4 cents for pieces. Their demand became a famous slogan. "We want 10 and 4" was shouted and sung on the streets of St. Louis during the ten day strike.

Finally the shop group extended to three factories belonging to the largest company. At a meeting which we organized of the workers, they decided to put their demands up to the boss and if he didn't agree, they would call a strike. The workers also decided to test their strength in the west end factory where the union had 100 members out of 200 in the shop. A committee of 12 was organized to make the demands upon the boss, and we arranged that the rest of the workers were to stop working and to go to the office to hear what the answer would be. Not only did the 100 in the union stop working, but every worker but seven came to support the demands.

For May First we issued leaflets to the nut pickers, asking them to join the demonstration. This actually agitated the

whole plant so that part of them were ready to walk out and the Executive Committee of the Food Workers Union local had to issue a special leaflet on the morning of May First, calling on the women not to walk out, but to stand ready when called later. In the meantime we spread our organization to other factories in order to defeat the plans of the company to isolate one factory, because it was not a busy season.

### Workers Decide on Action

The next two meetings were concentrated on the main plant in the city employing 700 white and Negro women. In another two weeks we had 15 women enrolled from the main factory into the union. By this time the workers had been waiting 3 weeks for an answer to their demands by the boss. That night the women decided that they could not wait any longer. They felt that any further delay would give the bosses a chance to split their forces by shutting down temporarily some of the shops and scaring the others. Therefore, it was decided to call an open mass meeting at which an open vote for a strike would be taken. The strike was voted on.

The workers arranged the original committee from the west-end plant would go to the boss and demand an answer to their demands. If they were granted they would stay in the shop and notify other shops that the demand was granted. If not, they would all walk out and march to the largest shop, giving the shop group in the plant a signal for a walk-out. On that day, we had machines and trucks outside the plant in readiness. The women began to walk out. The trucks were loaded and before the boss knew what happened, the women were brought to the doors of the largest plant, hailing the other workers and signaling the shop committee inside to call out all day two other shops and two small factories walked out, totaling 1,400 women. At the same time, the white women walked out in solidarity with the Negro women.

### How the Leadership of the Strike Was Organized

Three days after the strike was declared, all shops were striking, except one. This was done, not by a general strike call, but by pulling out one shop after another. In order to properly control the activities and lead the strike, each shop elected its own strike committee, and captains on the picket line. At the same time a central strike committee was organized. Each day, in addition to the meetings of the shop in the morning, general strike meetings were held to advise and let the strikers know of the developments. The Central Strike Committee met before and after each negotiation with the

bosses Every step was thoro'y gone over and every trick of the bosses exposed at each meeting of the strikers. Relief was organized and about 1200 women were fed each day. While poor preparations were made for feeding, the women strikers responded to the collection of food, funds, etc. The strikers actually carried on the main burden of relief.

Every day mass picketing was organized. The leadership of the Communist Party and the unemployed councils worked close'y with the strikers. On the third day of the strike came the offer of 33 $\frac{1}{3}$ % increase in wages. This offer was flatly rejected. The capitalist press then tried to turn the sentiment of the St. Louis workers against the strikers by saying: "the offer of increase was rejected because the Communists are leading the strike and simply want trouble." The answer of the workers was: "The Communists are our friends." To defeat the bosses propoganda the Central Strike Committee decided to open fire against the City government. Since 60% of the women were on the city relief roll, the city government was supporting the big bosses in the nut industry to maintain bad conditions. A mass demonstration was organized before the City Hall, and a demand was made for release of the arrested strikers. The demand was won, the workers sticking to their posts until the organizer of the Food Workers Industrial Union had spoken. Only thru close contact and attention to every form of demagogy or attack was it possible for the revolutionary leadership to defeat the attempts of the bosses and the government to split the ranks of the workers. Each of these issues was brought to the Central Strike meeting where the women themselves exposed the maneuvers of the bosses.

#### Force Bosses to Concede Demands

On the seventh day of the strike, the General Strike Committee served notice to the City Government, that other shops would be closed if the demands were not met. Also preparations were made for another demonstration. In the meantime, sentiment spread among the laundry, shoe and needle trades workers. The bosses tried another trick, offering what looked like a concession, but which was exposed as an actual wage cut. Despite all efforts of the bosses to inject the issue of Communism, the workers stuck and demanded that the TUUL organizer be present at the negotiations. Finally the company offered concessions and agreed almost entirely to grant the demands of the workers. The strike committee told the company they would report to the strikers and vote on the proposal.

### Build the Union

A vote was taken on the proposal of the company, the revolutionary union and the strike committee explaining the offer of the bosses and the question of the recognition of the union. Eleven locals of the Food Workers' Industrial Union have been organized and solidified in the course of the strike and since the strike. There are 1400 regular members of the union and about 50 unemployed members who have joined in support of the strike and are part of the union. Also, organization of the locals is progressing fast in East St. Louis, where 900 women are employed in three plants of the same company

### How Organizational Consolidation Was Achieved

While a great part of the consolidation of the union was conducted during the strike, on the picket line, at meetings and in explaining the union, the main organizational consolidation came after the strike, in the following way:

1. Immediately after the settlement, the locals of each shop met, checked the leadership, strengthened it where it was necessary, elected its shop committees from the best fighters on the picket line and on the strike committee and made rules how to examine each member as to union card, etc., before entering the shop.
2. Duty of the shop committees in each department or floor was explained and strict maintenance of agreement in the shop. Dealing with the boss thru the shop committee.
3. One man, a TUUL comrade, was assigned as organizer to each local to help and advise the members from day to day. Organizer joined the Food Workers Union and was voted upon as a member in that capacity.
4. Each day organizers made contact with the shop committee inside to find out how things are and to advise or help in solving any grievances that may arise. In this way we are in constant contact with the developments and conditions in the shop.
5. Establishment of City Control Board of the Union, with representatives from each local union, which meets every week, decides on policies and brings them to each local union.
6. Educational and social activities. 40% of the women are youth. They are already organizing baseball teams and will compete with each other Picnics, outings, etc., are organized.
7. Headquarters of the Union are being established close to each shop. Small locals go together to one place, while big locals have their own headquarters.

### Strict Party Control—But Building Party Still Main Task

The following steps are taken in order to assure that the Union and Party grow:

1. Assigned organizers to each local have become members of the Union and actually steps are taken to make them responsible to the point of forfeiting their membership in the Party for laxity. Each organizer is present at the shop in the morning when the plant opens, at noon and at night. At each of these three appearances at the shop, the organizer speaks with the shop chairlady and inquires if all is OK in the shop in case something goes wrong or any problems arise that the women cannot solve themselves they consult the organizer and he helps. When grievances arise we settle them right on the spot and try to solve them at once, also at the same time we carry on ideological campaign against bosses' influence

2. Definite assignment and responsibility of each organizer for all work, also for building the Party unit in the shop. Organizers and leadership of the union are so linked that we know every few hours what goes on in the shop as well as out. The Party is brought sharply to the front from day to day. The Communist Party and Young Communist League were not only recognized as leaders of the struggle, but part and parcel of every action.

3. Letters to each local are sent by the executive (City Central) of decisions each week, and are acted upon by each local. The union leadership in the shop is strengthened by enlarging the executives and electing several more officers of the union.

4. Altho the Party led this entire movement, altogether 200 have made applications to the Party Out of 9 locals, 8 have shop nuclei, but no steps were taken to consolidate the units and such simple organizational questions as issuing membership books have not been taken up. This question was raised very sharply

The news of these experiences has spread throughout the whole section. The influence of the strike has spread to the southern belt of which this city is a gateway. The influence of it upon the rank and file of the AFL Amalgamated Food Workers is tremendous. Workers in the Amalgamated here openly admit that their strike was misled by the fakers of the AFL and that they "need leadership like the nutpickers". Members of the Boot and Shoe Workers Union are also coming closer as a result of this splendid example of Party leadership and initiative.

E. S., St. Louis.

## Building Trade Union Opposition Groups In Cincinnati, Ohio

Cincinnati is traditionally a city of trade union struggle. However, up until a few weeks ago there was no trade union work done by the Party in this section. Prior to that time, several half-hearted attempts were made by the units but they were so weak that it was sure to fail. For a long time there was one trade union member in the Party and this member was convinced that nothing could be done because "all members of the A. F. of L. are reactionary."

Finally we quit the discussion as to whether or not we had forces enough and started with the forces which were at our disposal. A responsible trade union committee has been established which worked out a concrete plan of work and actually began this work. We are not perfect, we make mistakes, but we learn through the work.

### We Go Into Action

In a period of four weeks we were able to build a group in one industry of 25 members. These were in an established reactionary union. However, we did not take the time to go over in detail the functions of the group and the role they should play in the struggles with their reactionary officialdom. Also we failed to definitely establish a fraction in the group and to establish the fraction as the leadership of the group. There was also the inexperience of one of our comrades who was so cocksure as to his position of safety in his local that when the election of an officer of the union came up and altho this comrade was elected, he was ruled off the slate because of arrears in his dues.

### We Build More Opposition Groups

In another organized industry, controlled by the A. F. of L., we succeeded in building a group of about a dozen only, but it is holding together and has already taken up tasks within the local it represents. This group already has succeeded to force the officialdom of three locals of the same industry to come out against forced labor and elected delegates to go to the welfare department and protest against forced labor and demand trade union rates. We built our group from a small start. Three of us submitted names of trusted and honest workers, and discussed them before inviting them to the group meeting. Then we started to raise certain of the above issues in the third industry we succeeded in getting together about

25 members, also of a graft ridden outfit. Here we are taking up the task of building groups on the basis of the shops and yards they work in.

#### Possibilities for Work Great

These successes in building opposition groups must serve the Party as examples of what tremendous possibilities we have stand this, then the work will go on much faster. In every local revolts are taking place. The only thing we have to do is to utilize the grievances of the workers against the reactionary leadership of the A. F. of L. and their program and build up opposition groups in every local We want to say that the old bugaboo about "no forces" can't go any more. We do have enough forces to get started, and must continue to build up our forces through the work We are started, and the old idea that it "takes an army to build a hamlet" is out.

E. H., Cincinnati, Ohio.

#### Developing Shop Work in Detroit

At the District Convention of the Party in Detroit, held in October 1932, the fact that the Party had not succeeded in making the turn to the shops was sounded very sharply and the whole center of the discussion and reports at this conference was how to penetrate the shops, build the Union and root the Party in the shops. Following the convention, the District leadership called a meeting of all comrades engaged in shop work and those employed in the shops, together with the District Bureau.

At the Party convention it was emphasized that while the District leadership previously had made progress toward developing collective leadership and that the District leadership in general reacted to political problems, the leadership had not succeeded in making a clear analysis of the situation in the auto industry, had not succeeded in bringing to the functionaries and members of the units the policies and programs of the Bureau, had not been able to show the comrades in the units how to work and penetrate the shops. The problem presented itself—how would it be possible to bring this to the Party membership as a whole and plunge the Party into shop work?

It was decided that a conference would be called by the Auto Workers Union to organize the sentiment that existed in the shops for struggle, and in the building of the conference reach new groups inside of the shops and build the

Union. A commission was set up of members of the District Bureau and the comrades in the Union to work out a plan for building this conference. The conference and shop work were linked up very closely with the building of the Lenin Memorial Celebration, and the slogan of "Every factory a Communist fortress" was made our central slogan. A city functionaries meeting was called at which each point of the outline for this work was discussed. In addition to this the leading comrades of the District were assigned to work in the sections and units. These comrades including the District Organizer and Org. Secretary went out to hold meetings with groups of shop workers which our comrades in the units had contacted and called together to elect delegates to the conference and to discuss their problems in the shops. It was possible to give some of these groups a permanent character and many members were recruited for the Union on the basis of this activity.

Due to this activity in preparing the conference the organizational basis was laid in the shops for the strike struggles that developed in this period. At the time when the conference took place, on January 22, two strikes had already been successfully conducted and on the day of the conference a delegation of workers from the Briggs Highland Park plant came to the conference after they had walked out of the plant against Sunday work and wage-cuts, and asked that the Auto Workers Union give leadership to the strike.

By the time the conference was held, shop locals of the Union had been established in the Briggs Waterloo Plant in the Motor Products Corporation, definitely out of the struggles conducted in those plants. Also 23 loose groups had been established in the Ford River Rouge Plant. Our main concentration point.

#### How the Union Was Built.

The Union was brought to the forefront in the Briggs Waterloo and Motor Products strikes. During the entire period of this strike more or less systematic recruiting was conducted. At the close of these strikes, the organization of the Union as the only guarantee for holding what had been gained through the struggle was sharply emphasized. At this time practically every worker in both these plants joined the Union. In the Briggs Waterloo Plant approximately 350 workers out of a total of 550 on strike joined the Union. In Motor Products about 1500 joined the Union out of 3000 on strike. Here the Union was established on a departmental basis.

In Briggs Highland Park and Briggs Mack Avenue strikes, however, due to the line carried on by the comrades in the



leadership of the strike, the Union was not brought forward sufficiently. The individual comrades acted in the strike merely as individuals "from outside". The Union as the organizer of the strike from the inside of the shop was not continuously brought forward. While recruiting for the Union was conducted regularly and many hundreds of workers were signed up for the Union, the leadership of the strike was put out because of the line followed by the comrades, and following this, the failure of our Union to continue working in these strikes caused the loss of practically all those we had signed up, with the exception of very few.

In the Hudson Jefferson and Hudson Gratiot Plant strikes, the leadership applied the line of the Party correctly and here it was possible to gain victories and build the Union. Approximately 350 men and women were recruited for the Union. These locals were also established on a departmental basis.

#### Consolidation of the Union

While we can register at the present time approximately 1500 members in the Union, and have shop locals established in the Briggs Waterloo, Motor Products, Hudson Jefferson, Hudson Gratiot, Ford, Murray Body, Dodge Chrysler, Chrysler Jefferson and 22 territorial branches, our task now is to build and consolidate our forces. However, during the strikes 4,000 workers were recruited for the Union. We did not succeed in building the Union to the extent of the possibilities. This was due to the fact that the line of our comrades in the Union during the strikes was not corrected after the strikes and we were not able to meet such questions as "the Union is a Communist union."

The comrades of the Union leadership failed to work with the Union comrades in the branches and locals. Most important of all, they did not develop and conduct continuous struggles around the daily grievances and needs of the workers and conduct genuine serious education, despite the fact that certain lectures and classes were conducted in the locals.

As a result, the Union has declined in membership since the strike. However, our work in preparing and building up the May Day demonstration helped to a certain extent to check the decline in the Union. How was this done? The May Day campaign was brought to the Party members as a continuation of the campaign for the building of the Lenin Memorial meeting and the Auto Workers Conference, and was carried to a certain extent to the shop gates and shops. The work in preparing the May Day demonstration was carried on from below—in the sections and neighborhoods and inside of the shops. The comrades of the sections and units

together with the workers took the initiative in preparing the meetings, leaflets, etc. To some extent, the development of the neighborhood and small shop struggles succeeded in checking the decline in the Union.

We can say that despite the shortcomings noted above, that at the time of the Auto Workers Convention, June 24th and 25th, we were able to register an Auto Workers Union and built on a shop basis. New workers were drawn from the shops into the leadership of the Union, and a program of constitution worked out and adopted by the delegates from the shops.

#### Application of the Tactics of the United Front

We believe that the correct application of the tactics of the United Front was made during the strikes and after. The Union did not stand aside as separated from the unorganized workers but involved the unorganized and Union members and in some instances the A. F. of L. groups, as for instance, the Metal Finishers Union, the Dingmen's Club, and the I. M. A. in the Briggs Waterloo Plant.

On the unity of employed and unemployed, much more must be said. During the strikes, the policy of the District Bureau was to unite the struggles of the employed and unemployed and to some extent we succeeded. However, some serious mistakes were made.

In the Briggs Waterloo strike, the unemployed were drawn in. But here there was objection on the part of the strikers and when the unemployed came on the picket lines, they met with the opposition on the part of the strikers. Our comrades in the strike did not take up decisively the question of unity on the picket line. Unity of struggle for joint demands was not sufficiently brought out and not even unemployment insurance was brought forward. In this strike, the enemies of the workers succeeded in injecting the idea that only strikers with the shop badges should be permitted on the picket line. And we did not succeed in breaking down this idea which was introduced by the I.W.W. and the agents of the company for the purpose of breaking down the unity of employed and unemployed on the picket line.

In the other strikes, similar tactics were followed. However, in the Motor Products strike we succeeded in uniting the forces on the picket line. In the Briggs Mack Ave. this became a big issue, and our failure to take this issue up permitted such a situation to develop where the unemployed marched on one side of the street and the employed on the other.

Since the strike, the union has not taken up in a practical way the struggle for relief of the unemployed auto workers.

has not raised sharply enough the demands of unemployment and social insurance. However, the feeling of solidarity between the employed and unemployed was strengthened tremendously through the strike activity and the Ford hunger march recently conducted under the leadership of the Auto Workers Union, and the Unemployed Councils were a great step forward in building the Union.

#### Recruiting for the Party from the Shops

The figures of the initiations and dues payments during the strike struggles up to the period following the strikes indicate a very sharp decline from the figures preceding the strikes and were far below the monthly average for the year of 1932. During the month of May there were only 15 members recruited for the Party. This was because of the lack of continuous day to day recruiting from the struggles and the failure to bring the Party forward at all times.

During the strikes it was the policy of the comrades in the leadership of the strikes to keep the face of the Party covered and at many of the meetings, those comrades selling the *Daily Worker* were told to leave. The whole atmosphere in the strike was one of "Don't mention the Party".

Since the strikes, many of the workers involved have been drawn into the Party and shop units have been established. Certainly not to the extent it was possible. But we can register units in nine shops. These units average from 5 to 15 members each. Where these units were established and took the leadership in the shop and Union, our Union locals have not declined as in the other shops.

### A Means of Carrying Out the Open Letter

(Proposals of Comrade H. S.)

Following the Extraordinary Party Conference of the Party on July 7-10 many comrades left with a far better understanding of what making the turn to mass work really means. Both the report and summary of Comrade Browder as well as the discussion made all comrades think deeply how in the shortest possible time to put the Open Letter into effect. Many comrades, even within a very short time after the conference came forward with suggestions for improving the work of the Party in all directions. Typical of this and containing many excellent points for our work, is the letter of Comrade H. S. of the T.U.U.L. who wrote the following proposals for immediate consideration:

1. Submitting the following proposal for the serious

consideration of the Party. It is my opinion that the adoption of this proposal will help break down the isolation from the masses from which our Party is suffering. I do not propose that the carrying through of this proposal shall be done in a mechanical manner, but that each Party comrade shall be convinced and *obligated* to consider it his Party duty to surround himself with a close circle of workers. Let us say that the minimum such a circle should comprise shall be ten workers.

"The Party comrade shall carefully train and develop the class consciousness of the workers in this circle. The workers comprising the circle shall be systematically drawn into all the struggles led by the Party through convincing them of their interest in participating in such struggles. The unit of the Party shall check up on the activity of each of its members and help them to develop and draw these workers into the daily struggles of the working class.

"The unit should require the Party comrade to list the names of all such groups of workers with the unit. The aim of the Party comrade is to develop, to train through struggle, and to recruit these workers into the Party, trade unions, and mass organizations. I propose that every Party comrade become a captain of such non-Party workers. In order to carry this into effect not only as a propaganda slogan or as something merely *desirable* I propose the following concrete steps:

"1. That the Party comrade shall be held responsible for the training and development of these workers by the Party nucleus.

"2. That a check-up be made at each meeting of the nucleus on the progress of the work and the development of these circles.

"3. That definite Party work shall be assigned the Party comrade to involve these circles in.

"4. That the Central Committee check up on the Districts as to the development of this work, the check-up to be carried through every three months.

"5. That a simple manual be prepared by the Central Committee for the training and political development of these circles of workers."

This can easily be carried through as part of the regular work of the Party nucleus or unit. It is sufficient to say that were even these things carried out, our Party would very shortly grow many times its present strength. This example of one comrade's initiative in considering seriously the problem of how to carry out the Open Letter and the line of the Extraordinary Conference should be followed by

each member of the Party his own responsibility to make proposals, to make criticisms and to demand of every other comrade that daily work and check-up be carried on to assure that the turn be made to real mass work. Each comrade must take up this as well as other proposals for the work of the Party in their nucleus and neighborhood territory as a means of involving the workers in their territory in struggles and recruiting them for the Party and trade unions.

### Combatting the Industrial Recovery Act in Milwaukee

The Milwaukee Party organization has started some activity in combatting the Industrial Recovery Act. A membership meeting was organized where the Party was mobilized for intensive activity in the shops unions, etc. The units have been mobilized to carry on discussions on the Roosevelt measures and how to mobilize the working class on the fight for conditions. We are holding shop gate meetings every day and the various sections as well as the T.U.U.L. have issued and are issuing leaflets linking up concrete issues in the shop with the Act.

Most of the shops in Milwaukee have hired extra workers. They have also cut the hours. In Pressed Steel Corporation they reduced the number of hours from 12 to 8 and raised wages 5 cents per hour. But in reality, the men are making \$1.20 a day less, with the wage increase. The same is true in other factories. The International Harvester Co has the schedule so worked out that they do not permit their men to make more than \$12 per week. On top of that they deduct 10% for relief. There is great discontent in many places. A number of spontaneous departmental strikes lately took place, the workers winning increases.

Some of the big corporations like the Allis Chalmers Co. have taken steps to head off the favorable sentiment for organization by the workers by organizing company unions. We exposed this scheme through shop gate meetings and leaflets and mobilizing our comrades and sympathizers inside the shop for the same end and to build a union under our leadership.

**Main Task — Building Party and Union in Shops**

In one shop, the Marquardt Bedding Co., where we led a strike a number of weeks ago we succeeded in building our union so that today 160 workers are regular dues-paying members. Last week the company tried to maneuver on the basis of the Industrial Recovery Act so that they can outlaw the union and establish a company union, or else the A. F. of L. If it were not for our prompt mobilization of the workers they might have succeeded. Our experiences have further shown that in spite of many illusions on the part of the workers, we can through our activity expose the Roosevelt measures and organize the workers. Our chief task right now is to get the Party membership to realize the past weaknesses of shop and trade union work and to really begin this work in earnest.

**Questions of Shop Work In Birmingham**

We have not been, in reference to shop work, applying the line of the Party correctly. As we know, or should know, rather, the basis of all our unit work should be in basic industries, shops, mines and other heavy industries, and industries producing war munitions. Let us take the district headquarters here in Birmingham, where we have coal mines and steel mills. Not only one or two of them, but quite a number.

Now let's see just how the Party stands in reference to these basic industries. On paper we have 6 shop units, but unfortunately there are only 3 of this number that are meeting each week. And what kind of work have these 3 units done in the past four months? We are forced to admit that there has been nothing done—or what little there was done is negligible, which was only the distribution of a few leaflets, and 99% of these leaflets were mostly unemployed (I.L.O. or some other leaflet). To my knowledge in the past four months there has been but one mine and shop leaflet distributed, and the leaflet that was distributed in the shop was very very inadequate. Just a plain leaflet telling the workers that their conditions are miserable. Nothing organizations: to it, consequently no gain was made in this shop. I believe in the past there has been too much stress put in the outdging of street units, and only bringing up shop units in a mild manner. It is very good to build street units, but not at the expense of our really basic work—shop and mill work.

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### Our Sectarian Approach

To give the comrades an idea how sectarian we have been in the past in regards to shop and mill work, the following will suffice. In the weekly letter shop and mill work was brought out something like this: "Comrades, we must build shop units." Of course, not exactly this way, but nearly so. Certainly it is correct to say that the above will be meaningless, unless we work with the comrades and help them to apply the "formula" so to speak, as we have brought it out in the past. The question will be raised immediately in regard to the lack of forces to do this work, but in my opinion this is no excuse, because if we expect to bring the unemployed and employed together for struggles—how will we be able to do this if we are not rooted in some of the basic industries? Surely the workers in industries are ready and willing to struggle as well as are the unemployed workers, and I should imagine even more so, for they see themselves on the verge of losing their jobs, whereas the unemployed workers have no jobs to lose. But the question is not which is more willing, but what has been our approach, and have we had constant connection with them. In our shop and mill work not only one particular comrade is responsible for our weaknesses, but the whole district leadership. For the solution of these shortcomings I have the following suggestions to offer.

1. That some comrade be responsible to get *specific* information on just how many heavy industries, mines and mills that are within the boundaries of the city of Birmingham. After this is done, divide them, at least try to divide them equally, between sections X and Y.

2. That the District Bureau pick out the most important of these industries, and assign some leading and responsible comrade to concentrate in this shop, of course with the strictest of check-ups, and a week by week report made to the District Bureau on the progress.

3. That we invite the shop unit organizers to attend the District Bureau and discuss with them in the minutest detail their work in the shops, and in connection with this that all the members of the shop units be paid a visit by a member of the District Bureau, and of course this comrade must make a concrete report to the District Bureau the following week.

I am sure that if we carry out this work we will see an immediate change for the best in our shop and mill work. This work has been left too much up to the unit organizers to do. We ourselves as leaders of this district must take a firmer hand in developing this work, which in my opinion is one of the most important in the district.

E. S., Birmingham.

## How the Ford Hunger March Was Organized

The effect of the Ford Hunger March is far greater than many of the comrades realize. Among the workers there is a tremendous increase in confidence in our movement, as a result of the fact that we were able to successfully defeat the attempt of provocation on the part of the Ford Motor Co., and expose to the satisfaction of many backward workers that it was Ford who was prepared to repeat the massacre of last year. The Party proved to the workers that we were not interested in having bloody battles which many of them believed, but in securing relief.

The core of the march was the mobilization which took place in Dearborn. This movement took place around the relief question—complaints on the nature of relief, of the rotten distribution of food, and around this we began to develop a movement, drawing in all kinds of workers with whom we did not have contact before. We did this first through the building up of the Dearborn conference which has 27 organizations affiliated, and then gradually drawing in such organizations as the United Voters Progressive League, and others. The opposition to the system of welfare, the fight for free speech, and the opposition to the control of the Ford Motor Co. of Dearborn were the issues with which we succeeded in getting a delegation to go to Lansing, completely accepting the Party Program. We gained the leadership of the whole anti-Ford movement in the city. In Southern Dearborn, where our Party received more votes in two precincts than the Republican Party, we gained tremendous influence.

After the return of our delegation to the State Welfare Department and the Attorney General in Lansing, we heard that there was fighting in the Roumanian Political Club by the membership, as to why the officials refused to go to Lansing with our delegation. They stated they did not care if the leadership of the delegation were Communists. And this was formerly a Ford Motor Co. supporter. This was the general atmosphere that led to the good response that we got from Dearborn in the march. Everybody knows about the march. Everybody is talking about it.

At this time we had to face a strong question. The Safety Commission stated they would grant a permit for a march to the Dearborn Communists, but they would not permit anyone outside of Dearborn to parade. We made some efforts to overcome this. Two mass meetings were held before the march. They were not so big, one of 400 and the other of 200, but nevertheless they had tremendous influence. The workers



went out of these meetings determined that the march was going to go through.

The next best center of mobilization was Martin Hall, where the comrades utilized the shootings of the police, etc. in the preparation for the hunger march. However we showed many weaknesses in failing to develop real activities in such places as Delray, Lincoln Park, Ecorse, and a complete failure to make any attempts in Inkster and Melvindale. In the other sections of the city, there was participation in the march, but no real efforts were made to bring in the Ford workers from their sections, especially from North Detroit and Hamtramck.

#### Preparations for March

There were more than 300,000 leaflets printed. There were also many gotten out by the sections that we still don't know about. 10,000 stickers were gotten out. There were a considerable number of signs and posters. The sidewalks were stencilled in Dearborn as well as in Detroit. The leaflets were well distributed. One walked along Dearborn road in Delray and saw signs strung up on the telephone wires.

In Dearborn proper the city was covered with signs. But these were subsequently covered up with black paint. However, the workers knew what the black paint covered. So far we have been able to check up on over three hundred preparatory meetings, street meetings and mass meetings.

Along with the development of the work for the hunger march we succeeded in rebuilding the branch of the Auto Workers Union in the south end of Dearborn, and building a strong branch of the union in the central part of Dearborn. These branches played an important role in the development of this movement. We drew in sections of workers that we never had before.

#### Main Weaknesses—Shop Work and Work Among the Negroes

The first and most glaring weakness was our work in the shops. We had distributed leaflets to the workers in the shops on the Friday before the march and on Monday morning. The response of the workers indicated that had we carried on any systematic work in the shop, had we really been active in the shop, it would have tremendously raised the importance of the march to a much higher level. In this connection, the failure to get out the Ford Worker was a glaring weakness.

One of our greatest weaknesses was our failure to bring the Negro workers into the march and make their participation in the march a real outstanding event in the march itself. This is of the utmost importance since the number of Negroes coming to the city the last years for jobs is larger than any

other group, and it was our task to expose the extra discrimination against the Negro workers, nature of work, etc. We can see this weakness in Inkster and Ecorse, where the Negro workers live in compact groups.

### Our Next Tasks

The first task must be the penetration of the shop and the development of the Union in the shop. Our methods of work in this connection must be much more careful so as not to expose the comrades working inside the shops. Much more intensive work must be carried out to connect the struggles of the unemployed workers with every demand and issue of those inside the shops. The united front movement in Dearborn must be raised to a much higher plane. The fight for relief must be linked up with the struggle to force the Ford Motor Co. to give relief, and also with the development of the election campaign movement. Certain responsible forces must be assigned to the Negro section of the city where the Ford workers live, giving special attention to Inkster, as well as to Central Detroit and North Detroit.

The Hunger March itself presents us the opportunity of developing a movement in all sections of the city. We must consider the question of how the Union and the Party must be built in all sections of the city. The Union has established its prestige among the workers, especially during the January strikes. This prestige has been extended by the Ford hunger march. The question of other marches to other plants, such as Chrysler's, Briggs' in order to utilize the sentiment among the workers for the movement of relief.

This march raised the fighting capacity of the workers, forced concessions from the Ford Motor Co. (The Commissary store has been abolished in Dearborn. The Webster State welfare director has been removed - head of welfare in Dearborn), and increased confidence from the larger sections of the workers. It now depends upon the Party to really entrench itself and build itself through developing these struggles still further

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## The Strike on the Relief Job in Crosby, Minnesota

The sentiment for a strike in this section arose spontaneously and seemed widespread. Just as soon as the forced labor system under the State authority was put into effect the workers replied "We don't want that".

The Party decided for a strike, and as a fraction in the Unemployed Council, they took the initiative to call a mass meeting of all workers. Before the call for the mass meeting was out, some of our Party comrades were approached by members of Workers' Club an organization of Finnish workers connected with the I W W. These members of the Club pledged their support to the strike movement. Several of our Party members did not like the idea of a united front with the "wobblies" saying that the latter had some scheme to discredit the Unemployed Council. The fact, however, that the members of the Workers' Club came to our comrades shows that even they recognized our leadership among the workers. Since the strike we have been invited by some of the members to present the Communist position in mass organizations and mass struggles to the Club.

The first strike meeting was attended by about 200 workers. After a long discussion 105 voted for a strike and one against. Many present abstained from voting. A strike committee of nine was elected to organize picketing and to conduct the strike. This Committee consisted of one member from the Workers' Club, the other eight from the Unemployed Council, three being Party members. Picketing was organized and the jobs stopped. Our Communist Mayor, Comrade Nygard, took an active part in these activities.

But we had failed to draw in the unorganized elements. The first meeting was composed almost entirely of members of the Workers' Club and the Unemployed Council. Therefore we decided to call another mass meeting to draw in broader sections of the workers of Crosby and of the entire Cayuga Range.

### Communist Mayor Leads Struggle

Meanwhile the relief administrator appointed by Farmer Labor Governor Olson, became alarmed. The rate of pay was at once raised from 25 cents to 37½ cents per hour. At the same time they started a campaign of intimidation. The threat was broadcast that anyone who would not work would be

cut off from relief. Deputies from the outside were brought into Crosby. And here is where a big mistake was made by us. Some of the members of the strike committee, Party members at that, including Mayor Comrade Nygard, were asked to go over to the Armory for a conference with the local big men and with Rarig, the State Relief Administrator. As a result of this, the Party members invited Rarig to attend the workers' mass meeting to present the administration side of the case.

First of all, the enemy of the workers, against whom we were striking, was called into the workers' camp and given the opportunity to befuddle the issues and reiterate the threat that relief would be withdrawn from Crosby entirely if the strike continued. Secondly, a few members of the strike committee acted individually without consulting the entire committee. This mass meeting was a disappointment. Fewer responded than at the first meeting. There was little spirit and it took the character of a squabble over petty things between individuals and the relief administration.

At this time the strike committee decided to call off the strike, having made several gains, such as a raise in the rate of hourly pay, the right to get relief orders at any store and relief given to the needy at once without having to wait for an investigator to come around. While many weaknesses were shown throughout the strike and the activities for it, the workers realize that these small gains came as a result of the struggle. The Unemployed Council increased its prestige. The task of the Party is to continue increasingly to take up all issues and to build itself in the course of such struggles

4. 7.

## Experiences in Recruiting

Although the question of recruiting has been discussed innumerable times, still in this work we are weakest, particularly in our shop work.

In Section 2, of the New York District, where the majority of nuclei in the district are concentrated, great advances have been made in many phases of Party work, but with the exception of one group of comrades, little effort has been made to recruit new members.

In this nucleus organized in a government shop with many branches in New York City, and throughout the country, the comrades have taken this problem with great seriousness and have made such progress that it is important to bring to the attention of the Party generally their methods of work, and particularly their methods of recruiting.

A nucleus in one branch was organized about 14 months ago with one new Party member, just transferred from the Y.C.L. and two new comrades just entering the movement. Within two months recruits were brought in from another branch and a few weeks later there was the basis for the organization of the nucleus there.

Shortly after this an independent union was formed under the leadership of our comrades which in addition to serving the purpose of organizing and improving the conditions of the workers, now also serves as a recruiting ground for the Party

#### Organize Educational Work

The workers in these various branches, although their work necessitates much studying and preparation before they are hired, get far from a living wage. This is because of the fact that they are only employed part time. Because of the education necessary for their work, they are mostly of an intellectual type of worker. For this reason the comrades have found it possible to organize regular weekly discussion groups to which they invite both union and non-union workers. Here they discuss various current topics arranged in advance, with one of the group leading the discussion. In this way it is possible for the Party members to introduce important political current topics to which they can easily give the Communist viewpoint. Through these discussions the comrades are able to pick out immediately those who tend toward a radical viewpoint, and follow up this activity through closer personal contact. Among the most advanced of these workers are picked a few to attend open meetings of the nucleus where they listen to the work discussed by the Party, and also participate in the discussion.

Although this method is very simple, there is not another nucleus in Section 2 that goes about it systematically, step by step, as do the comrades in these shops. They do not think it sufficient to talk to a worker on the job, but because they wait some hours in the shop for work every week, they use this time to begin the first contact with new workers, and then follow this up by going out with him, by participating in these groups, etc.

There is, however, one danger in the work of the nucleus, which if not curbed at once may prove disastrous not only to our Party work there, but to our union work as well. Many of the comrades tend toward legalism in the union and sectarianism in the Party. In their union work they have to a great extent handled the request for granting of partial demands in a very "nice" manner - sent a representative or small delegation to the boss to request these demands, without any action taking place in the shop to support them.

In the Party work they have the attitude that only the type of worker that they are, can approach the workers in their shop—that is well-schooled, intellectual types. Also, that they must be very careful about the introduction of the Party into the shop. While it is correct that we must be cautious at all times, nevertheless, we cannot afford to wait indefinitely. Particularly in view of the fact that it is a government shop should it be easy to bring in more political issues than we do in the average shops.

Particularly has this been noticeable in that many of the comrades refuse to bring any other issue before the union membership. This was proved by the fact that they were afraid to introduce the question of supporting the conference for the defense of our trade unions, or the Tom Mooney conference for fear of exposing themselves or bringing too radical issues before the membership.

The comrades working in these shops must begin to realize these questions are particularly important for the organization of a basis for their further work in the shop. And while we must commend them for their excellent recruiting, this sectarianism and their fear of looking too "red" must be immediately overcome.

H. A.

## Our Problem of Forces

With the growth of strike struggles the cry for forces is heard louder than ever. Too often do we look for a solution of this problem by writing or wiring to the Center with a demand for more forces. This same demand is being made of the District Centers from the Sections and units. The Center in turn, is expected to open up one of its little vest pockets, pull out a force and ship it C.O.D. to the respective District or Section.

### Tremendous Strike Wave

In Buffalo, the first strike of 450 foundry workers, under our leadership was successfully terminated two weeks ago. This served as a signal for struggle in practically all other shops in that locality. We can see an actual onrush of strikes in the Buffalo District in the coming weeks. *Who will lead these strikes? Who will remain to work with the unions that we are building up now and those which sprang up as a result of the strikes?*

### Make Every Party Member A Leader

We called a functionaries' meeting in preparation for 2 membership meetings. At the 2 meetings we discussed one point, namely, experiences and lessons of the recent strikes in the District and tasks facing our Party. The 2 reporters at these meetings emphasized sharply that every C.P. member must become a leader. At the meeting at which I reported,

28 were present. In this report a check-up was made of what contact our membership has with the factory workers. The following was "discovered" Nearly all of these 28 members knew workers employed in the six steel and metal shops located in that Section. One C.P. member knew a worker employed in the foundry where the strike was won, who is ready to join our Party. A woman comrade knew friends of her husband who work in this foundry. Each of these comrades was given the following tasks: 1) to personally *they* be responsible to meet with the workers knew; 2) To arrange with the aid of these workers group meetings in private homes; 3) To bring down as many of these contacts as possible to the shop conference of steel and metal workers; 4) To remain working with these individual workers they know, become their leaders, learn from them and at the same time teach them; 5) The C.P. member who knows the worker is ready for the Party, to be responsible to sign him up and make him part of the shop unit in the foundry. With this point the meeting took on a different character. Our comrades felt that responsible work had been undertaken by each and every one of them. They are becoming leaders in shop and trade union work.

#### Leaders Among the Workers

But our own ranks within the Party are not the only course of leadership. The working class in the course of its struggles opens up splendid material. Who leads the spontaneous strikes taking place all over the country? Who led the 450 foundry workers? We had no Party nor T.U.U.L. members inside then. True we had a group of former members of the Unemployed Council. Militant, courageous and intelligent workers took the initiative to walk from department to department and pull the men out on strike. 3 of these already joined our Party. It is not enough to have them sign application blanks. It is necessary to train these 3 workers and the others who will come in very soon, so that gradually they will assume responsibility for work in this shop. It is these three workers who are already beginning to replace our two outside leaders we sent in. These

outside comrades can already be involved in another shop where the work is not as yet developed to the level that it is in this foundry. Training these workers who come to the leadership from the ranks of the masses, whether it be in the shop committee, in the union, in the Unemployed Council, or any of the mass organizations—this, in my opinion, will be the ultimate solution to the problem of forces.

## **Agit-Prop Work**

### **Education Through Struggle**

(The experiences of the State Hunger Marchers to  
Columbia, Ohio)

One of the most important aspects of any workingclass struggle is the development of the class consciousness of the workers through political education. This general rule is specifically applicable to the People's State Relief March of Ohio in that the political education of the marchers was advanced not only through the daily struggle of the march but also through a cultural program administered by an education committee which dramatized the struggles of the march to a higher political level.

All the columns upon arrival in a town on the line of march held mass meetings. At these meetings the marchers spoke about the conditions that had forced them to march, and also about the purposes of the march itself. Pamphlets concerning the unemployed were sold and given away at all the meetings. During the meeting the marchers would mix with the crowds and in this way numerous contacts for future Unemployed Councils were obtained. And also in this way new marchers were drawn in. For example in Marion, Ohio, such a meeting was held. We learned from the people present that not only did the Marion unemployed get only \$1.25 per week relief but that they also worked for this relief for a private railroad, and further than the A F of L had an unemployed union that had done nothing to better the conditions of the unemployed of Marion. After our meeting in that town we obtained numerous contacts for a militant unemployed council and also some new marchers.

Another feature of all the columns was the spirited singing and cheering. Slogans such as "Tax the rich and feed the poor", "We demand unemployed insurance", were continuously shouted along the line of march. These cheers would sometime draw applause from sympathetic onlookers.

The Toledo column held a different type of meeting with the people of the various towns. This column would hold an informal meetings with a discussion participated in by everyone, marchers and outsiders alike, on the activities of the day. At this meeting such things as police provocations in order to smash the march were pointed out. At the end of the meeting one of the leaders of the column would



analyze the political significance of the day's events. In this way not only the marchers but also the outsiders obtained a practical political discussion that was linked up with the struggles of that day.

#### Plays Teach Organization

In the Cleveland column a special feature of the mass meetings was the dai'y plays composed and performed on the experiences of the day. The chief aim of these plays was analytical clarification of the events that the marchers had participated in that day. The plays were prepared only on the basis of an outline of the event that had taken place. No words or speeches were prepared beforehand. This method was of course necessary because of the limited time available for the preparation by the actors. Usually only an hour or two was open to rehearsals and therefore the actors were allowed to develop their own speeches in accordance with the progress of the play, which, as I have mentioned before, was based upon a struggle with the police or some other struggle that had taken place that day.

Beside the mass meetings already mentioned other types of meetings were held. Numerous lectures on subjects such as "Reforestation Camps", "Industrial Control Bill", "Role of Women in Industry" and "Workingclass Youth", were held and discussions followed in which the visitors participated as well as the relief marchers. And there were also health talks concerning poison-ivy, snakes, etc.

A great deal of publicity was obtained by the "March". Elected publicity committees visited newspapers in the towns along the route of the march. For the most part favorable publicity was the result. One of the Columbus papers devoted its "Enquiring Reporter Column" to the "March".

Effective distribution of leaflets popularizing the relief march was carried out throughout the entire state. This passing of leaflets and selling of the *Daily Worker* was done by a committee that would precede the march a few blocks. Thus territories were reached that had never seen a *Daily Worker*.

The educational activity of the columns did not differ much after their arrival in Columbus. The marchers camped in Columbus for about four days and during this time many neighborhood meetings were held. A truck would take some marchers into the neighborhoods where small mass meetings would be held. From five to ten meetings would be held in this fashion every night. Speakers were also sent to other unemployed organizations. At a meeting of a Mustatte Council, 19 members voted to join the united front of unemployed in spite of sabotage of their leaders. In this way the ad-

vantage of militant action was brought to the pacifist unemployed leagues.

As for the marchers themselves, a program was given every night until the convention opened. At these programs, plays, singing of folk and revolutionary songs by national groups, as well as movies of unemployed struggles, and of Soviet Russia, were featured.

The march concluded with a convention at which reports of past activity and future plans for State organization of the Unemployed Councils were given. The youth and women had their own convention modeled after the main convention, except their demands dealt specifically with the youth and the women.

I have outlined briefly the educational activity of the People's Relief March. The success or failure of the march from a political standpoint depends largely upon the educational activity among the masses of people as well as among the marchers. There are two things that will have to be emphasized for future marches. First, larger mass meetings in the towns along the route of march so that a greater mass basis can be established, and second, a better politicalization of the marchers themselves by a daily connecting up of theory and the struggle such as police terror, etc. As for the first part; larger mass meetings can only be obtained by the establishment of local unemployed councils. And this shall have to be the principal activity of the Unemployed Councils of Ohio in their fight for unemployment insurance.

By E. T. C. (Toledo)

## Factory Papers of the C.P. of the United States

(By Mova, from the Inprecorr.)

The papers give sufficient space to the conditions of work in the factories, and to the partial demands of the workers. Factory papers are comparatively rare which, like the *Stewart Warner Worker*, contain only political material of a general character. There are a certain number of concrete, living articles on local subjects in the *Ford Worker* the *Crane Worker*, for example. But the general fault of the papers is that there is an incapacity to choose, from among the various questions, the most important, principal and vital questions, and to carry on a fight on these. One article speaks of reduction of the hours of work, another of overalls for the workers, a third of the necessity of kicking a spy out of the works. But one does not know by which means the paper

proposes to begin the fight. The demands for the fight are not formulated, and this prevents the papers from becoming the organizers of the fight of the workers in the factories for their demands and daily needs.

On the other hand, the papers appearing in the name of the Communist cell usually do not know how to link up the partial demands with the general tasks of the working class. They do not explain sufficiently to their readers, what is Communism, nor do they indicate clearly enough the objectives for which the Communist Party is struggling, only very rarely do they mention the final aim of the working class. In general, they speak only of partial demands, although the title of the paper is followed by the indication that it is "Organ of such and such a cell of the Communist Party", the text gives only detached, scattered and accidental explanations concerning such and such demands as are fought for by the Communists. Thus the *Headlight* on the election indicates that the Communist Party is the only party which does not fear to struggle for better conditions of labor in the factories. The *Railroad Worker* explains that the Communist Party is for payment in full of the war veterans' pensions. This is correct in itself but the tasks of the Communist Party are not limited to this.

The *A.B.C. Paperworker* in an article on the youth, writes: "Young Communists have no other interests than those of the young workers." The paper forgets to add that the interests of young workers are indissolubly bound up with those of the working class as a whole. In short, the non-Party worker or reformist worker who reads ten or fifteen different factory papers will not have gotten an exact idea of the tasks of the Party, still less will he know that the Party fights in practice as much for the partial demands as for the final objective of the working class, while subordinating the former to the latter.

The papers of the factory cells reflected the Communist Party's campaign at the time of the Presidential elections. A number of mistakes were shown therein. The papers set forth without any comment the six points of the Communist Party's election platform, for instance, the *Crane Worker* did this. With regard to the capitalist candidates, the factory papers confined themselves to general statements explaining that there was no difference in essence between the Republicans, Democrats and Socialists. The *Inplate Worker*, *Stewar*, *Warner Worker*. The papers made no attempt during the elections to bring out the position of the Communists as opposed to bourgeois democracy and the aim that the Party

pursued by taking part in the elections. One of the rare examples of a good electoral agitation is furnished by the

*Railroad Worker*, which makes use of Roosevelt's intervention in favor of a cut in the wages of the railwaymen to show the policy that this candidate would apply if elected President.

Many factory papers are not edited by the workers themselves and are not even made at the factory: whence a number of mistakes appear as a result of the lack of knowledge of factory conditions. A lack of initiative as regards demands that there is a chance of putting in each given case: abstract formulas about the need of organization. Sometimes the factory papers ask worker correspondents for articles to be sent to such and such an address—which from a conspirative point of view is absolutely impermissible.

The question of organization of the workers' press, of joining the Party and the trade unions is not put clearly. As a rule, there are simple appeals: "Organize, organize immediately," without indicating how it is to be done.

As for the trade union factory papers there is scarcely any difference from the Party papers, and in general, it is only from the heading that you can know who publishes the paper.

The question of forming various committees of action is put forward only in a very abstract manner in the various papers. But who should take part in these and what their tasks should be remains unknown. Sometimes the papers call on the workers to create at one and at the same time several different committees. *The Docket Worker*, for example, proposes the creation of shop groups, of anti-wage-cut committees, of anti-war committees, in such a way that the worker reader does not gain an exact idea of what has to be done: first of all. As an exception to this may be mentioned the *Illinois Steel Worker*, which gives some practical indications as to the way in which a grievance committee can be organized in the factory.

The struggle against imperialist war and the popularization of socialist construction takes the form in the majority of the papers of small articles of a rather schematic kind ending with a long list of slogans, very rarely are these questions linked up with the life and struggle of the workers of each given factory. Some papers give good examples of this work. *The Crane Worker* publishes an article on social insurance in the U.S.S.R., and besides it a note about a Crane factory worker who lost his sight and a limb at his work without receiving any compensation. There we have a concrete example which shows up the profound difference between the U.S.S.R. and capitalist countries. The *Illinois Steel Worker*, points out the part that the Illinois Steel Co. shop will play in the next war, and puts forward the follow-

ing demands:— "The war budget should be made into a fund for the unemployed." In this way the paper shows the worker the manner in which the war danger concerns workers directly.

The *Armour Worker* publishes a dialogue which looks very popular. It is between workers, one of whom wants to know what the Communists are, the other replies: "Tomorrow I'll bring you their program, and if you do not see me tomorrow, get the program from the *Daily Worker* seller at the factory gate." For the Communist worker this dialogue is not at all a model of the way in which to approach a non-Party worker, and the non-Party worker, too, can get nothing from it. There is no rhyme nor reason in inserting, as the *Armour Worker* does, a blank to be filled up by name and address and the words "I should like to be sent information about the Communist Party." Information on what the Party is and does ought to be found in the paper itself. Sometimes the papers insert workers' letters without reply or any explanation.

The question of National Minorities in the midst of the working class, and particularly the policy of the Communist Party on the national question, are left unexplained in the factory papers. And it is the same with the situation of the Negro workers. Many papers appearing in factories employing Negroes do not mention them, and in the election articles do not even point out that the Communist Party's candidate for the Vice-Presidency is a Negro worker. The papers do not put forward demands looking to an amelioration of the situation of the Negroes, equal rights and equal wages with those of the white workers, comradely relations between white and Negro workers, questions of organizing the mass of Negro workers, etc.

To overcome this big lack, Negro worker correspondents must be induced to take an active part in the factory papers.

The *Daily Worker* can help in the factory papers very much. On the one hand the factory papers can carry on propaganda and win readers for it in the factories. On the other hand, the *Daily Worker* could from time to time, print fundamental articles showing how both general political questions and local questions should be dealt with in the factory paper. It should also publish reviews of the factory papers, reprint articles and the most characteristic letters and set forth the experience of this work, both good and bad.

# Party Organizer



SPECIAL  
ISSUE

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Extraordinary  
Party  
Conference

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Vol. VI.

August-September, 1933

No. 8-9

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*Issued by*

CENTRAL COMMITTEE, COMMUNIST PARTY U. S. A.

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# PARTY ORGANIZER

VOL. VI.

AUGUST-SEPTEMBER, 1933

No. 8-9

## WHY THE OPEN LETTER?

"Why are we holding an extraordinary Party conference at this time, and why are we proposing that this conference shall issue an open letter to the Party? It is not alone because of the extreme sharpening of the crisis and consequently of the class struggle and of the danger of imperialist war. Above all, the reasons for these extraordinary measures lie in the fact that in spite of the serious beginnings of revolutionary upsurge among the masses, yet our Party has not developed into a revolutionary mass party of the proletariat.

"This extraordinary conference and the open letter are designed to rouse all of our resources, all of the forces of the Party to change this situation, and to give us guarantees that the essential change in our work will be made. The letter represents the most serious judgment of the situation and tasks of our Party and our leadership." —(From Comrade Browder's report at the Extraordinary Party Conference).

"To carry out the task of winning the majority of the working class every Communist Party shall establish, extend and strengthen *permanent and intimate contacts* with the *majority* of the workers, wherever workers may be found." (Resolution of Twelfth Plenum of the E. C. C. I.)

"The American Party must mobilize the masses and concentrate chiefly on the struggle: 1) For social insurance, against wage cuts, for immediate relief for the unemployed. 2) For assistance for the ruined farmers. 3) For equal rights for the Negroes and the right of self-determination for the Black Belt. 4) For the defense of the Chinese people and the Soviet Union. It is necessary to carry out the decision on the turn in the work of the Party and the Trade Union Unity League."—(Resolution of the Twelfth Plenum of the E.C.C.I.)



**T**HE Open Letter of the Extraordinary Party Conference to the membership of the Party aimed to arouse the entire Party to action. The Open Letter re-emphasized in the sharpest manner that our Party, if it is to become the indisputable leader of the American workers in the day-to-day struggles against capitalism, winning them for the battle to destroy capitalism, must make a rapid turn to approach, organize and win the decisive elements of the American proletariat, especially in the mining, steel, marine, railroad and textile industries.

The Open Letter found immediate response in the ranks of our Party members. Even non-Party workers and poor farmers greeted the Open Letter as an instrument which will spur the Party to greater activity. Dozens of letters poured into the *Daily Worker*, from workers and farmers, Communist and non-Communist, enthusiastically pledging to improve the work, critically analyzing wrong methods of work. These letters have many lessons for our entire Party.

What do these letters show? These letters once again reaffirm the deep revolutionary ferment rapidly embracing large strata of the American workers and toiling masses, a ferment which is pregnant with sharp class battles already evidenced by the growing strike movement involving hundreds of thousands of workers. This is only another indication that the American workers are looking for a way out—and will follow a militant class struggle policy providing we *know how* to bring it to them simply and clearly. These letters emphasize once again that the task of the entire Party is to organize and lead the masses into struggles.

Secondly, these letters fully bear out the statement of the Open Letter that our Party members *will work*, that our membership will prove itself in the present situation as the force which can move the Party forward on the path towards becoming a mass Party.

Our Party members have been stirred. This is also evidenced in the district and section conferences that are now taking place throughout the country. What is necessary now is to *organize, plan the activity of the members, direct this activity precisely in those channels which will entrench the Party among the basic sections of the American proletariat.*

### **Need Resolutions, Experiences from Shop Units**

But letters and resolutions have not yet come in from our shop units, from our comrades in the large steel plants, from the mines, from the waterfront, from the railroads—from those workers upon whose activity depends that change in our work necessary to trans-

form our Party into a mass Party. This still reflects the insufficient mobilization of these decisive sections of our Party membership.

The Open Letter gives the key by which the change in our Party will take place—through concentrated activity, systematic day-to-day work of the major forces of our Party in selected large plants, developing struggles around immediate issues, preparing the workers for strike struggles, and convincing them by our unflinching and determined defense of their interests that the Party has the correct policy and can lead their struggles. When the Party will be able to win under its influence the workers in the strategic plants, set these workers in motion, these struggles will serve as a lever for the penetration into other factories.

From almost its very inception our Party has put forward the need for rooting itself in the factories, mines and mills, converting each factory into a fortress of Communism—a stronghold of the Party. But while the Party has made some headway in this connection, has done some good work in the shops, in the main it still remains isolated from the most important sections of the American proletariat. It is this fundamental problem that faces the entire Party today—how can we root the Party in the important and decisive factories?

#### **Must Root Party in Strategic Factories**

Our Party cannot penetrate all the factories at once. We have to select the most strategic factories, those factories which have a key position in capitalist production, which embrace the largest number of workers, and carefully, persistently, tirelessly win these workers under our leadership.

It is of the most tremendous political importance that our Party shall therefore throw its forces in the first place into steel, mining, railroad and marine industries. And in these industries to select those factories in which through the systematic and planned activity of the Party, we can gain a foothold.

#### **Need Permanent Organization in Basic Factories**

In line with our final revolutionary perspectives, in line with winning the masses of American workers not only for immediate struggles, but for the struggle for power—these key industries, these strategic industrial cities and towns will be a determining factor in deciding the victory of the proletarian revolution. Unless permanent organizational connections are established with the workers in these industries, there can be no guarantee for a rapid development of our Party, nor that we will be able to effectively organize the resistance of the working class to combat and defeat the capitalist offensive.

This is the central line of the Open Letter. It is this fundamental problem which must be understood by every Party committee, by every Party member. It is in this direction that every task of the Party must be planned. Our Party membership has the necessary will, the determination, the prerequisites, to solve this fundamental problem. What is needed is more political clarity on this central task, more direct personal guidance and assistance from the higher committees, more careful and systematic planned work, more controlled Communist activity.

The exchange of the vital experiences of our Party in carrying out our work of concentration will be a medium through which to improve the work of our Party as a whole. "It must be absolutely clear that positive criticism and practical proposals, and comradely material exchange of political opinions, for improving the work of the Party are a vital necessity." The critical examination of our work made by the Open Letter requires that every one of us approach our work with the same seriousness, but also requires an exchange of experiences and "political opinions" in the first place on our work among the workers in the factories, mines, railroads and ports.

#### Political Clarity and Collective Action Guarantee Carrying out Open Letter

This issue of the *Party Organizer*, which contains some of the best experiences of our Party, some of the best contributions to the examination of our Party work, by the comrades gathered at the Extraordinary Party Conference, should be carefully studied by every Party member. This issue of the *Party Organizer* should be one of the instruments through which to bring to every Party member the tremendous requirements demanded of our Party today, especially in the light of the present developments in the United States and the concerted attacks upon the masses of toilers contained in the Roosevelt program—in the National Industrial Recovery Act.

What is needed is collective action of the entire Party membership, from the top to the bottom. If every Party member, every Party committee will pull in one direction, the Party can and will carry out the tasks laid down in Open Letter.

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*"Without daily work among the broad masses, without daily struggle for the defense of their living interests, the Communists, in laying claim to the leadership of the masses, can only isolate themselves."*—Kuusinen.

## ROOTING THE PARTY IN BASIC INDUSTRIES

Whether the toiling masses of America will go upon the path of determined class struggle, whether they will take the road toward the revolutionary way out of the crisis of capitalism, or whether they will be turned into the channels of social-fascism or fascism—this question will be decided by the work of the Communist Party. If our Party can gather all its forces for a profound change in its work and really make a Bolshevik turn to the masses, can assume the full responsibilities of leadership of the growing strike movement, the struggle of the unemployed; really build a solid base for itself among the most decisive strata of the working class, the workers in basic industry; if our Party can really gather around it the non-proletarian masses who are suffering under the crisis—only then will the Communist Party of the United States really have measured up to its historic responsibility. Only then will we really have shown that we understand the basic teachings of Lenin. (*From Comrade Browder's Report.*)

### MINING

*From Speech of Jack Johnstone, Organizer of Pittsburgh District*

**I** want to take up a couple of our strike struggles and the work in one of our concentration steel factories, and try to analyze them in the light of the Open Letter and the report of Comrade Browder.

I will take first the Avella strike. This strike involved eight mines, led by the National Miners Union on the basis of the united front from below. We had a tendency throughout our Party toward the theory of the general strike, that is, that the miners could not win victories unless they went out on a general strike. The result of this was extremely disastrous, because this ideology also permeated the workers.

So what was the result when the strike took place? Our analysis of the situation was that we could not expect a general strike and that we could probably have 10 or 12 or 13 thousand miners on

strike. Our analysis was correct. Thirteen or fourteen thousand miners came out on strike, but some of our leaders and many of the miners were disappointed; they expected 50,000 or 30,000 or 40,000. The result was that although the Avella strike lasted a month, at no time were we able to develop enthusiasm and a fighting spirit.

Did we mobilize our Party members? Yes, we mobilized our Party members in preparation for the strike and we defeated every effort of the U.M.W.A. to split the ranks of the strikers. We defeated every effort of the government which made a cut of 75 per cent in the relief of the unemployed miners in order to force them to take the jobs of the miners on strike. We organized two hunger marches of the unemployed and strikers and not only defeated this cut but forced on the relief list every striker down to the last man. We had a broad united front strike committee; we carried out every necessary and correct action. But something was fundamentally wrong with our strike—a strike under our undisputed leadership, a strike in which there was no question about our leadership—when one day of terror could wipe us out of existence so completely that we were blown out of the picture, until today we have not yet made contact in that strike area.

### Wrong Concentration Fatal Error

Why was this possible? First of all we were not concentrating correctly nor sufficiently. Neither our units, nor our N.M.U. locals, nor our fractions functioned during the strike. This is a fatal error. In strikes a constant daily check-up on decisions is necessary. Yet it was two weeks before we found out that no recruitment had taken place for our union or for our Party, that the Party organizers and the union organizers down there had not even asked one miner to join the union itself. We were kept busy chasing the U.M.W.A., to keep them from splitting the ranks of the strikers—very correct to follow them up, correct that we should stop them. But in doing this we neglected to mobilize our own forces and allowed the enemy to secretly organize their terror forces while we didn't even carry on a campaign or organize a defense corps to meet this terror.

In strikes and in concentration we must not allow anything to interfere with the proper functioning of our Party, our Y.C.L. and our revolutionary union. These functions must not be less, but on the contrary, they must be increased, not as a separate force from the strike but as an integral part of the strike itself. We have to learn how even to lose a strike and still win the workers.

In the Avella strike we said that we must permeate every organ-

ization in Avella, but we did not do it. We don't hand the rank and file of the American Legion over to the fascists, yet we did so with the rank and file miners.

### **Party Face Hidden in Our District**

In our District our units never appear as organizations of our Party; they appear as Unemployed Councils or the N.M.U. and never as Party organizations fighting against the lower units of the government. And, of course, their political level is never above that of the mass organizations in which they have contact. In Westmoreland County our organizer, Comrade Wolly, appeared for the first time in the name of the Communist Party. Wolly was the leader of the Needle Trade Workers strike. Miss Pitt, a government conciliator, trying to disrupt the strike, came out before a mass meeting of strikers and accused our comrade of being a Communist. He had to admit he was a Communist and explained to the workers present the program of the Party. And no one was more surprised than Wolly to find that the girls voted to accept him as leader and sent the government official back to Harrisburg. Thus it is very clear that we must bring our Party before the workers. The fact that we do not indicate, of course, a lack of faith in the workers, an idea that the workers cannot understand and do not want our Party.

### **United Front Action Defeats Wage-Cut**

A few words about concentration in the Jones-Laughlin mill. We have been concentrating in this mill for years. The comrades said the mill was 85 per cent foreign-born, and there were no youth. But there were many young workers and Negroes. Here we were able to create a tremendous foment by organizing anti-wage-cut committees. We also developed a united front of organizations on the outside that helped the workers fight against the wage-cut, so that the employers were not able to put the wage-cut into effect. Then what happened? After the cut was withdrawn all our new workers disappeared, because we did not press forward these anti-wage-cut committees into action committees inside the mills, to fight for their daily grievances. There was also a struggle of 30 young workers in the mill who refused to work until they received overalls, and they won this demand, separate from our committees and without our knowledge. Though the mill is all on part time, yet every worker is compelled to be at the gate every morning to find out whether he has work or not. This is a general grievance which we can utilize to carry on real activity. It is necessary to know the most simple, elementary demands of the workers in the mills and to recognize the importance of struggle around them.

## WE BUILD THE UNION

*From Pat Toohey's Speech, D. O. of Colorado District*

I should like to relate some of the developments which have taken place in the state of Utah. There are 2,300 coal miners as well as other miners. Among these miners are Japanese, Chinese and other nationalities. Our district buro decided to commence a campaign in that field.

Some two months ago the Utah section of the Party held a special conference to consider penetrating the mining fields and industry in Utah. Up to that time a phenomenal growth of the Party in Utah had taken place from six members in 1932 to about 300 several months ago, but it was hollow and based on the unemployed. The special conference decided to try to penetrate the coal sections of Utah and establish the union and Party in those sections.

### 1,300 Join National Miners Union

After the conference laid down decisions the comrades went to that section and found a few connections in the field. They commenced working from door to door, and mine to mine. They established new connections and took advantage of the existing economic conditions. After a while the beginnings of a union organization were established. Later on the possibility of a strike arose, and by that time the National Miners Union was established side by side with the Party in the field. After one month's activity among these 2,300 miners, 1,300 are definitely signed up in the National Miners Union. The same can be reported, on a lesser scale, in the state of New Mexico.

### U.M.W.A. on the Outside Looking In

By that time the U.M.W.A., under the provisions of the Recovery Act, decided to enter the field, but were a little too late. Our comrades had a firm control over these workers and the U.M.W.A. was looked upon as outsiders. The U.M.W.A. immediately began working with the coal operators and the authorities, trying to horn in. There was such open collaboration between the coal operators and the U.M.W.A. that every miner in the field immediately rejected the United Mine Workers. And after all their conspiracies and all the pressure of the A.F. of L. union, we can say that the situation is firmly controlled by our Party and the National Miners Union in Utah.

### Build Party Side by Side with Union

Another point I would like to speak about is the age-old question of when the Party comes into a situation. In the past we have gone through many huge struggles, with thousands of workers involved, and after it was all over and the band stopped playing, we looked around and found nobody left. Adequate preparations were made to guard against this by making the comrades understand that the Party is not something isolated from the general struggle, but simultaneously with the development of struggle, Party organizations must be set up.

### We Utilize Struggles to Involve Farmers

Our Party has attempted to utilize the struggles of the miners to establish connections among the farmers, not only for struggle but for relief in the strike. We also mobilized the unemployed throughout the district to check on the scab employment offices and shatter any attempt made by these offices to send in scabs and strike-breakers.

What will come of the situation in Utah I do not know yet. Great pressure is being brought by the national and state A.F. of L. by the authorities, by the Mormon Church and by the companies in an effort to oust our comrades from the field and bring in the United Mine Workers. But because our comrades entered the situation first and became deeply entrenched, it will be very hard to oust us.

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## ILLINOIS COAL FIELDS

*From Speech of Leading Comrade of National Miners Union*

**I**N the mining field the Open Letter must mean a whole lot, but we have something else that calls for our attention—we have the United Mine Workers, this organization that we speak about being so discredited. This organization is carrying on a big campaign throughout the mining fields. We also have an example in Westmoreland County of what can happen if we who are building the oppositions, if we of the N.M.U., do not hesitate and lag behind, if we are there at the proper time to give the proper lead. Westmoreland County was never organized, although they had strikes—and yet while I was there I found that every coal miner in that town belongs to the U.M.W.A.



### Concentration Lacks Continuity

Now in Illinois. In Illinois we have Trotskyites, I.W.W.'s, Socialists, Musteites, the Progressive Miners, the Democratic organization that is in control of the Progressive Miners, and certain people trying to organize a new federation of labor to compete with the A.F. of L. Here our organization had very little influence. We carried through a policy of concentration. But between the last plenum and this one we did not continue this concentration, and therefore we had some bad results. We decided to concentrate on Gillespie, the key place. We built unemployed organizations, we got individual cases and fought for them and got relief for them, and as a result of these struggles we were able to make the relief in this county the second highest in the state. We were able to organize a State Hunger March. We were able to get into the locals of the Progressive Miners and into the auxiliaries. But after this we moved the headquarters to Springfield. I was sent to Springfield, and we went away from our base of activity. However, when we left Gillespie, the Trotskyites and other elements did not leave.

### Not Building Party Biggest Mistake

Our biggest mistake was that we did not build the Party. Very few members were recruited and no units were built at all.

I believe that the lessons we had in the beginning when we carried through a policy of concentration are very important and we have to continue that policy of choosing certain places to concentrate on and using these places to spread out.

In connection with the Pittsburgh District; when I was there we were preparing a strike. We decided that the proper thing to do was to let everything go and pull Vesta Mine No. 4. We pulled a strike in No. 4 and the next morning the other mines came out too, and I think the same policy must be followed in every mining town. There is always a key mine to which the workers look for leadership, and what this mine does it is very easy to get the other mines to do.

*"When we search for the reasons for our previous failures to make this decisive change, we must emphasize one key question which explains most of our failures. The Open Letter states this very sharply. It clearly establishes that among all our weaknesses, the central point is the failure to understand the decisive role played by the workers in the basic industries, in the most decisive industrial centers, in the most important big shops and mines."—From Comrade Browder's Report.*

## STEEL

*From Speech of a Leading Comrade of the Steel and Metal Workers Union*

**C**ONSIDERING the conditions in the steel industry and the reactions of the workers to the Industrial Recovery Act, we now have an opportunity to do some real work in the steel industry for building both the Party and the Steel and Metal Workers Industrial Union.

What has been the effect briefly of the Industrial Recovery Act among the steel workers? Several comrades have pointed out (Comrade Williamson of Chicago, Comrade Zack) that the effect of the Industrial Recovery Act is one of arousing to a certain extent whole masses of steel workers. In many respects they are laboring under certain illusions as to what this Act means to the steel workers. It is true, as some comrades have reported, that the steel workers feel that they have now the right to organize, and express themselves and I want to bring this out by a little incident which happened recently.

In the—Steel Corporation, at—(a company town) one of our union members was nominated to run for office in the company union. On the day of the election he got up and made a speech in the mill and told the workers that he was running for office in the company union not because he believed in the company union but because he thought it would help the workers if he could bring the program of the Steel and Metal Workers Industrial Union into the company union. This was unheard of in the —, that a worker should get up in the company union and express sentiment against the company right in the mill, but he reflected the illusions of many thousands of workers in the industry who believed that they had the right to express themselves in the company union.

We, therefore, as Communists, must take advantage of this situation as much as we possibly can to entrench both the Party and the union in the mills.

### **New Developments Due to Recovery Act**

The Industrial Recovery Act has also brought forward another new development in the steel industry which is very significant for our Party and union. Namely, that the A.F. of L. has come forward in the steel industry in certain sections (Youngstown, Ohio) and are campaigning there for the first time since 1919, attempting to win workers into their unions and are utilizing our approach to the workers in this campaign, talking industrial unionism, utilizing

our phraseology, conducting street corner meetings, soap box meetings, house-to-house campaigns, etc.

Briefly the Industrial Recovery Act has to a big extent aroused the workers in the industry. What have we done? I think we have been very slow in reacting to this situation. It has taken us a long time, in fact, to realize particularly in this period, that the workers are beginning to move. The breaking out of strikes up in Monroe, Buffalo, etc., is an indication that workers are getting ready for struggle and we have not been politically alert enough to come into the situation as an independent force.

Our organizational position is very weak. We have only issued in the union some 1,400 membership books; we have some forty groups throughout the country and we are not conducting sufficient struggles of workers or winning workers to struggle in this situation.

### Sharpest Reorientation of Districts Toward Steel

I want to say that if we expect to accomplish even the minimum of the tasks assigned to us by the Open Letter, there will have to be the sharpest reorientation in these districts toward the steel industry. There will have to be an assignment of the very best forces in the district for work in steel. There will have to be the very closest political attention given to this problem. Forces, finances, mobilization of the language organizations, etc., are necessary in order that these things are properly carried through. What are our tasks in mobilizing the Party and union to carry through the tasks that are facing us?

It is necessary that the Chicago, Cleveland and Pittsburgh districts immediately select certain concentration mills—in Illinois, steel; \_\_\_\_\_, \_\_\_\_\_, \_\_\_\_\_, and that these mills become focal points of attention for the entire district from the district burd down to the units in the districts. It is necessary that we assign not only ordinary forces but that we assign our best and most experienced forces for this particular task and above all that we draw in from within these mills local forces that are and that can be drawn into activity.

### Utilize Unemployed to Build Union

In the Pittsburgh district we have taken steps recently for the development of these local forces and we have found that there is a wide field that we can reach—forces that we can reach at the present time. For instance, in the Pittsburgh district there are fifteen thousand registered members in the Unemployed Councils. Many hundreds of these are steel workers. We have been able through work in these Councils to gradually draw in some of these local

elements from the Unemployed Councils as union organizers. These workers are from the mills and have intimate contact with the workers in the mills and know the problems of the workers in the mill.

Comrades, these elements, these local new fresh forces will enable us to develop struggles in the industry. It has been a general practice and tendency not only in the Pittsburgh district but in Cleveland and other districts to consider work among the unemployed in the industrial town as entirely separate from the union. It is by utilizing these forces for work in the steel mills, for work in developing the Party and union that we will be able to accomplish our task to a big extent.

*Editorial Note:*

*Since this speech was made, the Steel and Metal Workers Industrial Union carried on an extensive campaign in connection with the National Recovery Act and code hearings in Washington as well as through states. As a result of this thousands of steel and metal workers have since joined the union.*

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## LESSONS OF THE ACME STEEL STRIKE

**T**HE Acme strike is a direct result of the successful termination of the North Buffalo Hardware Foundry strike. The Acme Steel and Malleable Iron Works employs about 200 workers, including Negroes and women. The average wage before the strike was 30c an hour for men, and 20c for women. The strikers demand an 8-hour day, \$5 a day for molders, \$4 a day for grinders, improved conditions and recognition of their shop committee.

The strike assumes tremendous importance primarily because we were able during the course of the 2 weeks struggle to arouse the entire Polish Section of Black Rock and involve thousands of workers, men and women and children, unemployed and shop workers, Negro and white. As a result of the correct leadership and most strenuous activity we succeeded in: 1) breaking through, to some extent, the most vicious terror unloosed in Buffalo, by rallying as many as 5,000 neighbors on the picket line in support of the 150 strikers, 2) Organizing the Acme shop into the Steel and Metal Workers Industrial Union during the strike, thus making it easier to force the bosses to recognize the shop committee, 3) organizing a women's council, 4) make a start in organizing the children of the neighborhood and of the strikers, 5) organizing a shop unit in the Acme during the strike. Many outstanding mistakes and weaknesses

could and should (in subsequent articles) be discussed. However, the purpose of this article is to analyze the role our Party played in this struggle. What were the tasks of our Party? How well did we carry through these tasks?

### How the Strike Was Called

On the 10th of July, several of the workers of the Acme plant came to the Section organizer of the Party and told him they are ready to strike and asked for directions on how to proceed. About 40 workers were rounded up, demands worked out and arrangements for a larger meeting made. The next day about 75 workers came to the meeting at which they decided to strike the following day, July 12th. About 125 workers responded. Some of the machinists (at least two of whom are members of the A. F. of L.), the whole patternmakers' department and the straw bosses refused to go out. The molders are the decisive department; they took the initiative in calling the strike and are out solid.

There are a few Negro workers in the shop. The comrades in the first strike meeting had the white workers take a unanimous vote to support the Negro workers in the struggle, and vice versa. A few women work in the shop also, and they receive less wages than the men, but are supposed to be doing lighter work.

At the outset a strike committee of 13, including Negro and women workers was organized, representing each department except the patternmakers. Picketing was organized. A publicity committee was elected, which was successful in securing considerable publicity in the local press; a functioning relief committee, capable of caring for the needs of the strikers; a defense committee, though too narrow, effective in the handling of the preliminary steps in arrests. Also delegations from the strikers have been sent to the police, etc., to demand the stopping of police interference on the picket line, demanding the right to carry banners on the picket line, etc. Also later in the strike, women's auxiliaries have been organized with a large number signed up, and perspective of permanent organization. Likewise children's troops have been organized.

The strike is led by the elected strike committee, which meets at least once each day. The leading Party members are not members of the strike committee, but meet with it, where all steps to be taken up are planned and discussed, and then presented to the general strikers' meetings. The members of the strike committee are assigned the part each is to bring to the meeting and given guidance on how this should be done. The Party members speak on questions which come up during the general meeting and which the strikers are unable to solve themselves, also raising the discussions to a higher political

plane. During the first few days the Party members spoke too much and too often, but this was soon corrected.

Mass meetings of the strikers and others are held every night at which the strikers are the main speakers, the Party members politicalizing the issues, exposing the A. F. of L., as well as countering such suggestions as bringing rifles to the picket lines, bombing the plant, etc. Because of the newness of the workers to struggles and the relatively small number of strikers, the leading comrades were compelled to picket with the workers the first few days in order to prevent the collapse of the picket lines. One definite result of these mass meetings, which were undertaken for one thing to raise the morale of the strikers which was very low in the first few days, was that on Friday (21st), over 5,000 men, women and children marched to the picket line, stoned and broke all the windows on the busses transporting scabs, sent several scabs and one bus driver to the hospital; with mass indignation against the police, scabs, etc., running high.

### The Party and Union Built during Strike

Before the strike the Party and the T.U.U.L. had no contacts in this plant. Within the first few days four members were recruited into the Party and a nucleus formed which is the leader in the strike committee. These four constitute the leading members of the union. From the first day, members were recruited to the Steel and Metal Workers Industrial Union. To date, about 125 workers of this shop have signed applications, and 30 have paid full initiations, and the others have paid part. The workers of this plant receive very small wages and need relief, being unable to pay initiations and dues. The vice president of the union is a Negro.

### Shortcomings and Errors

Despite many significant achievements for the Party in this strike, there are on the other hand very serious shortcomings and errors. The first and decisive error made was that the Party section organizer permitted the workers to tell the night watchman not to fire the blast furnaces when they were ready to strike. The demands should have been worked out more carefully; the present ones being maximum demands. (NOTE: the strike is still on, and the errors and shortcomings stated have been criticized, and steps taken to overcome them. The period to which this criticism applies is mostly for from July 12th to 22nd.) The neglect of the Party is partly explained, but not justified, by the fact that most of the leading comrades were absent from the district during the early part of the strike. Briefly, the main shortcomings:

### Insufficient Mobilization of Party around Strike

1) The Party units in the strike area were not mobilized in support of the strike, and for recruiting new Party members, etc., 2) no directives were sent to the other sections and units on the strike or on any other issues, 3) the Party was not brought forward in its independent role, organizing mass meetings, etc., in support of the strike, having Party representative speak at the strike meetings, organizing Party members from the units to go on the picket line, selling literature, *Daily Workers*, etc., 4) Though the Y.C.L. organizer has been in the strike from the first day, yet no Y.C.L. unit has been formed, not only from the strikers, but the whole neighborhood which is there and struggling. The Party bears the responsibility. 5) Insufficient publicity in the *Daily Worker* on the strike. The *Daily Worker* has not been sold in sufficient numbers, and most of the time not at all. In this connection it is necessary to point out that the *Daily* made an error in cutting down the article on the strike, appearing in the Monday (24th) issue. 400 copies of this issue were ordered to be sold to the strikers, and the article having been cut, was discouraging to the strikers. 6) The Unemployed Councils have not been involved as an organization, though the members have been very active from the start. The I.L.D. has been brought into the situation. The strikers' defense committee was elected under the direction of our comrades, yet the I.L.D. was not sufficiently brought forward in its independent role; a committee was formed to work with the strikers' defense committee. I.L.D. attorneys will be used, and the strikers' meetings are utilized for protest and demanding the release of the arrested workers, rousing the strikers and others against the police. The W.I.R. is as yet in no contact with the strikers' relief committee, though the W.I.R. has an office there.

### Scabs Recruited Because Party Failed to Mobilize Masses

An extremely important issue arose in this strike from the fact that the employers resorted to the tactic of using Negroes to scab, creating a situation threatening race riots. The Negroes were recruited in the Negro section of the city, miles away from the strike. This is important to bear in mind, in connection with the falling down of the activities of the Party units in this and in other areas, as a result of neglect of them, and it was far more difficult to mobilize the masses in that area (especially the Negro territory) to combat this vicious practice. This is being done, however. The L.S.N.R., I.L.D. and the strike committee have issued joint leaflets, held joint street meetings in the Negro territory, mobilized Negroes to go to

the picket line, etc., and thus have succeeded to rouse sentiment against Negroes being used as scabs, directing the anger of the white workers against the real culprits, the bosses; informing the Negroes that they are being hired to scab, since many of them do not know this.

The employers are aware of the significance of this seemingly "small" struggle. They have concentrated upon it all their forces, the police, attempting to introduce the A. F. of L. through the police and the employers, radio talks against the strike by the Chamber of Commerce, Johnston of the local A. F. of L. Central Labor Council declaring it an "outlaw" strike.

### Did We Carry thru Our Tasks?

In the main we did. *But how?* Not in an organized and planned manner. Party members were on the picket line. Party members were collecting relief, helping in the defense, speaking at the mass meetings, etc. Leaflets were issued, open air meetings were arranged, resolutions were sent in. However, this was done in a haphazard, unorganized way. The Party members did these things not because their *units* planned them, not because they received directives from the District to do so, but because many Party members had nothing else to do and when they came to the strike headquarters we involved them in the various phases of work. Our Party apparatus and organization were almost entirely neglected. Therefore, in spite of the good work of the few Party comrades who were leading this struggle, we can say definitely that the entire strike was weakened because of our failure to have mobilized the Party in an organized manner. These lessons, once they become the property of our entire Party, will help us improve our work in the other strikes and struggles brewing everywhere.—*Steel Worker.*

*"It is idle chatter to speak about the leading role of the Party without establishing contacts with the decisive strata of the workers, mobilizing these workers and winning them over to our side."*—From Open Letter.



## CONCENTRATION

*From Speech of B. D. Amis, District Organizer of Cleveland,  
Polhuo Member, C. P., U. S. A.*

**T**HE question of concentration in our District revolves around not only more and better forces for the Union, but also for the Party and mass organizations, including the press—especially the language press. Here in these decisive sections it is necessary that we take more seriously the question of utilization of our forces. We have to work out the particular task of each unit, of each nucleus in the mine or in the factory, of each branch, of the mass or language organization; how to mobilize comrades to keep in touch with activities going on there, to send reports to the language press, to develop struggles and activities of these workers.

Around such a program it will be easier for us to carry out campaigns of exposure of our enemies in this particular point and tell the workers who are their friends and who their enemies.

### **First Task—Building Solid Contact With Workers**

The question of concentration has been approached from a different angle by some comrades in our district. Our comrades have voiced the opinion that if we are going to build the Steel and Metal Workers Union (that is some of the comrades—not all of them) or if we are going to build up a strong movement among the miners, the first thing we must do is open up a headquarters, have a trade union center where workers can meet and gather. My opinion is that this is incorrect to start with.

The first thing that we have to do is build up a foundation for a trade union headquarters, create a basis for this union headquarters by making solid personal contacts with the workers in the neighborhoods, shops, factories, mines, winning their confidence, organizing them into small committees, such work, comrades, gives us a basis not merely for opening up a union headquarters but also creates a basis for financing such a headquarters.

The incorrect methods we have used in concentration work are, in my opinion, the reason why we have not been able to lead a great number of strikes. It has been noted by the majority of comrades here that we have not been the real leaders in the great number of strikes that have taken place. Many comrades have spoken about the will of the workers to struggle, not only to struggle but to come out on strike. Many know that. The A. F. of L. and other reformists who have led strikes know it. This only shows, comrades, the great possibilities that exist for us and shows also that

our methods of concentration have not been serious in that we have not concentrated our forces in a particular spot, we have not thrown all our energies into a certain spot and carried on a struggle right there.

Again the poor methods of concentration give rise to the cry for cadres. Surely if we carry through correct methods of concentration, if we were actually among these workers, participating in their struggles, right out of these struggles we would be able to develop new cadres and get real American elements who would become excellent forces for the trade union and the Party. Therefore, comrades, my opinion is this: One of the central points in the Open Letter, and that was given great emphasis in the report of Comrade Browder, is the question of the methods of concentration. We have already seen some excellent results from Detroit, also from one or two strikes in New York—the needle trades, etc., as to how comrades carried through concentration work correctly.

## UNITED FRONT ACTION

*From Speech of M. Johnson, Buffalo District Organizer*

**T**HE Mooney campaign was the first major united front action carried through by our district. It was very successful, considering the inexperience of our comrades. We succeeded in bringing to this conference 14 American Federation of Labor locals, including switchmen and railway clerks. We also united many organizations from which we were isolated in times past.

The conference has served as a stimulus to building up the movement. As a result of a follow-up we have succeeded to some extent in penetrating four more A.F. of L. locals and in making many contacts that we are planning to crystalize into an opposition movement within the A.F. of L.

At the mass send-off of delegates to the Chicago Mooney conference we carried out an exposure of the Socialist Party leaders for their failure to participate in united front actions. As a result we were able to contact many Socialist workers and we can say that through this exposure we were able to win over a Socialist organization of nearly 200 members.

In the Unemployment League we have succeeded in building up a powerful opposition movement against the Executive Committee of the Socialist Party. This unemployed organization went on record condemning the Executive Committee of the Socialist Party and elected delegates to our united front conference. This is our

first serious beginning in the penetration of these organizations under the influence of the S.P.

These experiences have been popularized throughout our district so that they can become a guide to the other sections and units in their dealings with the Socialists and other organizations in the work of building the united front.

We have developed some strike struggles—approximately 13 shops have been on strike in the last few months. One of the most outstanding was the strike of the North Buffalo Hardware—a shop that employs about 400 workers. They went on strike against a wage cut of from 23½ to 31 percent. The comrade who was in the situation from the start was carried away to some extent by the spontaneity of the movement and did not realize that he is there to give direction and purpose to this strike. As a result, a set of demands were worked out that were impossible to win at that stage of the fight.

### **Win Minimum Strike Demands**

Immediately after the first meeting of the strike committee when we discussed the question of demands, one of the workers came in and objected to the demands. He stated that the demands raised by the strikers are too advanced. I asked him what he proposed and he said that at the present time the demands should be the following: Recognition of the shop committee; no discrimination against strikers and withdrawal of the 23½ to 31 percent wage cut. This worker said these demands would strengthen the workers and they will be in a position to win the day rate. Some comrades felt that he was there for the purpose of breaking the strike, but I thought we should accept this set of demands and present both to the workers for final adoption.

At the meeting of the strikers it was decided to keep the original demands and hold the minimum demands in reserve. We succeeded in winning the minimum demands from the employers. This victory greatly stimulated the morale of the workers. Already 308 workers have joined the Steel and Metal Workers Industrial Union. The Union is carrying on activity openly in the shop for 100 percent organization.

### **Make Contacts in Airplane Shop Strike**

There was also a strike in the Consolidated Airplane Shop, involving more than 450 workers. They went on strike against a reduction in wages that came as a result of reduction in hours. They stayed out on strike two days and forced the employers to reduce the hours and guarantee them the same wages as for the

longer hours of work. During the strike we succeeded in making quite a few contacts and through these contacts we are attempting to overcome the mistakes which they made during the struggle, such as the failure to build up the union in the shop, etc.

Now with regard to the struggles for Negro rights. We can register some progress in the tying up of actual instances of discrimination against Negro workers with the Scottsboro case. We did this on the basis of comparison of relief given to white workers with relief given to Negro workers. As a result of these struggles, we have developed a mass influence and following among the Negroes. A couple of months ago a Negro stevedore was murdered by a group of white hoodlums. We organized a mass protest funeral in which more than 3,000 Negro and white workers participated. So effective was this that we forced the Negro reformists and clergy into the action. Our most outstanding achievement in this action was our ability to direct the indignation of the Negro masses into the channel of class struggle.

## MARINE

*From Speech of a Leading Comrade of the Marine Workers Industrial Union*

**T**HE line of the Open Letter and the report of the Political Buro are to enable us to understand why we have not been able to establish a firm basis among the decisive sections of the proletariat and to indicate the steps which we have to take to overcome this gap.

We still have the fundamental task of establishing firm contact with the workers in the basic industries. What contact have we with the workers in the marine industry—one of the most important sections of the working class, one of the decisive industries in the struggle against war? Comrade Browder brought forward a correct estimation of our position in this industry. The Marine Workers Industrial Union is not a mass union nor has it led mass struggle. We have not consolidated our organization. There is still a large turn-over in the membership, but the recruiting of new members in most ports is more satisfactory than it has been for a period of three years. A national organization that is carrying on systematic work under the control of a national leadership has been developed. A relatively large cadre of forces, most of whom are young Americans, has been developed. A number of small struggles have been carried through on the ships

during recent months and the union has established contact with the longshoremen and is really beginning to carry on systematic work among them.

#### Must Change Methods of Work

Of equal importance is the struggle of the unemployed that the union has initiated. Mass struggles in our industry have not yet developed due both to subjective and objective reasons, but the recent struggles, the growth of the organization, the intensification of the activities of the reformists and renegade organizations, all indicate the growing mood for struggle among the masses. And even with the base that the Party now has, we have an extremely favorable opportunity for penetrating this decisive industry. The Party must be aroused to this possibility, this perspective of building and establishing a mass Marine Workers Industrial Union. Shortcomings, weaknesses and obstacles that have hindered the work must be overcome by the most energetic application of the line of the Open Letter and Comrade Browder's report.

Why have we not progressed more rapidly in the marine industry? The basic reasons, of course, are our methods of work, the slowness of the leadership in developing a struggle policy, our sectarianism, isolation from the workers in reformist organizations. Even where we are weakest, where little or no support is given to the work, mistakes in policy are responsible for unfavorable results. I emphasize this because there have been tendencies in our own ranks to fail to understand that the solution of our problems lies first in an improvement of our daily work and carrying through a correct policy.

#### Orientate Party toward Marine Industry

The fact that the work in our industry is largely separated from the general work of the Party is also a major factor; Party committees have little contact with the work, do not assume responsibility for work in the industry as a major task. The Party in seaport towns is not orientated or mobilized for the task.

What is the basis of this problem? I want to cite an example: We have had requests from Norfolk for the past six months for a longshore organizer. This section is new and especially weak. We sent an organizer down there—what did we find? We found a longshoreman who was a Party member, a capable agitator and fine speaker; one who has considerable influence among the longshoremen, who can be developed into an organizer. And all the time the section has been clamoring for forces to be sent in. How was this comrade used? While he was working on the docks, largely through his own initiative, he developed groups on a number of docks. But mainly because there was no guidance from the Party,

mistakes were made and a number of workers, including this comrade, were victimized and ousted. He was then drawn into what the section and he term "mass work," away from the waterfront—general activity, building the I.L.D., circulating petitions. He became completely isolated from the docks. The I.L.A. had a group which they were maneuvering with. This group didn't wait, but continued to grow and built its own dock committee. These unorganized workers struck for an increase in wages, and the Party didn't have anything to do with it, except beginning the work and then dropping it.

This is an extreme example, but generally true of all seaport towns. The conception is that some little section of the movement is responsible for the work and that it is not the major task of the Party as a whole to work in any decisive industry—marine, metal or coal, shop work to develop the economic struggles, whether marine or any other industry. The Open Letter is correct when it states there is a lack of political understanding of the necessity to strengthen our base among the decisive sections. Until we acquire this understanding and assume the responsibility of centering our major activities in the important industries, we can make no progress.

#### Bring Party Face to Waterfront

Recently there has been some improvement in connection with the work of the Marine Workers Industrial Union and the orientation of the Party as a whole. But there is not enough and not as much being done as can be done under the present situation. Much of the change has been formal and forced. It is reflected in reports, but not in actual work.

The problem of bringing the Party's face to the waterfront is a burning one. It will not be solved if the Party will appear only through the fraction in the union. It must appear through the fraction in the union, but also as a Party openly before the workers.

I believe that the line of the main report and the line of the Open Letter can insure our going ahead, if it is carried out. I say this conference will become an Extraordinary Conference, only if it does something extraordinary; if it goes over from words to deeds. And we must have guarantees that there is going to be a change. We must really for once get down to the heart of one of these open letters and remove some of the obstacles that prevent progress.

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*"It is idle chatter to talk about the revolutionizing of the working class by the Party unless the Party conquers a firm basis for itself among the miners, metal and steel workers, railroad workers, auto, marine and textile workers."*  
—from the Open Letter.

## HOW AND WHERE TO CONCENTRATE

*Excerpts from Speech of Charles Krumbein, N. Y. District Organizer*

**C**ONCENTRATION in connection with mass work is the beginning of the solution of our problems. Of course, we cannot underestimate the difficulties that we will have in breaking with our past methods. We can see from where we are entrenched in New York that we have never taken concentration seriously. We have worked hard, being everywhere and therefore generally being successful in gaining important fields, to the extent that we are successful on other fields that we do not concentrate on. That is a point which must be stressed.

Now in regard to concentration on the industries that are important: Marine first and foremost for New York City. New York City is the biggest port in the world. It is not only a question here of the number of workers in the industry; the political importance must be seen by us. And fighting the war danger does not mean for us only mass meetings. It means work in the basic industries that are so close to war, industries that will be decisive in war.

### Our Approach in the Past

What has been our approach in the past? We take a comrade, assign him to the waterfront and consider the problem solved. But the real problem is to break down the mechanical separation of Party and mass work, mobilizing the Party members on the waterfront so that we multiply the efforts of any specialist we send down.

Next, metal. Metal is very important for us. Although the comrades in the Metal Workers Industrial Union have done good work, they have not yet done any important concentration. For example, we had a comrade in Brooklyn where a section of this basic industry is located, and because of strikes in little shops here and there that came up we pulled him out, kept him out for four or five weeks, and by the time he returned those we had worked with had no further confidence in us. If we mean concentration seriously, then we must see that our comrades stay put.

### Concentrate on Transportation

Next on concentration for New York: railroad. On this we have done practically nothing, although the issues are there for us to mobilize the railroad workers.

Another point I think we should consider for concentration is city transport. Transport in all big cities plays a very important political role. I think it is a field that we must concentrate on. We have nothing there yet. In addition to concentrating on transport we can use the election campaign that we are now entering to put forward the proper issues, connecting the question of low fare, as it affects the workers generally, with the conditions of the transport workers.

Now I want to state that on the question of concentration the District leadership must set the pace. Each and every one of us on the staff must give his major attention to a point of concentration. I don't mean the whole industry; I mean picking out certain points of concentration within the industries. We must set the pace.

#### **We Must Guide the Sections**

Section leadership: we have got to give very serious consideration to this. What is the situation today in our district? Today we find a flow from the sections to the District—the section organizers come in, we take up problems with them, they go back to the section. This is not the way to develop section leadership. Systematically, regularly, we must go down to the section committee, take up their problems with them, so that the whole section leadership is developed, in place of bringing one comrade into the center and developing only him as a result. Furthermore, we must immediately review our entire leadership, our entire activity in the sections; see who is engaged in mass work and bring these comrades into the section leadership. On the other hand, some of the comrades now in the leadership must get into mass work, and this must be done simultaneously.

#### **Unemployed Members Responsible for Unemployed Work**

What do we find in the unemployed situation? I venture to say that the percentage of unemployed in the Party is greater, because of the victimization, etc., than it is in the mass as a whole, yet not over 10 percent of our unemployed comrades participate in unemployed work. Our unemployed comrades do not consider unemployed work as their main field of work. They are not working, they are off all day; the unemployed likewise are not working and are off all day. The opportunities are tremendous and we must see to it that every unemployed comrade has as his main task the unemployed work.

The same applies, of course, to other fields. We have a situation in the trade unions where less than 50 percent of our comrades participate in the fractions and less than 10 percent are active in the trade unions.



On the Election Campaign; I want to say that this campaign will be successful if we are successful in our unemployed work and in our concentration. Only to the extent that we broaden all our work, will we have a real broad election campaign.

### Build Daily in Election Campaign

I want to say a word about the Daily Worker. New York, of all districts, has the main responsibility to the Daily Worker. We must see to it that this question is seriously put in the foreground. We must see to it that the Daily Worker plays its role in every bit of work we do. During the election campaign we expect to have a Sunday edition, building it up to 100,000 each Sunday. The Daily Worker must be the organizer of struggle, and out of struggle we must build greater circulation.

On the question of the exposure of the bureaucracy in the A. F. of L. and the S. P., I want to say that to the extent that we do basic concentration work, to the extent that we develop our mass work, to the same extent will we win the A.F. of L. and S.P. workers to us and at the same time will we expose the fakers, because we expose their faces on the basis of the day-to-day struggles.

### Develop Political Life in Units

In closing I want to refer to the question of recruiting. To the extent we do mass work, to the extent we are conscious of the need of building the Party, to the extent that we concentrate on basic industry, will we be able to solve the problems of composition of the membership, of building shop nuclei—the building of our Party. Mass work means real political life in the units. Real political life in the units means interest to the workers we bring in, it means their development, it means working for results and it means keeping our Party members.

I want to conclude by saying that if we work out the correct solutions for our problems, we will go ahead by such leaps and bounds that even the most optimistic of us will be surprised.

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*On the question of recruiting and that twin question of Daily Worker circulation, these two things that are the very lifeblood of our whole movement, how many comrades take this question seriously? We must establish recruiting as a normal part of our Party life, so that every member of the Party constantly has two, three, four or five workers that he is in contact with, preparing them to become members of the Party, working on them systematically, talking with them, giving them literature, engaging them in discussion, developing them politically, bring them to the*

*Party, and himself personally taking them to the Party unit, adjusting them to Party life, becoming their guide in the very difficult task of becoming a Communist Party member.*

*These things, building the Party, recruiting new members, circulating the Daily Worker, these are the very essential elements of carrying through struggle. Before struggles, during struggles and after struggles, these things are the constant tasks of the Party. But we forget it. We divert all of our attention to things of second consequence and neglect this basic task. In this respect also we even forget the history of our Party. How many times has the Party celebrated the anniversary of its birth? It is one of the tests of conscious existence if a Party will remember its own birthday or not. Our Party forgets its birthday. Our Party has got a birthday coming next September, and we want to make this Party birthday a campaign of education of our Party members and broad circles of sympathizing workers in the history of our Party, the significance of our Party, as a means of Party recruiting and Party consolidation.*

—From Browder's Report at Conference.

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## BUILDING PARTY INTO MASS PROLETARIAN PARTY

**T**HE Open Letter of the Extraordinary Party Conference raises very sharply the problem of building the Party into a revolutionary party of the proletariat. It states that "in spite of the spread of the mass movements and, above all, in spite of the radicalization of the masses of workers, the Party has not developed into a revolutionary mass Party of the proletariat."

The influx of new elements into the Party during the past few years emphasizes the powerful attraction of the Party to the large masses of toilers. More than 35,000 workers joined the Party in the last three years.

During the past six months, our Party recruited 8,300 members. These workers joined as a result of the general activity of the Party, rather than through any special effort on the part of the Party membership. In proof of the above facts let us compare the figures of the last recruiting campaign (1932) with the recruiting during the first six months of this year.

During the 1932 three-month recruiting campaign, 6,300 workers were recruited into the Party, with a monthly average of 2,700 in the last two months of that period.

In the past six months of this year, the Party has had no special campaign, but led many successful strikes and struggles, yet reached only half the monthly average as compared with the 1932 campaign. We have not fully attained the realization that daily recruiting of the best element in struggles and activities is of vital importance.

As a crass example can be cited the Furriers Union. Under the leadership of the Party, after a victorious struggle, the Furriers Union has established itself as the only union in the industry, wiping out the reformist union and organizing 10,000 workers into its ranks. Yet, today, after more than one year's existence, the Party fraction numbers only 100.

### **Failure to Recruit During Strikes Weakens Proletarian Base**

In going over the figures of new recruits of 1933, it is seen that only a very insignificant number were recruited from those workers involved in strikes and struggles (Detroit auto strike, Penn. miners strike, shoe and textile, metal strikes, etc), with the bulk of the workers coming from the ranks of the unemployed.

In the Detroit strike, led by the revolutionary union, we did not pay sufficient attention to recruiting into the Party and to building and strengthening the factory nuclei. In the April strikes in Pittsburgh District, only a negligible number were drawn into the Party.

The same holds true in most of the struggles during this period, with the exception of the St. Louis nutpickers' strike, where, through conscious efforts of the section leadership of the Party, they succeeded in building a Party nucleus in almost every department of the factories, building the Y.C.L. also. The Party in St. Louis, in contrast to the other districts, knew how to boldly bring forward and emphasize the role of the Party in the course of the strike.

### **Central Tasks of 14th Plenum not Carried Through**

At the Fourteenth Plenum, the Party set itself, among others, the following task: the organization of a firm basis for our Party among the decisive strata of American workers in the most important industrial center.

Still the existing shop nuclei in the basic industry did not grow. Ninety percent of those who joined the Party were unemployed and a very small percentage of the employed workers came through direct activity in and around the factory. An analysis of the composition of the membership shows that only 3% of the members are steel workers, a little above 5% miners, not quite 3% automobile, only 1% marine, 1.3% railroad, .3% chemical; 28% of the employed members, or 7% of the entire Party membership, are working in mines and factories which employ 500 or more workers.

The tremendous fluctuation in the Party which in some concentration districts exceeded in the last period the 100% mark, took place mainly in the street nuclei. In the shop nuclei, even in those instances where we did not succeed in carrying on effective struggles, we did not lose members, but at the worst, remained stagnant, proving that organization at the point of production is more stable than on territorial basis. In the Chicago district, in spite of the unsatisfactory factory work in the past, the membership in the shop nuclei grew steadily while at the same time there was an 80% fluctuation of the membership, although militant mass unemployed struggles were carried through.

### **Extraordinary Conference Adopts Control Tasks to Carry Through Open Letter**

At the Extraordinary Party Conference, the task was set to root the Party in the decisive elements of the working class in the basic industries. Emphasis was again placed on the necessity of concentration and the Conference concretely laid down the plan for the next period. The five concentration districts, Chicago, Detroit, Cleveland, Pittsburgh and New York, were assigned the special task of concentrating on altogether about 50 factories in the steel, mining, railroad, marine, automobile, besides those specific industries and problems which the districts have (stockyard, Negro territory, etc.).

The Extraordinary Party Conference set the following control tasks:

1. To establish active Party units, drawing in the most advanced workers through personal work with them.
2. To build real mass trade union groups with functioning Party fractions in the sections.
3. To issue popular factory papers, or, for the beginning, factory bulletins.
4. To develop united front action, win the social-reformist workers and expose and fight reformism and social-fascist leaders.
5. To develop strong corps of proletarian cadres, experienced in mass work, and establish collective leadership of sections and tried secretaries in units, establish around the lower committees of the Party broad, active cadres which must be constantly instructed and utilized for the effective mobilization of the Party membership and for mass work; to draw active workers, members of the Party, from the factories into the leadership of the section committees.

### Build Party into Mass Proletarian Party

Every Party member, every leading committee, imbued with the central task of building the Party into a mass Party of the American proletariat, must exert all energies toward the carrying out of this task. The Open Letter states:

"A Communist Party, with a very weak and inadequately functioning organization in the big factories and among the decisive sections of the American industrial workers, a Communist Party whose entire agitation and propaganda, whose entire daily work, is not concentrated on winning over and mobilizing these workers and winning of the factories, a Communist Party which through its revolutionary trade union work, does not build highways to the broadest masses of workers, cannot lay claim to a policy capable of making it the leader of the working class within the shortest possible time."

—J. P.

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## PROBLEMS OF SHOP NUCLEI

*From Speech of Wm. Schneiderman, District Organizer  
of Minnesota*

I want to say a few words about one of the shop units where we have been doing some work and where, due to the fact that some concentration has been carried through, some results can be recorded, and that is the packing plant of South St. Paul. Here we assigned a comrade for work, and due to patient work over a period of months, more than a year, and the fact that this comrade had the idea that concentrating does not mean merely attending a unit meeting once a week, but participating in the activity seven days a week with the workers of that plant, he was able to build up a packing house union and organize 75 per cent of the workers in one plant and establish important contacts in a whole series of other plants in the stockyards of South St. Paul.

It would have been impossible for these comrades to make headway among these workers if they thought that building a union would mean developing only strike struggles. We at first had no conception of gaining partial demands except by striking. And this is especially important because the experiences in the 1922 packing house strike made the workers afraid of the disastrous results of a strike; they didn't believe a strike could be successful unless it was a general strike in all packing house plants.

### Union Built Through Struggle for Partial Demands

But when we started to tackle the problem of raising partial demands and fighting for them, showing the workers it is possible to win them without a strike, it was possible to make headway with the union. The bosses attempted to tax the workers in the plant with a community chest tax, and when the workers mobilized and sent a delegation to the boss, saying that they would refuse to pay the tax, they won this demand. This had a tremendous effect upon the workers, showing them that it is possible to win smaller demands without endangering their jobs, without necessarily going out on strike, and to build their union side by side with this.

After this, the confidence they gained with this victory made it possible to force the rehiring of a worker fired for union activity, and finally to force the withdrawal of a threatened wage cut.

But because of the fact that the district committee has not given sufficient leadership to our comrades there, we find the shop unit in South St. Paul at the present time functioning more or less as a trade union fraction, and not as a political unit, a Communist Party unit. They hardly take up any other question than the work in the shop, the union, etc., in no sense bringing forward political issues before the workers in the shop, but functioning merely along the narrow lines of a trade union fraction, within the Packing House Workers Industrial Union. This is one reason why we have not been able to build up the Party inside this plant and in the union more than we have, because of the fact that political questions were not brought before the workers, and because our comrades considered their task was taking up the union questions and nothing else.

### Must Give Daily Guidance to Shop Units

This was a comparatively good example of concentration as far as our comrades were concerned. In another shop unit, the railroad nucleus in Minneapolis, we had an experience where we assigned a leading comrade to work in the unit. His conception of concentration was to meet with the unit once a week, and the result was that after meeting with them once a week for a year, the unit has recruited one new member, has not grown, is not taking up the problems of the workers, because this comrade has this formal conception of approaching the workers in the shops.

In the———Mine, the Party and N.M.U. comrades mobilized the miners and defeated a wage cut. However, our union did not grow. Only 8-10 members among 150 miners. Our comrades did not know how to bring forward the union correctly. The result was that for a long time our comrades did not know why we were unable to recruit members for the union.

*Because in the Party, and particularly among the leading cadres, there is a deep going lack of political understanding of the necessity for strengthening our basis among the decisive sections of the American workers. From this follows the fact that the leadership of the Party has not adhered to a fixed course for overcoming the main weaknesses of the Party, allows itself to be driven by events, and does not work out carefully with the comrades of the lower organizations ways and means for the carrying through of resolutions and checking up on their execution. The result is that we talk about factory and trade union work in countless resolutions, without carrying this work out.*

—From Open Letter.

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## CHANGE METHODS OF WORK

*From Speech of J. Williams, Org Secretary of Chicago District*

**I**N the control tasks it says, "The building of the strong proletarian base of the Party in big enterprises in the main industrial centers of the country is the primary task of the whole Party." This is the central question here in relation to penetration of the shops, the building of our shop nuclei. It means, of course, that to attain this primary task we must develop and lead the economic struggles of the workers in these factories or industries we decide to concentrate upon; we must tie up all the political activities of every organization around this; we must build our unions.

### 400 Out of 3,000 in Shops

If we examine some of the reasons, in addition to the central reasons laid down in the Open Letter, why the concentration and penetration of the shops have not been carried through, we will find, for instance, in an examination of a registration of 3,000 Party members in the Chicago district at the beginning of the year, only a little over 400 were employed in any shop whatsoever. Now these 400 members who are in shops are our main instrument in carrying out the directives in the Open Letter. The Open Letter deals with the fact that only 5 per cent of our members are in shop nuclei. In the Chicago district, out of some 250 nuclei, only 30 are shop nuclei, comprising only 5 per cent of the membership.

I am in full agreement with the comrades who stated that in carrying out the directives of the Open Letter we must simplify our work, cut out a lot of our campaigns. When it is necessary to carry through certain major political campaigns, the directives must be of such a character that they apply to steel, to mining, to railroads—

the three main points of concentration in the Open Letter. This same practice which I refer to in the center is duplicated by the districts and in turn by the sections.

For instance, we had a situation in one section where a shoe strike of several hundred workers took place. Practically none of the leading comrades of the section in this territory was involved in the strike. Precisely because the leadership of that section was not actively involved in the strike, that leadership has very little authority with the workers in the shoe factory, and they actually do not take directives from the section leadership.

In an effort to improve this in the city of Chicago, we have tried to cut down the size of some of our sections. We have tried to build new sections around specific big plants, a stockyard section, a Western Electric section, a South Side section (which means Illinois Steel). All their work must of necessity be directed to the workers in that factory or mill, because that is all that they can find in that particular territory.

#### **Party Face Hidden in Shop Nucleus Work**

Another fact with reference to our shop nuclei. Because of our underestimation of the shop nuclei in the Chicago district we have a situation where the most elementary activity of the shop nucleus in bringing forward the face of the Party (through the shop bulletin, for example), is neglected. In our total of 30 shop nuclei, the highest number of regularly issued shop papers we ever have is ten.

Another point which needs to be emphasized is the role that the shop nucleus will play in guaranteeing our success in economic struggles. We must build the Party out of every one of these struggles. It must go hand in hand. In the St. Louis strike we recruited some 1,500 members in 12 shops for the union. And at the same time we organized six new shop nuclei. In the small shoes workers' strike in Chicago, in addition to building the union, we organized three new shop nuclei. But in the recently concluded Sopkins strike of 1,500 Negro girls in the Chicago South Side, we did not organize as yet a single Party shop nucleus and so far recruited only 18 Party members.

#### **Main Responsibility Lies with District**

Why is this so? Of course, the main general responsibility must be placed on us in the district. But it is interesting that while in the St. Louis strikes we had no old experienced forces, the leadership in the Sopkins strike included old union comrades, and it was precisely these old comrades and so-called experienced union comrades who resisted the building of the Party simultaneously with



the building of the union despite all our decisions. This is going to be a very great handicap in the consolidation of the Sopkins strike because now we go back with no recognition of our shop committees, no recognition of our union, although there were certain definite economic gains.

### **Must Be Ready to Lead Struggles in Steel Section**

I wish now to spend a few minutes on the steel industry. It is true, comrades, that the sentiment for organization in the steel industry today has definitely changed. This is reported not only by Party members but by non-Party members. While the Industrial Recovery Bill raises all kinds of illusions, at the same time the workers, even in the steel industry, where the company union is being carried through, feel a little more free to talk than they did previously, and we must be alert and alive to take advantage of this situation. When we examine the situation in the Calumet in Gary and Indiana Harbor, which are exclusively steel towns, we find that our leadership and our membership are very busy, but all of this busyness does not lead to a decisive change in penetrating the steel industry, in building the union, in building the Party.

We find in Indiana Harbor with some 50-60,000 people that our Party during the last election campaign held meetings with two and three thousand attending not only one meeting but many meetings. And in debates with the Republican Party, with the Liberty Party, with thousands present, our speakers got the greatest support and applause. The united front conference that was held around certain immediate burning issues of unemployment brought in a total of 119 organizations, of which only about 17 were under our control. And in this conference where a dispute took place as to our nominee for chairman being a Red and Communist, the Communist carried it. But in Indiana Harbor we have a Party membership of twenty.

### **Need a Revolution in Language Buros' Work**

One problem is of great importance in steel. That is the question of our language work. In my opinion when we talk concentration, we need a revolution in our national language buros. If there is any place where we are backward, it is there. Our comrades claim that they get two sets of directives, one from the Party committees stating "your main concentration is steel," and they get other directives from the National Language Buro, which gives them something a million miles away from steel. We must overcome this. Our language press, our language resources in steel or mining where the majority are foreign-born, are an absolute prerequisite to carry through successful work.

Question to Williamson: What methods were used in the Sopkins strike in the bringing of the Party before the workers?

Answer: The methods included the following: First, those Party members who had been drawn into active leadership in the course of the strike (there were some, including, for instance, a Negro comrade who was one of the section organizers of the South Side) should not be afraid in the course of their activity to announce quite openly to the workers that as well as being active strike leaders they are also Communists. The concrete help the Communist Party gave the strike in contrast to the activities of the other political parties as represented specifically by Oscar De Priest, who is the representative of the Republican Party and dominant in the South Side, is very great. Also, of course, the issuing of leaflets by the Party and explaining our position towards the strike, our position towards the union, etc.

## AUTO

*From Speech of John Schmies, District Organizer of Detroit*

**C**OMRADES, in the Open Letter there is one little point which in my opinion explains everything—why the tasks set for the Party at the Fourteenth Plenum have not been carried out. Here it says: “But these tasks have not been carried out. Why? Only 4% of the members are organized in factory nuclei”—and then it says that out of the 4% which in itself is a very small percentage—only a small percentage are organized in the shop nuclei in the basic factories.

In Detroit we felt that the Fourteenth Plenum Resolution means everything it says as far as our district is concerned, that basically there was no change.

We began to discuss the situation and in connection with this some of us had the opportunity to read an article of Piatnitsky in which he described in detail the activities of a factory cell in the Bolshevik Party before the revolution. And he developed this idea, how it is possible that one Party member can begin to organize around himself a group of other workers, and, Piatnitsky goes on to say, he doesn't even have to say he is a Party member; he doesn't even have to say he is a union member, but in some cases he might even say he heard, somebody informed him, of reading a story of how workers improved their conditions in the other plant or department. And Comrade Piatnitsky explains how due to such an elementary approach of trying to explain or to ask the worker if he heard certain things in relation with the department or shop, it is possible to discuss

the problem in the particular department, too. So, by making contact with a friend, with whatever means they, as Party members, had, they succeeded in organizing a department strike and made out of this department strike a general strike in the factory. They were even able to create a strike wave in one city, which resulted in many cases in developing a general strike in the city. The militancy of the workers was directed into street demonstrations, thereby immediately connecting up the political struggle with the very elementary economic struggle that started in that particular department.

### **Detroit Strikes—Direct Result of Shop Work**

How did we organize the strike in Detroit? In one case we had one comrade in a department. Now this one comrade couldn't organize the department. He had to make a contact first and he had to find some workers who were willing to fight for better conditions. So we have the experience that through one comrade we succeeded in organizing shop groups and later on the struggle was developed. And then we had the experience where we had 3, 4, and 5 comrades whom we organized into a nucleus and then the problems of the shop were taken up.

The building of shop nuclei, recruiting members into the Party, will be a tremendous political factor in breaking down the idea that the Communists or revolutionary unions work from the "outside." If our nucleus gains the leadership of this movement and if this Communist nucleus explains the role of the Party, and of the unions, the workers in that factory will not look at the Party and the union as outsiders.

Wherever we made an attempt and succeeded in organizing two or three Party nuclei, we have the union to a certain extent established, and where we have more or less a strong nucleus as the result of the strike, we have a situation where the workers themselves under the auspices of the union have issued two leaflets, one against the New Deal, and one against the A. F. of L. There we can see the initiative from below.

### **Cannot Do Real Shop Work Without Party**

The next question: did we assign what we call concentration groups from the outside, or did we first see what we have in the factory and begin to concentrate on the forces in the factory? We merely assigned, as far as outside forces are concerned, leading comrades to some of the shops.

In addition, of course, we mobilized the sections around these two concentration points and here I may add is where the biggest mistake was made in the sense that, for instance, the section organizer and the active members in the Section Committee got so interest-

ed in these organizing groups that they forgot all about calling the Section Party Committee together or taking care of the section. In fact the section organizer did finally call a section membership meeting together after pressure, but he was absent. He said he had to meet three workers in the restaurant at 10 o'clock in the evening. This is excellent. But to this we must add the question of how is it possible for this section organizer and how it is possible for us to direct and help him so that these 5 workers will be taken care of in such a way that all members in this particular section have as their task to get 3 or 5 workers together.

### Lack of Faith in Local Leadership Greatest Mistake

One more point is very important for us.

The strike developed in one of the B—— plants, and then in another plant. So we rushed over to the other plant and settled this very fast. And while we were doing this, another strike broke out, and we rushed over there. By the time we were through we were at the head of all this movement, but finally we looked around and we couldn't see anybody around us.

What is the lesson? Why didn't we organize a group of comrades in the first strike? Why didn't we make them the leaders and say to the section: here is your new group, here is where you have to work—and distribute the forces on the other strike. We did not lack forces; these new Party comrades who organized the first and second strikes, why didn't we make them leaders of this movement—that is the real Bolshevik criticism. They started the strike, and we forgot all about them; they were the real leaders of this strike. We led all these strikes and were responsible for organizing them, but we did not create anything in the center that would keep around us these hundreds and thousands of workers.

If we can settle down and continue this Bolshevik point of concentration, organize the Party, organize the fractions in the union, have these workers that can control the situation, make them feel we believe in them, have confidence in them, and are with them every day, then the Party will grow.

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## BUILDING PARTY DURING STRIKES

*From Speech of a Leading Comrade of Auto Workers Union*

**WE** have just had a convention of the Auto Workers Union where 110 delegates were present, half of whom actually represented workers from the shops. The big majority of these delegates had had strike experiences this year. Many of them had

initiated the organization of little groups in the shops that preceded these strikes. The number of workers represented was in the neighborhood of 45,000.

We have to record the fact that we were not able to keep all who came into the union during and as a result of the strikes. Also at the convention there were very few Negro workers and practically no women from the shops. The main reason, of course, is the fact that we failed to carry on the day-to-day struggles that were necessary after the strike was over, especially in behalf of the laid-off workers.

It was mainly because of the fact that we failed to develop struggle in defense of the leading elements in the union that a dwindling of the membership took place. And probably the most important fact is our failure to build up shop nuclei in these factories to get in members in the Party during the strike. This resulted in weakening our resistance to the company agents, to the elements that are utilizing the red scare. After the strike it became almost impossible to combat the various schemes to sow dissension in the union without a strong nucleus of the Party.

### Our Clumsy Methods Antagonize Workers

It is not true that workers have got any antagonisms towards the "reds." It is more often because of our clumsy methods in carrying on work, in carrying out some of the program, that we antagonize workers—methods that make it seem to non-Party workers that we take an attitude that we are the Communists, that the union is ours, and that we can do anything we want with it.

At the convention there were quite a few instances brought up where we had carried on the day-to-day struggles, and in such shops we maintained the organization more or less.

In the—plant we carried on a few struggles after the strike and one struggle resulted in increase in the wages of the workers.

Another struggle in which we had a united front with the—union, resulted in an increase of from 52 to 90 cents an hour.

At the convention there was a delegate from the—who reported a struggle in that plant which involved the stopping of work of several hundred workers who remained in the plant until a 10 percent increase was granted.

However, we have only a few instances which demonstrate our ability to carry on the every-day struggles against victimization, against lay-offs, for unemployment relief which is the cause of quite a number of members leaving the organization.

### **Failure to Hold Union Meetings During Strike Fatal Mistake**

During the strikes, I have to report the fact that in the— plant, for instance, where we had a struggle against the company agents, we had a local even before the strike took place. But during the strike itself, we forgot even to call this local together, which meant, of course, that our enemies were organized while we were not. They carried on every-day activities among the workers. And we were trying to fight against them from the top. We did not even try to call together the Party members employed in the plant. This, of course, is one of the main reasons for the committing of a number of mistakes in the plant.

### **Must Find Methods to Protect Employed Workers**

One year ago, we had a group of some fifty workers in the— plant. This group was disrupted, the majority of the workers were fired and suspicion was laid against a certain individual. At the beginning of the year we began to reorganize once more. The group was disrupted, about a dozen comrades were fired out of the plant, and suspicion is against the same individual. Just before I left Detroit, several comrades came to me, feeling that they were getting absolutely no direction in carrying out work in their shop nucleus, feeling they do not dare inform the leading comrades when they get a job in the shop.

I think it is about high time we began to examine this work more carefully and find out whether or not we are using the best methods to protect the workers employed. To show the spirit of the workers, since that time we have organized three different groups in the—plant. This time we are not putting them all together, and we are trying to make connections between these groups not by bringing them together in one local, but through a system of representatives from each of the departments.

### **Leading Bodies Must Help Members of Shop Units**

We assume in carrying on the work in the shops that every comrade is born with the knowledge of how to carry on the work. This is not so. Some comrades have the ability of attracting the workers around them, of really being leaders inside the shops. Other comrades, even though sincere, antagonize the workers because they are in the habit of telling the workers they are wrong every time they make a statement. Some comrades even make themselves a pest. When the workers call them a Bolshevik, instead of the term meaning a militant worker, it has the meaning of someone who makes himself a nuisance.

It is about time that the District and National leadership began to take up some of these problems of carrying on the work in the shop. I find that a good beginning is often made in the shop work and then some of the key comrades are taken out to prepare for a demonstration. These comrades are taken out and the beginning is left to go to the dogs. Comrades assigned to shop work should be allowed to concentrate all their attention on this work, and even when a demonstration is being arranged, and this comrade can bring ten workers or so to the demonstration from that shop, he is doing a big part of the work. If we take this attitude, maybe the demonstration will be less, but I am inclined to think they will be bigger and better demonstrations because they will actually involve workers in the shops. I think the demonstration such as the comrades had in the——plant is a very important demonstration. Proper activity of the shop nuclei can raise such demonstrations to a higher political level.

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## WAR INDUSTRIES

*Talk about the defense of the Soviet Union and struggle against imperialist war is nothing but empty phrases unless systematic work is carried out in the war industry plants and in the ports.—From the Open Letter.*

*From Speech of Leading Shop Nucleus Member*

I come from a nucleus situated in the New York district. In order for the comrades to understand some of the problems which I raise in connection with this shop it is necessary that they understand the type of shop. Three thousand eight hundred workers work in the shop, among them one hundred young fellows—apprentices. This plant produces only war materials.

There are twenty-one trades in this shop and ten locals of the American Federation of Labor in the plant, among them machinists, sheet metal, plumbers, and other numerous locals of the A.F. of L. of this type. We have a shop nucleus of five comrades. All of them are young comrades, members of the Y.C.L. We also have an opposition group in the machinist local and an apprentice association. This apprentice association has a history which I will try to give in brief.

### Hold Shop Meeting during Work

Some fellows in this shop decided that in order to get their conditions bettered they were going to form an organization. When the officials heard of this, they called a special meeting of the entire

group of one hundred young fellows during working hours. For about four hours they tried to get this group of apprentices into an organization that would visit other shops of similar nature and while visiting these shops look over the methods of production, and so make better mechanics out of the apprentices. The response of the apprentices to this proposal was: "We are not interested in visiting these other plants, we are interested in having an organization and getting something for ourselves."

With the help of the comrades inside the shop we finally built an organization that says definitely in the constitution that its main purpose is to better the conditions of the apprentices. Through our work and by getting very friendly with these fellows we managed to elect one of our comrades as secretary and another comrade as shop delegate of this organization. We had a system of shop delegates from each shop represented in a central organization which has three or four officers.

### Organize Against Wage Reduction

The first act of this organization was in connection with a fifteen percent wage cut which came through the plant at the same time that the automatic raises of the apprentices were taken away. The apprentices are given raises every year and at the end of four years they are supposed to be made mechanics and get mechanic's pay. Among these apprentices there were many who had finished their four years' apprenticeship and were still working as apprentices.

We drew up a petition and most of the apprentices signed it. In this petition we stated that we oppose this fifteen percent cut, especially with the low wages which these young workers were getting. At the same time we pointed out that not making these apprentices full-fledged mechanics also affected the standard of the mechanics.

The second act of this organization was to organize a paper to deal with the conditions of the fellows in the plant, to be distributed to them inside the plant, to the adult workers, and also outside the plant, in order to mobilize popular opinion.

### We Carry Activities to Other Plants

Third, we decided to gain more strength. Throughout the country there are other plants of this nature which also have apprentices. We decided that we were going to build a national association of apprentices. So we began to send letters to different shops of the same type. To date we have received answers from many shops throughout the country and probably within the year we will have started this national association.



Let me point out how we were able to do some of these things. First of all, we could not have done anything without the nucleus inside the organization, working at every meeting and actually acting as the leader of the organization.

We had a peculiar problem in the shop—there are 3,700 adult workers and 100 youths. Our entire force of comrades were among the youth, not the main section of these workers, so we had the problem of penetrating the ranks of the adult workers in the A.F. of L.; any struggle inside the shop would not be among the apprentices, but would take the form of a struggle among the adults.

### We Have to Deal with Delicate Questions

Since we had to get to these mechanics, we came up against the following problem: Although more developed politically than the average worker because of long experience in the A.F. of L. and labor movement—many of them so far back as the eight hour day strike in 1918—these workers depend upon building these war materials for their livelihood. It was necessary for us to deal with some very delicate questions.

First, we had to explain our proposal in connection with all war funds to the unemployed; second, defense of the Soviet Union; third, the question of what they can do. We decided to issue six leaflets through the shop, dealing with all these questions, pointing out in detail what this shop was producing, and how these workers, although unconsciously, were helping to prepare for a new world war. With these six leaflets, we expect to clarify the workers to some extent on some of the basic questions.

Second, we had to penetrate the A.F. of L. We started in the strongest local, where we had sympathetic workers, and organized a group consisting of fifteen members of the machinist local. We had meetings with them and discussed the problems inside the A.F. of L. local and how to fight for certain proposals against the officials.

### We Make Mistakes—Fail to Build Y.C.L.

We have made some mistakes: first, and most serious, all our League members were in the League before they got into the shop. We haven't recruited a single League member. Among these apprentices we have some valuable contacts, we have fellows who could do systematic work and whom we should draw in; we have not done it. We haven't penetrated the A.F. of L. to any extent. Our work in connection with the one local has fallen down, there is no work being done at the present time.

Second, the question of safeguarding *members*. We drew up a

letter to a nucleus in the Soviet Union that works in the same type of plant we have. We drew up the letter and sent it to the comrade in charge of International Correspondence and *this letter, in its entirety, dealing with where we had our organization, where all of us were concerned, what our tasks were, everything was printed in the Daily Worker—the entire thing*, and the next day in the apprentice school in this shop the teacher delivered a lecture for an hour and a half on the question of our work in the shop. To this date, none of us has been fired out of the shop, but whether this is because we aren't troubling them or whether they don't know of us, I can't say. But certainly we have to develop much better methods of safeguarding our members inside of these nuclei.

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## WORK AMONG GOVERNMENT EMPLOYEES

*From Speech by Leading Member of Shop Nucleus*

**A**BOUT a year ago there were three comrades in my shop; we are government employees. There were practically no militant rank and file workers nor any mass organization. Just about a year ago, the workers in my place got a wage cut. Immediately a few workers got out a petition against the cut. In the process of fighting against the cut we built up a rank and file organization, and today we have 1,800 or 2,000 workers in that particular organization.

The work of this group of new comrades was good. They started out by building committees. Our industry is so situated that we had to recruit workers and today in this particular craft we have influence and control of the 15,000-23,000 workers all told. During this time we were doing recruiting and we have today 23 comrades. In the process of working in this mass organization and in the shop we realized that the only way we could carry out the Party line and build the organization, was to build T.U.U.L. groups, that is, not actually having T.U.U.L. books. We built up informal groups. The fellows got together, held discussions and fought as the left wing in the organization and on the job.

### Organize Shop Committees and Groups

Our young comrades had to find a method of work that would enable us to bring these workers into the organization. Being government employees, these workers had many illusions. They

believed they could not strike, etc. Under great hardships we were able to organize on the basis of shop committees and shop groups in every department.

I think it is the first time in the history of this particular trade where the workers actually went out in a demonstration. This first demonstration is the beginning of a movement that will grow throughout the entire country. We have gotten out a magazine that today has a circulation of 5,000. We have also gotten out pamphlets attacking the wage cuts.

In the shop there are many trade unions, quite a few of them built on craft lines. Some of them are affiliated with the A. F. of L. The A.F. of L. has little or no influence in the shop although getting dues from 30 per cent of them. The workers belong not because it's a union that does something for them but because of the sick and death benefits. These workers are beginning to demand something concrete. They demand action.

#### **Work towards Establishment of Industrial Union**

The workers are looking to our young rank and file organization and soon it will be possible to convert it into an industrial union, taking in all crafts and start working among all of them. We have been able to talk to the workers in the other trades in this particular shop and show them that they must organize. They asked us to come in and organize them. We told them this was not the way. We told them, "you yourselves must form your committees, get out petitions and get into struggle. We will work with you, help you and will actually take leadership whenever necessary, but we cannot build your organization for you."

#### **No Fluctuation in Shop Recruitment**

In the beginning we were able to recruit the comrades very slowly. One or two comrades got in one or two others. We began building little groups and recruiting them into the left opposition groups and directly into the Party, and today we have 23 comrades. These 23 are rapidly recruiting others, at the rate of one and two a week. We have had no fluctuation at all. Since the very beginning we have had only one comrade transferred and that was because he left the place of work. The others have remained in the Party and have been developed. They are only four, six and eight months in the Party and today they are the leaders in the mass organizations and carry on Party work.

## VETERANS' MOVEMENT

*The Party is now faced with the task of organizing the united struggle of the American workers and all toiling masses for their vital immediate demands. This includes the organization of the struggle against the reduction of veterans' disability allowances and for the payment of the bonus.—From the Open Letter.*

*Excerpts from Speech of James W. Ford, Member of Polburo Communist Party of U.S.A.*

**T**HE PolBuro of the Party has seen it necessary to put on the agenda of this Conference the question of the veterans.

I want here to emphasize the need for a political understanding of the necessity of strengthening our base among the veterans, the various veteran organizations and also to build the W. E. S. L.

What is the significance and importance of the veterans' movement and the work among the veterans in this country? (1) Everybody knows and has seen that the movement was more or less but not altogether spontaneous. It has been a broad movement of a nation-wide character of great sections of the American population, workers, poor farmers, etc. (2) This movement can be seen as an instrument for fascist development against the working class. The bourgeoisie quite well understands the possibility of utilizing this movement against the working class, and herein lies the importance of work among the vets.

On the other hand the lessons of this movement are that with the bankruptcy of the Roosevelt Recovery Act, the bourgeoisie will attempt to utilize this movement as a fascist movement against the workers. We are in a favorable position today not only to *prevent* the use of this movement as a fascist movement against the working class but to *get support of the movement for the working class.*

What is this movement? It is composed of advanced elements of the working class, backward workers, clerks, doctors, lawyers, a whole cross section of the population, including both Negro and white. In this movement also are a number of Spanish-American War and Foreign War Veterans. Some comrades view these veterans as "fascists."

### Wrong to Brand Veterans as Fascists

But, comrades, I think this is incorrect, as many comrades do, to view this movement as a whole as a fascist movement. Certainly we have found in the course of this movement in 1932 and also this year that there are fascist leaders, agents of the government

in the movement, but to characterize this whole movement as a fascist movement and therefore to ignore it, is incorrect.

Comrade Browder has pointed out the cut in the disability allowance. There was a cut in the soldier's pay, the establishment of forced labor camps.

Comrade Browder also pointed out that it is the same with the Roosevelt administration as with the Hoover administration, but Roosevelt dealt more deceitfully with the veterans.

Now with regards to the question of the returning of the disability allowance. We want to establish here the idea that the disability allowance of the ex-servicemen is a form of *social insurance* for the veterans. On this we will be able to have an idea of the changes on the whole question of Social and Unemployment Insurance.

#### Develop Anti-War Activities through Vets

Another question is the question of the anti-war activity which can be developed—anti-war sentiment and struggles among ex-soldiers who fought for the government. The most important thing I want to emphasize is the question of what can be done. How can we guarantee that every District Organizer, every Party comrade will develop and organize the movement among the ex-servicemen?

We have laid down a program for developing local struggles around the local relief stations. To develop the movements of the veterans in the neighborhoods for local relief, around veterans' bureaus, in every city, around state legislatures, in the congressional centers of the congressmen who are in Washington, for the enforcement of legislation which has been passed in many states for relief to the veterans.

The New York State legislature, for example, has passed special laws for relief to the veterans which are not being enforced for the benefit of the veterans. We must develop a broad united front movement to break into the American Legion, into the Spanish-American War Veterans organization and to build up a united front of all these veterans in the neighborhoods and locals to struggle for local relief.

#### Build Rank and File Movement around Demands

In my opinion these points are: 1. Local relief. 2. Special relief to the veterans. 3. Fight against discrimination in any of the relief stations where veterans are discriminated against. 4. Special medical attention and aid to the veterans in various hospitals. This can only be done by day-to-day systematic work. Here I want to draw attention to the methods of work shown in the report made here by the

young girl comrade yesterday, how she analyzed the day-to-day work done in the dress factory. We will be able, if we apply this to the veterans' movement to go into the posts of the American Legion and by patient day-to-day work win them for struggle and unity.

Build up *central rank and file committees* on the basis of a fight for the demands that I outlined. We should be able to establish for the most important districts in the Party a quota that they shall get in direct contact with a certain number of veterans, say 100-200 veterans and to continue to work upon these contacts. Districts like New York, Chicago and Detroit should see that the comrades establish such quotas.

### Party Concentration Lays Basis for N.T.W.I.U. Lead in Strike

I want to take up another question, the question with regard to strike struggles, especially the struggles in St. Louis and Chicago. Here we have a concrete example of how we can by systematic work develop strike struggle. Comrade Gebert has spoken about the St. Louis strike of Negro women. In Chicago they have shown us how to concentrate, they began a year ago. Through activities of women's work in South Side section, Negro women workers were contacted. The contacts were given to the Needle Trades Workers Industrial Union and the Union began to organize these. They took them out on strike and these strikes are in my opinion two of the most important, two of the most historic strikes that have occurred among Negroes.

I shall not have the time to go into the details of how the strike committee worked, how they organized their fight, how we were able to get the whole sentiment of Chicago in spite of the police and the employers. We were able to get support among the churches. We can learn from Chicago how to develop the trade union organization among the Negroes. I think these strikes are important lessons for Harlem.

I want to agree with how the Open Letter characterizes the importance of the Negro work. It says: "The other important ally of the American proletariat is to be found in the masses of Negroes in the struggle against national oppression." The Communist Party is the only Party that can lead this struggle of the Negro masses. In Harlem I believe we have great possibilities for developing this movement among the Negroes, and I believe the St. Louis and Chicago strikes show us how, on the basis of developing economic struggles of the Negroes we can find and develop the Negro cadres for such a movement.

### Negro Comrades Must Secure Confidence of Negro Masses for Our Party

We must understand what the Letter says: "The Party, and in the first place the Negro comrades, must genuinely improve the methods of patient, systematic but persistent struggle against the ideology and influences of petty bourgeois nationalism among the Negro workers." This makes it the first duty of the Negro comrades to create confidence among the Negro masses in the Party and the Central Committee and the Polburo. I do not think there is sufficient of this work done by the leading Negro comrades now.

Comrade Kuusinen once said that it is the task of the white comrades to fight every remnant of white chauvinism and on the other hand the task of every Negro comrade to gain the confidence of the Negro masses for our Party and not to destroy it, and this is in line with fighting Negro nationalist bourgeois ideology.

I want to further agree with the remarks made by Comrade Browder, and Heywood will further emphasize this, that the L.S.N.R. must be built and such an organization is needed for the development of the liberation struggle, and I think this Conference should take some definite action on the L.S.N.R. and how we can bring this Open Letter into the struggle of the veterans, into the Negro liberation movement.

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### PENETRATE ARMED FORCES

*From Speech by Leading Comrade of Workers  
Ex-Servicemen's League*

**O**N the question of the struggle for relief and unemployment insurance, five million of the population, the veterans, which represent according to the figures of the bourgeoisie ten per cent of the electorate—with their families twenty per cent—citizens, the native sections of America today, have lost their social insurance. This has been taken from them directly by the government in the New Deal. The Economy Bill changed the entire policy on Veteran Pensions. That has not moved us a bit in the past year. In spite of the fact that the Party has had a line and orientation, the documents have pointed out that these things are happening.

Let me give a few examples of concrete work, examples of coordination of work of the Ex-Servicemen's League with some of our major tasks. In the trade unions, say in the A. F. of L., the "Big Six" (Printing Trade) Post of the Veterans of Foreign Wars

sent a protest against the use of troops against the veterans. In every one of the unions there are sections of the American Legion, of the Veterans of Foreign Wars. Comrades, on the question of the Veterans Relief, on the question of their back pay—the bonus—certainly we can easily bring these questions up in these unions.

### Through Vets' Movement Can Penetrate Armed Forces

I could give details on the struggle against war, the co-ordinating of this so that we will reach the armed forces. And when I say veterans I don't mean only those who went to war. We have to make a change in the leadership in the Veterans' movement. We must put forward the World War veterans, but remember the peacetime veterans. They get a certain insurance also, and these are some of the best contacts, fresh from the armed forces to make contact with the men in the armed forces today.

Right here in New York City, after sending veterans to Washington, the United Front Committee, a group led by the Socialist Party, split the ranks of the veterans led by the renegades against the Party. Within a few weeks' time the rank and file of the veterans repudiated those methods and those active in the leadership of it are the ones now active in repudiating the S.P., are exposing their making this attempt and trying to bribe them.

### Sectarianism in Veterans' Movement

In the Ex-Servicemen's League, the veterans feel that unless they have a red card of some kind they can't join the Workers' Ex-Servicemen's League. A narrow, sectarian tendency that reflects our sectarian tendency throughout the entire Party. That must be seriously and sharply stopped. And we will be able to carry it out only if we study this problem.

The mass pressure of the veterans today has turned away the fight from bourgeois control and we are able on our three-point program to bring the question closer to the unemployed and with the farmer. This kind of a movement has been started; unity of veterans with the general mass struggles. We must carry out the line of the Open Letter for winning over large sections of native American elements. Building up of the veteran movement and its proper co-ordination with our basic tasks will be one of the methods to carry out the intent of the Open Letter.



## TEXTILE

*Excerpts from Speech of Leading Comrade in Trade Union Work*

**A**BOUT the Salem strike. What is the importance of this one strike of some 1800 workers, organized one hundred percent in the U.T.W.? First, this has become a strike against the Recovery Act. It shows—recovery bill or no recovery bill—the workers will fight for improved conditions. Secondly, it shows that even where the A.F. of L. has its best organization the workers will fight and will follow our leadership if we know how to get to them.

There is one example of how to carry on a correct policy in such a difficult situation. How did our comrades get into the Salem strike? We had no one there, no Party or T.U.U.L. member. Our organizer, Comrade ———, went down there. She found the workers were willing to fight. The workers elected their own committee, did not trust the officials who came out against the strike. The comrade did not come down there denouncing everybody and just say: join our union, something which we did in the past but with no success. The comrade began to talk to individual workers, began to get acquainted with some of the members of the Strike Committee, did not denounce these workers as misleaders but tried to find out who they were. She began to give them concrete advice and won their confidence by showing them how to defeat a plan of the company and the A.F. of L. to drive the workers back to work and to victimize them by making them vote with marked ballots. Our comrade gained a lot of prestige among the workers through helping them with the relief machinery, by giving them concrete assistance to win their economic demands.

I think, comrades, this strike is a great lesson to us, the militancy of the workers, the confidence in their own Party, the ability to get the workers to follow our class-struggle policy. (Since that time the strikers won their demands and unanimously seceded from the A.F. of L.,—organizing an independent union, the Textile Workers Union, by carrying through the above correct policy and by leading textile workers in strikes the Slavery Code—recruited over 1,500 members in the Union in the last month.)

## CORRECT PAST METHODS OF WORK

*From Speech of A. Davis, Org Secretary of Philadelphia District*

**C**OMRADES, just a few words on our concentration in Allentown. In the Open Letter the situation in Allentown is given as an example of the wrong method of work. In the struggle of 1931 we were successful in discrediting the United Textile Workers Union in Allentown. But when the strike was over, we packed our bags and cleared out of the city of Allentown. The workers did not see us for two years, until the Amalgamated entered Allentown and began leading strikes in the shirt shops. The girls were working for \$4 a week. They settled the strike, gaining a 10 per cent increase. But actually the gain didn't amount to anything, since they had to pay 25 cents dues to the union every week.

### **We Concentrate in Allentown**

Our comrades began to react to the problem. We sent comrades in and began concentration in Allentown. What happened? The U.T.W. decided to call a meeting. We discussed the problem and we felt that it was necessary for us to take the initiative. With hard work we succeeded in having the best meeting of silk workers held in Allentown since 1931. The meeting was called by the National Textile Union and there were about 200 workers present representing 17 shops. We proposed to the workers the organization of mutual committees on the basis of a united front of National Textile Workers and U.T.W. members.

On the basis of this conference we decided to begin immediately a campaign of struggle in some of the mills in Allentown. The bosses, feeling the growth of our organization, began a system of voluntary raises of 10 and 15 percent to the workers. We decided to concentrate on one mill where conditions were especially bad, where there were no clocks to measure the amount of silk produced and workers' wages were stolen doubly. In a period of a week one of the mills in that city went on strike and in this strike a worker who had come in contact with our movement through listening to speeches at Union Square, etc., became a leader of the strike.

### **Workers Want Independent Union**

Our comrades began to speak about organizing revolutionary unions and bringing forward the N.T.W.U. What was the reaction of the workers? They felt that the N.T.W.U. was a militant union, an honest union, but were not convinced that it could win better conditions for them; the workers felt that if they developed their own independent union among the Allentown silk workers they could win better conditions.

It is my opinion that we must bring forward before these workers our revolutionary trade unions and the need for building these unions. At the same time, however, we must not make a fetish of this. If the workers insist upon organizing an independent union on a mass scale, in which we can provide leadership and do active work, I do not think we can place the question of the name of the union against mass organization of the workers. At the same time it is important for us to bring forward our own revolutionary unions and urge workers to join, particularly because there is a tendency in many sections, due to the Industrial Recovery Bill, to negate the role of the revolutionary trade union and to take short cuts to independent unions.

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### CONCENTRATION IN LAWRENCE

*From Speech of a Leading Member of National Textile Workers Union*

**I**N Lawrence, which is the concentration point for the textile industry, we have seen the correction of one mistake, that of shifting around the leadership and have had continuous leadership for one year. The Open Letter nevertheless applies to us with full force.

The National Textile Workers Union has mass influence in Lawrence and the Party is known to the workers, as a result particularly of the effective campaign we conducted against night work for women. Both the union and the Party have led and conducted small struggles for unemployed relief. For more than a year now the workers of Lawrence have seen a N.T.W.U. on the job continuously and appreciate the fact that it is the only organization in the field fighting for their interests.

There are many reasons for this but the basic one is to be found in the fact that we have not yet succeeded in convincing the workers that the union is not an organization that you join only when you go on strike. Having suffered defeat in the 1931 strike the workers are very reluctant at present to join the union.

This of course is due in large measure to our mistakes in the past. But we have learned. For instance, during the strike wave that spread in the textile centers a few weeks ago and especially following the strike in the Amoskeag Mill in Manchester there was a very definite strike sentiment in Lawrence. The mill owners sensed it perhaps better than we did. They are in the mills with the workers day in and day out and often know the moods of the workers better than we do. The result was that they announced a 12½ percent

wage increase the very week that we were preparing for an intensive campaign to stimulate a struggle in Lawrence.

We did not make the mistake we might have made in the past; namely, to denounce this increase as nothing at all and calling upon the workers to strike for more. We decided instead to test out the reaction of the workers and found they were not ready to strike for a greater increase.

We called a mass meeting for which we carried out a very good preparation. Utilizing the strikes in the nearby New England centers we invited the workers and announced that strikers from the Amoskeag, Dover and Salem strikes would report. Nevertheless, although we did not talk about the strike in Lawrence in our leaflets or preparations for the meeting, only 50 workers turned out. This was our answer. The workers understood the significance of the meeting. Their answer showed they were not in a strike mood.

#### Workers Ready to Fight for Partial Demands

Analyzing this we might have drawn the conclusion that this indicated a no-struggle perspective. This would have been a mistake for in that very week numerous department struggles were carried out by the workers on department grievances, such as demand for lunch periods, no overtime, against speed-up, etc. This gave us our line. We have to find a way to convince the workers of our sincerity and ability to protect their jobs while winning immediate improvements. We hammered out a system for providing leadership through department leaflets. In one mill, the Arlington, which was a particularly backward mill during the October strike, we succeeded in this manner in winning a lunch period and stopping overtime for from 400 to 1,000 workers, which is something to the credit of the union and of great benefit to the workers. Our leaflets were simple.

For instance, where the company tried to steal the lunch hour which the workers had won about a month earlier with our help, we called upon them: *when lunch time comes walk out as usual, no arguments necessary, everybody will do it.* The leaflet reached all the workers in the department. They were filled with confidence and actually walked out as we had directed. When the management called for the leaders, a representative committee, they were told there aren't any. When the superintendent attempted to intimidate some workers by demanding to know why they had stopped the workers answered: "Everybody stopped, so I did too." The demand was won and no one was fired.

This is our work: to win one small department struggle after another for the workers without their resulting in discrimination so that they can learn from actual experience what the union stands for.

## MUST CONCENTRATE ON BASIC SHOPS

*From Speech of Rebecca Grecht, District Organizer of New Jersey*

ON page 4 of the Open Letter it is stated, first, that there is a deep-going lack of political understanding of the necessity of strengthening ourselves among the decisive sections of the American masses, and then it says, "From this follows the fact that the leadership of the Party has not adhered to a fixed course for overcoming the main weaknesses of the Party and allows itself to be swayed by the drift of events." This is the very heart and crux of our failure to do concentration work. We do not follow a fixed course. When we decide on a specific factory concentration, on a specific neighborhood concentration, we find in the midst of it that a hundred and one other things arise that for the moment appear more important.

We have far too much the tendency to look for the spectacular, to look for the big things, the things that can produce immediate results, and not to base ourselves sufficiently on that kind of day-to-day, concentrated activity which brings fundamental results, even though these are not so quickly apparent.

I know how it has been in District 14. We have had in our experience precisely this—that had we followed a fixed course in concentration work without permitting ourselves to be moved by every current happening, and events that arose, we would today be able to report far many more strikes, far many more new nuclei in shops of basic industry.

In the last six or seven months, there have been in the Paterson section at least 30 to 40 shop strikes, many of them under the leadership of the National Textile Workers Union. However, what happened there? In spite of the fact that these struggles have succeeded to a certain extent in breaking the wall that existed last year between the union and the masses, one fundamental problem has arisen, and this is, the necessity of concentration on a number of basic shops—silk, dyeing and woolen mills. This was resisted. Why? Because in all of these little silk shops of fifteen or sixteen workers it is much simpler to carry on the work, results are seen much more rapidly. When it came to the dye houses, of two or three thousand workers, that meant much more patient and persistent work. For six months we have been driving and driving away on this question, and it is only now at this moment that we can at least report that precisely because of the beginning of concentration work, we have established a shop nucleus in one of the largest silk dye plants in the country employing about three thousand workers. Only now the comrades are becoming convinced that we can continue to concentrate more basically on this plant.

## OPPOSITION WORK IN F.F.H.W.U.

*From Speech of Leading Member of Textile Workers Union*

**T**HE Full Fashioned Hosiery Workers Union has become famous for its wage cuts. At one time we were the best paid workers in the United States. Wages of \$80 and \$90 for a forty hour week were nothing unusual. At one time the whole industry was organized and we were considered the aristocracy of labor. Today the picture is different. Statistics of the United States Department of Labor show that average wages have fallen to \$17 for skilled men and to \$10 and \$11 for skilled girls. We have taken more wage cuts than any other skilled trade in the United States. Of the 10,000 organized workers in the city of Philadelphia, 94 percent are unemployed. The conditions of the hosiery workers are deplorable. Despite this, we became a battle ground of social reformism in the United States.

### Build Fractions in F.F.H.W.U.

Today we have a Party fraction of about 12 Party members in the local union in Philadelphia, and some sympathizers in other local unions. But we have built up a Party fraction in the last year of ten members in the biggest local union, which is good when we consider the fact that a year ago we had only one Party member in that particular union.

The full fashioned hosiery industry is composed mainly of young, native born American elements, and our Party members are, with one exception, native born Americans. Lately some of them have come forward actively in the leadership of our District. Thus one is section organizer of an important section in Philadelphia and another is district *Daily Worker* agent.

### Opposition Work Forces Referendum

Now on our work in the union and the struggle we have carried on. About three or four weeks ago, the National Executive Committee of the Full Fashioned Hosiery Workers Union met, adopted a motion to do away with the constitution, and elected a sub-committee of five with the right to negotiate any wage cut that seems fit in order that the union shops may be in position to compete with the non-union section of the industry. We immediately began a struggle, and forced the union officials to carry through a referendum. The workers in Philadelphia were called to this referendum. The biggest meeting ever held in the history of the union took place in Kensington Labor Lyceum. About 1,400 workers came out. The Party fraction had met and discussed the question very thoroughly

with the District leadership. The action decided upon was that when the meeting was opened, one of our speakers would ask for the floor, oppose the wage cut, and call upon the workers to declare a general strike. At the meeting the workers responded with tremendous applause for our speaker. After our speaker got down, a rank and file worker got up and said they don't want to listen to any official that put through the wage cut, and therefore he moved the previous question. The machine tried to speak, but they were booed down and none of them could speak. The vote was 963 against, and 287 for the wage cut. This was the first time that we ever actually defeated the machine on the union floor.

#### **F.F.H.W.U. Leaders Betray Workers**

What did the machine do? It immediately started propoganda in two of the biggest union shops, the Hancock mill and the Aberly mill. The union officials made a proposal to call a general strike in the open shop. Our fraction immediately raised the proposal of a general strike in the entire industry, not only in the open shop. Many of you comrades have read and heard of what happened the evening before the general strike was called; how 1,300 workers showed up at the meeting to make preparations. The meeting did not adjourn until 4:30. I have seen the famous telegram of Perkins which asked the leaders of the F.F.H.W.U. to call off the strike. And the leaders, without consulting the workers, called off the strike at the request of the U.S. government.

Next I will deal with the strike in Reading. How a general flare-up exists in the county. The Full Fashioned Hosiery Workers Union prepared for weeks and weeks for the Industrial Recovery Bill. They put out a leaflet which read: "Roosevelt has done his share, now you workers do yours; join the union; without joining the union you will be lost in the Industrial Recovery Bill." And let me assure you comrades, the American Federation of Full Fashioned Hosiery Workers, which has a membership of approximately 18,000 to 20,000, has recruited ten to fifteen thousand workers in the last few weeks. Every mill in Reading is tied up, every mill in the small town of Boylton is out on strike. Eighty percent of the hosiery made in the United States is made in this particular section of the country, and every mill there is tied up.

#### **Workers Militantly Defend Their Interests**

Simultaneously with the movement of the F.F.H.W.U. the Amalgamated Clothing Workers came into the situation. There were thousands of workers on the highway, there was actually a general strike, and our Party was not in the picture, our Party did

not know about it. In Reading that same night, the workers everywhere marched through the city streets with bands marked "Strikers."

Everyone knows the Pennsylvania Dutch, how conservative they are, and how in 1931 picket lines of thousands of workers could not stop them from going to work. And now there is the most enthusiastic picket line. On one day about 5,000 young American workers blocked the roads to the mill so completely that nobody could get near the mill. They recruited almost 480 members on the spot, right on the picket line; tied up the biggest open shop in the textile industry, a shop that has the most scientific spy system.

One of our fraction members in the F.F.H.W.U. hit the nail on the head, I think, when he said that the American workers believe in the impartiality of the state, and now they have the idea that this great impartial man, Roosevelt, sitting in Washington, D. C., is going to arbitrate all the conflicts of the proletariat and the bourgeoisie. This is where our struggle must start. We must raise the struggle in the trade unions, explain politically to the American working class what it is all about.

## NEEDLE

*From Speech of Leading Comrade of Shop Nucleus*

COMRADES, I am going to report on the experiences of a shop nucleus in one of the largest dress shops in New York City, working on the piece-work system.

In the shop we had a Y.C.L. member and a Party member. The workers were among the most exploited you could find in New York City. The boss had come from Maine and brought to New York City the methods he had used in Maine. He kept the workers in constant terror, barking at them continually and reminding them that they should be thankful they have a boss to work for, killing the confidence of the young workers that they could ever become dressmakers. In this way, the workers were afraid to speak to the boss, he was some sort of a god higher up.

The workers were not friendly to new workers. The first task facing the comrades was to win the friendship and confidence of the workers. The comrades were in the shop only two weeks when the boss gave a 5 percent wage-cut to the operators. The younger workers were rebellious but the older ones took it sort of quiet. The young workers hollered "Strike," and the comrades urged the workers to get together and talk to the boss. It was decided to do this the next morning, but by morning they had calmed down and



didn't want to talk to the boss. They said to our comrade: "Well, you speak to the boss." She said, "All right, I will speak to the boss at lunch time but you must follow me up." When lunch time came around she approached the boss, but the other workers did not follow, as they had promised.

The boss argued with her, he said, "How dare you come and argue about the price!" And she said, "Well, I want to increase my salary." This put off the boss's suspicion and gained prestige for our comrade among the workers for showing the spunk to speak to the boss.

Soon after this, we recruited into the shop a Y.C.L. member and a Party member.

The Y.C.L. comrade worked among the young workers, who were doing stamping work, which blistered the hands of the girls. They wanted rubber gloves, but were afraid to ask for them. The Y.C.L. member showed them how to get these gloves and this won the comrade some prestige. In the cutting department we were able to recruit another Y.C.L. member through union members sent up from the union to colonize the shop. These two colonizers from the union are still working.

#### Break Isolation from Workers

We tried to show the other comrades the advantage of carrying on the role of having the boss like them and make him think they are good slaves, at the same time pointing out to the workers the boss's maneuvers; we saw how he kept the workers divided. By keeping a certain number of workers' boxes piled up with work, though they had no more right to open their mouths than the others, the other workers were jealous and so they were kept divided. We were not able to overcome this until we were in the shop two months. We had to win these workers through friendship, through social discussion, a conversational manner, a real friendly basis, so that the workers would not feel we were trying to get something from them. If they brought lunch, we brought lunch; if they went out, we went with them, and in this manner we were part of the workers and not an isolated sect.

The workers began to watch how the boss maneuvered and agreed that we were correct. The boss began to sense that there was something going on in the shop and we warned the workers that we had to be careful, not to associate with us too much in the shop. Stool-pigeoning was going on to the point where comrades were followed into the restaurant. When this was observed, our comrades invited the forelady and other stoolpigeons to sit at the table with them. The workers admired our technique and it raised us in their estimation.

### Hold Meetings in Ladies' Room

We were also able to hold meetings in the different floors, in the ladies' rooms. The workers began to realize they weren't fooling around with workers who did not have a head on their shoulders.

The hours in the shop were tremendous—8:30 to 7:00, and all day Saturday and sometimes on Sunday. We prepared the workers against working on Sunday. How did we do this? It happened that the boss did not tell us a day or a half-day before, in fact, he told us an hour or so before closing on Saturday, so the workers were not ready with some back talk. He would come and bark at them that they had to work on Sunday, and the workers were terrorized. But this time our comrades spoke to the boss and said they were not coming in to work on Sunday because they were told too late and had made other arrangements. The workers saw this, and going out of the shop the comrades realized their position, that they might be thrown out. So we got hold of the boss outside and told him not to feel sore, and he told us, "It's all right, you keep quiet, just don't come in." The entire shop came in except those two comrades. The next week there was much bitterness. Although he had prepared to have them work again the following Sunday, they were prepared to refuse, and he dared not ask them to work.

### We Organize through Small Group Meetings

In the beginning we formed a group of five workers and called them to a meeting. After this meeting of a group of five, we had a group of three, and then a group of 28, at which we organized a captain system, which meant that every plant had two captains in charge of the work at the plant; where any issue should arise, the captain should be informed and then inform the leading captain, or if the workers heard of it first, inform the different captains and the leading captain. It was so well organized that we put it to a test at a time when additional work was added on to a garment previously done by a different craft. We had a group of 28 but we had won the confidence of the entire shop by drawing in workers that we took from the cliques in the shops—we knew these were the leaders and we knew that through these leaders we could penetrate deeper. Thus we neutralized the rest of the workers so at least if they were not with us they were not against us.

After this we took another major step. The Party and Y.C.L. comrades were coached on how best to approach the workers in the group, not to antagonize those that did not immediately come in with us, how above all we must maintain their friendship. When we had a more difficult garment and the boss told the workers they had

to make it for the same price as a plain garment, the workers in the group demanded action. Captains got together and discussed the plans. The decision was made that the leading captain approach the boss for a raise and the other captains mobilized the workers. After a 20 minute struggle we got a 10 cent raise, from 25 to 35 cents. This was done in such a manner that nothing was known by the boss until the action occurred.

Later on rumors began to spread that he was not really going to give the workers the 10 cents, which began to discourage the workers, but we were determined that he was going to pay us the 10 cent raise. We pointed out that we still have to fight for it.

### Take Steps to Guard Workers from Exposure

The group decided to call a meeting to discuss what steps to take. The meeting was arranged so that workers would meet at certain corners and no one knew the address where we were to meet except the leading workers. We told them that if they had any suspicion that they were being followed (the boss's stoolpigeons were getting active) they were to go home and not bother about the meeting. We held the meeting and pointed out that the boss is not going to give the 10 cents without trying some maneuvers, perhaps firing one worker as a start and finally firing all of the leading group. This, by the way, is exactly what did happen. Two days before pay-day, the boss picked on a comrade whom he thought the workers wouldn't fight for. The day before firing the worker the unit met and discussed what method to apply to the new situation. The comrade in the leadership would be the spokesman. The stoolpigeons of the bosses were there, however, and pointed out to the workers that we were being led by the Communists, but we succeeded in counter-acting all their maneuvers. We learned that we have to be very sharp in exposing these stoolpigeons, but we must not attack them personally but expose their tactics and in this way the workers will fight with us instead of against us.

### Must Be Flexible in Our Work

The strike was won and although the economic gains were not so big, the workers feel they have gained some freedom as well as stopping the danger of wage-cutting.

What I want to bring out is that though we disagreed with these workers on many points, at least they did not come and fight against us. We must not raise a fence against the workers because they disagree with us. You cannot speak to young workers as you would to older workers and to inexperienced workers as you would to experienced ones. We must be flexible and our application must be very dialectic.

*With regard to the work among the women, we have very important experiences in this field which should be fully brought out, especially in the reports from the districts. I have in mind especially the strikes of the Negro women, the nut pickers in St. Louis and the needle workers on the South Side in Chicago. These are really historical strikes. The strikers were mostly young Negro women who were striking for the first time; they carried through struggles, established their own leadership, won battles and built up unions—these are things which certainly should fill us all with enthusiasm and confidence for a real tremendous mass movement in this country. When we see young Negro women doing these things while we are sitting around complaining that we were not able to do them, among miners, steel workers, etc., we must blush for shame. In this connection it is very interesting to note that these Negro women are doing good political educational work. In St. Louis they have just sent in an order for 500 copies of every issue of the Working Woman. They are carrying on a systematic campaign of education, distributing literature, holding discussions, etc.—From Comrade Browder's Report.*

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## EXPERIENCES IN WORK AMONG WOMEN

*From Speech of Anna Damon, Head of Women's Commission,  
Central Committee, C. P., U. S. A.*

I believe that in spite of the fact that work among women did not receive any too much attention at this conference, through the various reports we have received a real expression of problems in the districts, particularly among factory workers, with regard to work among women. If we are going to take the Open Letter seriously and work along these lines, especially in the shops, we cannot isolate the question of how to involve the women.

I want to review briefly the strike struggles of the first six months of 1933. Almost all industries were involved in strikes. However, outstanding in these strikes were five industries, textile, clothing, shoe, food and tobacco. More than half of the workers involved in these strikes were women, and the majority of these strikes were spontaneous.

In many instances the A.F. of L. came into these strikes at the request of the bosses and succeeded in diverting these militant struggles of women. But we must ask ourselves: where were we?

to make it for the same price as a plain garment, the workers in the group demanded action. Captains got together and discussed the plans. The decision was made that the leading captain approach the boss for a raise and the other captains mobilized the workers. After a 20 minute struggle we got a 10 cent raise, from 25 to 35 cents. This was done in such a manner that nothing was known by the boss until the action occurred.

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In many instances the A.F. of L. came into these strikes at the request of the bosses and succeeded in diverting these militant struggles of women. But we must ask ourselves: where were we?

Wherever our industrial unions did come in directly or indirectly, helping and guiding the workers daily, as in the Salem, Mass., textile strike, and wherever our leading comrades took an active part in these strikes, some successful results can be recorded. We cannot go into detail as to these spontaneous, militant strikes, particularly the fifty-five strikes in the Southern textile field, but one thing is clear, that we did not put ourselves at the head of this strike movement to defend the daily interests of the working women.

#### No Fight for Labor Legislation for Women

With regard to labor legislation for women, the drive in the Eastern textile districts for bringing down the living and working conditions of the textile workers to the level of the South and Governor Ely's (Mass.) proposal for abolishing the laws prohibiting night work by women, our activities were and remain very limited.

The weakness of our organization and agitation in the textile field in the face of the outright betrayal of the United Textile Workers in the interests of the bosses, the lack of organization among the textile workers as a whole is one of the factors governing the choice of the textile industry as the first in which to put over an industrial code. The U.S. administration realized that the first attack should be made upon the weakest and least organized industry which would set the pace for the other codes to follow.

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We have about 20,000 members in the Party, with an average dues payment of 17,500. Out of these, 3,287, or about 19 per cent, are women. Of this number, 1,568 are housewives and 1,719 are working women. A large number of registered housewives are also part-time workers, particularly the Negro women. This is a definite improvement in the social composition of the women Party members in the past year; we have now close to 300 Negro women in the Party and approximately the same percentage of the total Negro membership as that of the general percentage of women in the Party, namely 19 to 20 per cent.

Since the Sixteenth Plenum we have a recorded increase of 700 women in the Party, that is, those that remained after the turn-over. The situation in St. Louis, and the positive results for the Party in recruiting Negro women should make the districts extremely conscious of the possibilities to make gains among the most oppressed section of the American working class.

Comrades, I want to point out that if we are to judge the workers generally, the young workers, the Negro workers, the women workers, as to how long we have had them on trial before we admit them in the Party, we will not make the headway demanded of us in the Open Letter. We must judge the workers according to their

militancy, seriousness and activity in the struggles that they participate in. This is the decisive point.

### Non-Party Worker Combats "Red Scare"

If you want an example, let me tell you about Comrade Carrie Smith, chairman of the St. Louis strike committee, in contact with our movement only about two weeks, who defended the Communist Party against the "red scare" attacks of the city administration. Let us compare her stand with that of some of our comrades who have been in the Party leadership, and leaders in the unions for years. This woman, 42 years old, who had never participated in the labor movement, was called by the Mayor of St. Louis to an arbitration meeting at the City Hall to negotiate about the strike. He insisted that the Communist Party organizer be excluded from the negotiations. He asked her:

"Why didn't you get in touch with Urban League to represent you instead of the Communists?"

She told him: "The Urban League and all the rest of them knew we were sitting in that sweat shop for nothing. None came to our rescue but the Communist Party and I think that I have just as much right to choose who I want in my council as you have in yours."

It is enough to say that we now have over 100 Negro women and girls in the Party and Y.C.L. in St. Louis and that the prestige of the Party in St. Louis is very high.

### One Task in Plan Carried Through

After the Fifteenth Plenum of the Central Committee the Women's Commission, C.C. set itself a number of tasks. One out of these was carried through. To date we have printed five issues of *The Working Woman* in improved magazine form selling for 3c.

The magazine is well received and really has a mass basis and can be distributed by tens of thousands among the working women in textile and other basic industries as well as wives of workers at concentration points. But what is the actual situation? Instead of increasing the distribution, we have had to limit each issue to 8,000 copies, because the districts are not using the magazine for specific agitation and propaganda.

As to finances, it is worse than scandalous. It is considered a legitimate practice in the districts to use *Working Woman* money to make up all sorts of expenses for leaflets, halls and deficits in connection with work among women.

The districts in taking stock of financial responsibilities to the C.C. must also consider *The Working Woman*.



*It is a scandalous situation that in the ten years of the Daily Worker's existence and in the fourth year of the crisis, with seventeen million unemployed, with strikes and wage cuts, and struggles of all kinds going on everywhere, the masses beginning to surge upward, even the petty bourgeoisie coming into mass struggles—and the Daily Worker circulation does not grow, it goes backward. And nobody seems to get excited about it. The question of Daily Worker circulation becomes one of life and death for our Party.—From Comrade Browder's Report.*

## THE DAILY WORKER

*Excerpts from Speech of Clarence Hathaway, Editor of Daily Worker*

COMRADES will be interested in knowing what the results of the circulation drive have been up till now. I will take the concentration districts. New York, for example, during the month of May while the subscription drive was on, secured 67 new subscribers to the *Daily Worker*. But while it was securing 67 new subscribers, they dropped 90 old subscribers. If you take District 5—Pittsburgh—during this month, they took in 17 new subscribers. They dropped 35 old ones. District 6—Cleveland—took in 41 new subscribers and dropped 62 old ones. District 7 took in 46 new subscribers and dropped 48 old ones. Take Chicago—66 new subscribers—and they dropped 92 old ones. This is the subscription drive that is now being conducted by the Party for the *Daily Worker*.

### Daily and Mass Party

I think, comrades, that these figures speak more emphatically than any words that could be said by myself. Every comrade that hears those figures and does not feel really ashamed as to the position of the *Daily Worker* certainly does not take the work of the Party seriously and is not in a position now to take the Open Letter seriously. We have got to make the comrades realize that with figures of this kind we can never become a mass Party of the American workers. We can never make this turn demanded by the Open Letter, we can never place ourselves, seriously place ourselves, forward as that force capable of leading the struggles of the American workers.

### Staff Isolated

I know that the comrades of the Districts have many complaints against the Daily, many of which are justified. The paper

has not been able to fulfill its functions. But here, comrades, we have to bear in mind that there are also reasons for this. We have had a situation where, to begin with, the staff of the paper has been isolated almost completely from the life of the Party as it developed from day to day. Likewise from the life of the workers. We have also had a situation where the staff of the paper were journalists not deeply rooted in mass struggles of the workers, but who came to the paper with little experience of these struggles.

Secondly, we have not had a close living political contact between the *Daily Worker* and the districts of the Party. The districts of the Party today send us a little news item in which they will tell us about one or another demonstration that took place in their district. These are important, comrades, and the *Daily Worker* must find ways and means of getting this material into the paper. But there are things that are even more important than these, and that is that the comrades really read the paper and give to the editorial staff of the paper their opinions of the manner in which we handle each question that comes up.

#### Workers Advisory Committee

How are we going to do this? We cannot do this merely in the editorial office of the paper. We have to introduce a policy, all the way down the line, which ties up the paper closer to the masses of workers. One of the things that we have to carry out is the building up of a Workers' Advisory Committee, organized from the factories and trade unions, that will meet to discuss the problems of the paper. We want to build up a real representative committee of workers who will come to us not for just an occasional meeting but who will meet regularly with the leading comrades, to help us very quickly carry through this change.

Furthermore, under the direct and personal leadership of the District Organizer of the Party in every district—and particularly in the concentration districts, there must be set up a Workers' Advisory Committee that will meet not less than once a month with the District Organizer, to discuss the manner in which the *Daily Worker* has reflected the struggles of the workers, the needs of the workers, etc.,. On the basis of this discussion, the District Organizer must assume personal responsibility for seeing that a full report is sent to the editorial office of the *Daily Worker*. This is necessary, comrades, if a real change is to be brought about in the paper. Furthermore, this is necessary if you are going to develop a *Daily Worker* consciousness in the districts and build the paper as a popular mass organ.

## WORK AMONG UNEMPLOYED

*Among the unemployed masses, the struggle is being exceptionally sharpened by the latest phase of the "new deal" and we must develop a counter-offensive through our unemployed organizations, developing a real mass fight against those relief cuts which are taking place almost everywhere throughout the United States today. We must take much more energetic steps to bind together the struggle of the employed and unemployed, to bring expressions of support from the workers in the shops to every struggle of the unemployed, even if it is only a resolution or leaflet, even the smallest expression will grow and develop into something bigger. At the same time, more carefully and more systematically and energetically bring the unemployed workers into active participation in every struggle that takes place in and around the shops in support of the demands of the employed workers.*  
—From Comrade Browder's Speech.

*From Speech of Leading Comrade of Unemployed Councils*

**T**HE weakness of our unemployed movement has been recently most sharply brought forward through the conventions that have taken place, organized under the leadership of the Musteites in Ohio. It is necessary that we take note of the fact that our movement is no longer the only unemployed movement in the field, and that we are not the only ones who have the capacity to organize the unemployed. We have seen in the recent period since the first of May particularly a number of conventions of the unemployed in which there were represented broad masses of unemployed workers entirely outside of our immediate influence.

It is true that the delegates at the Musteite Convention both in Ohio and nationally are more politically backward than are those workers organized in the Unemployed Councils under our influence. But although they may be more backward in their general political understanding of the problems confronting them, they are no less militant than those workers organized in Unemployed Councils and just as ready to struggle and to accept precisely such a program as we place before the Unemployed Council and organize the Councils around. So that we see it is not some special kind of workers being organized by these Musteites but the same kind of workers that we are organizing and failing to organize in the Unemployed Councils.

### Lack of Faith in Workers Narrows Unemployed Movement

Why is our movement so narrow? The Open Letter very clearly places some reasons as they apply to the unemployed movement as well as the other phases. In the first place, there is still a lack of faith in the masses manifested in our Party. Comrade Browder dealt with it in a previous plenum. We have said—more faith in the masses, but we have not developed that faith. We are still afraid to organize broad masses of workers because we are afraid we will not be able to control them. We have had comrades frankly state that they do not dare to organize a broad movement as we do not have enough Party forces to be able to control it. And this attitude, this conception that we must mechanically control these broad mass movements is one of the reasons why we have not approached the task of organizing the unemployed on a broad mass basis. Instead we have very often deliberately tried to narrow down the movement.

In New York City where we have 20,000 or 30,000 members of the T.U.U.L. we cannot get more than three to four thousand organized in the Unemployed Councils after four years of crisis. Can anyone say that Unions, who are *supposed* to be the leaders of the unemployed movement, *are* the leaders when this is the case? I have seen comrades who have just come into the unemployed movement, who know more about the problems of the unemployed than those who are supposed to lead them, the leaders of the revolutionary trade union movement.

Most of the leaders of the trade union movement do not know the first thing about unemployed work. In this connection comrades must consider as to whether the program and even structure of the revolutionary unions has not to be somewhat reorganized on the basis of the experiences of four years of crisis and mass unemployment.

### T.U.U.L. Unions Cannot Fulfill Present Tasks Without Leading Unemployed

It is manifest now that our unions are not adapted to giving leadership to workers in a period of crisis and since mass unemployment is now a permanent problem, our unions, therefore, will to a very considerable extent have to modify their structure. The unions cannot fulfill their role as far as the unemployed are concerned merely by organizing industrial councils.

They will have to be leaders of the unemployed in the neighborhood where the struggle takes place and if their organization is not adapted to this role, then they must take certain steps to supplement their form of organization with an additional form to make it possible for them to fulfill this role. If they don't do it, they will not

be able to give leadership to the unemployed masses. As to the Councils in relation to this, the comrades may think, now that we have as our basic control task the development of work in the shops, that this excludes the question of building the unemployed movement.

We will cite only a few of many instances that show how wrong such conception would be.

You heard news of how the unemployed are organizing workers in the shop. In Greensburg, Pa., where the Unemployed Council decided to organize a sweat shop and call a strike in it, they simply marched down in a body and pulled the workers out on strike and they won.

Now it is evident that these masses of workers who have learned the lessons of militant struggle are going to be an important factor in the building up of our organization and struggles in the shop.

### **United Front From Below Only Guarantee for Struggle**

The recent conventions held have shown not only the possibility of unifying the unemployed and the correctness of this decision, but have shown that the workers want to unite. They have also shown the sabotage on the part of all elements outside of our movement, on the part of renegades. The Lovestoneites and Trotzkyites were the ones who took the forefront in the fight against unity, and these elements incidentally, the Trotzkyites particularly, are influencing the majority of the members of that National Federation Committee that was established in the convention in Chicago on May 13, 14 and 15. We will have to conduct struggles against these elements.

This committee cannot be the unifying force for the unemployed movement, but we must not completely abandon it. We must take steps to build up the united front down below; build up the Federation in the localities, and the various existing organizations for struggle around the immediate issues concerning the unemployed for guarantees that we will be in a position to control and conduct a campaign for unification and prevent sabotage on the part of these elements.

### **Cannot Let Demonstrations Replace Daily Struggles of Unemployed**

On the question of marches and demonstrations, we have been discouraging in the recent period the organization of further state hunger marches. The Ohio Relief March was a good reason why we should discourage these actions. We cannot make them a substitute for the basic work of conducting the struggles down below in the neighborhoods every day. And the comrades in Ohio by organizing a relief march, found out that they failed to stop this,

but to a certain extent they even accelerated the downward trend of the unemployed movement in Ohio, and the manner in which they conducted it is open evidence of the manner in which we cannot conduct the united front.

Many workers did not participate in this Hunger March who wanted to because, they said "we were not consulted in the matter," and I might say nobody else was consulted in organizing this march.

### **Must Strengthen Fight for Unemployment Insurance**

Our main emphasis will have to be on the organization of local struggles. Unemployment relief in the last year has amounted for 120 cities for 62 percent of the urban population, to \$313,410,370. And we see in this bulletin issued by the U.S. Department of Labor some interesting figures with regard to relief. For example, in face of a general average increase of 79.4 percent in relief throughout the country in 1932 as compared with 1931, relief in the city of Detroit has been cut 15.2 percent. That is entirely consistent with the decline of our unemployed council movement in Detroit.

We did not keep and develop the unemployed council movement in Detroit. As a result relief was cut, while in Chicago expenditures during the same period when the Unemployed Council in Chicago was on the upgrade were increased by 182 percent.

### **Must Lead Unemployed in Fight Against Low Standard of Living**

We are not fighting against the tendency to make the workers adapt themselves to a low standard of living, and one of the reasons we are not fighting against it is because we are not fighting for unemployment insurance.

We are not making clear to the workers that they have a right to demand from the government a basis of existence consistent with what they have been able to earn during the period they work. Therefore, we are fighting a defensive struggle to prevent cuts in relief, but not to raise relief.

The campaign for unemployment insurance must be conducted as a campaign of struggle. We have a referendum campaign proposed in Ohio where the state law provides for a referendum, but we must not confine ourselves to these campaigns only on the basis of where the law permits us to. In this connection, bear in mind the correct criticism embodied in the article of Gusev on this question. We do not take the position that we scatter our fight for unemployment insurance state by state.

## FOLLOW UP DEMONSTRATIONS

*From Speech of Comrade A—— of Connecticut*

**I**N New Britain we have carried on many struggles. We were able to mobilize thousands of workers at meetings of the unemployed council, thousands of workers came to our demonstrations, and still today we cannot show any kind of organizational results.

Why? Because, as the Open Letter points out, there is a lack of training and education among the Party members. In the unit in New Britain we have comrades who have been in the Party for three, four and five years, but who today are not able to give the necessary leadership to the new workers entering the movement. About a year ago, when I first joined, the unemployed council called a demonstration in New Britain protesting against single workers losing their jobs working for the city. Thousands of workers demonstrated. We were able to establish four or five ward committees. Hundreds of workers wanted to be active. For instance, the workers were willing to go out among married workers still working on city jobs and try to organize them to strike on the job in sympathy with single workers who were put out of work. With these non-Party workers we were able to sell 200 to 300 Daily Workers every day for about a month in this city where the population is about 70,000. We sold 1,000 Daily Workers in one day, August 1st. But today there is not one paper being sold.

### **Must Convince—Not Order Workers Around**

We held weekly meetings of unemployed for about a month; the Party unit organizer used to come to these meetings and just issue instructions to these non-Party workers, saying "you must come here tomorrow, you will distribute some leaflets and next week attend a meeting," etc., not showing them how to organize and fight for their everyday demands.

What happened? After a month we lost about two hundred workers.

Why? Because there is no training, no education of the Party members; the Party members do not understand the line and the district leadership must take the responsibility.

Today we have about 30 members in the Communist Party in that city. We are starting to get some small results.

When I came out of jail I found some of the Party members themselves did not understand the line because they never read. They told me they went out and spoke to the workers and the workers are satisfied with Roosevelt. "We will have to wait until they find out themselves," they said. I asked them if they dis-

tributed the Daily Worker in front of the factories when it carried articles on the National Industrial Recovery Bill, if they distributed literature from house to house. No. Well, how do we know that the workers are satisfied? If we do not understand ourselves, how can we convince the workers? How can we know they are not militant?

### Demonstrations not Followed up Organizationally

We have a Red Square in New Britain, similar to New York's Union Square. When the Unemployed Council issues a leaflet calling workers to demonstrate on East Main and Main Streets, the workers come out and demonstrate, because they are suffering, they are looking for a way to fight and get better conditions.

We were able to mobilize 8,000 workers on March 4. But we did not get organizational results. We should have gone to the neighborhoods with the campaign, distributing our literature, finding out what we can do for the workers and what they must do for themselves.

Now, for instance, we issue a leaflet calling an Anti-Fascist meeting. How do the workers know what Fascism means? If we do not distribute literature telling them what Fascism means, they will not know what we are talking about.

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## BREAK DOWN WRONG CONCEPTIONS OF LEADERSHIP

*From Speech of Careathers, Section Organizer Pittsburgh*

**I** want to tell you how a Negro alderman in the Hill section of Pittsburgh was forced to support the struggle for the freedom of the nine Scottsboro boys.

First, we sent a committee to this alderman, demanding that he take a position. He refused even to give a hearing to this committee. We organized a demonstration of 600 to 700 workers before his office. He called the police station which is about a block from his place, but the police were unable to break up the demonstration, and he was forced to contribute \$15 to the Scottsboro March. This is one instance which shows that the Negro reformists, like all the rest, when forced by mass pressure of the Negro and white workers, will come into the struggle, only, of course, with the purpose of diverting the mass pressure of the workers.

Comrade Markoff in his report said that sometimes we lag behind the masses of workers. In the Hill district, where I happen to be



section organizer, one portion of that section just outside the city is known as a KKK town. We organized a unit and began an unemployed movement, carried on some struggles, etc., and the movement began to grow. On one occasion the workers organized a big mass meeting in the school house. The workers came to the District Office and asked for speakers for this meeting. They told us they didn't want a speaker who was known to be a Communist. We told them we would send a Communist to speak at this meeting, and when these Party members found out that the speaker was not only to be a Communist, but a Negro, they threw up both arms, they said it could not be done in the KKK town of Wilkinsburg, that the workers were not ready to listen to a Negro. But we convinced them we could send a Negro speaker to this meeting.

We sent a Negro speaker and a white speaker who is also a Communist. The white comrade spoke, and then the Negro comrade was introduced and the audience of about 600 to 700 workers by their applause actually repudiated the position of the Party member who had said that the people in Wilkinsburg were not ready to hear a Communist speaker, nor a Negro speaker.

I point this out to show that in many instances the workers themselves are a little in advance of the Party members.

### BUILDING A. F. OF L. OPPOSITIONS

*From Speech of Leading Comrade in A. F. of L. Opposition Work*

**T**HE Cincinnati Conference marked a turning point in the history of organized opposition inside the American Federation of Labor. The Conference was called on the question of fighting for unemployment insurance inside of the A. F. of L. It was organized on this basis. It was a result of a referendum campaign conducted inside of the A. F. of L. for unemployment insurance. If we put the question to the District Organizers, to the District leadership, whether the comrades have taken the trouble to familiarize themselves with the decisions of the Cincinnati Conference, whether they have studied these resolutions adopted at the Conference, which were supposed to be carried into practice after the Cincinnati Conference, I can state very definitely, comrades, that it was not studied by our District Leadership and it was not carried into practice.

Comrade Browder in his speech stated that if he would call upon the comrades in this room to stand up and make a report and analysis of the Workers Unemployment Insurance Bill and compare it with the other unemployment insurance bills introduced by

the various capitalist parties, and state federations of labor, many wouldn't be able to do that, for the simple reason that they did not make a thorough study of the Workers Unemployment Insurance Bill. And it naturally follows, that the decisions of the Cincinnati Conference have not been carried through.

### Build Oppositions in A.F. of L. Locals

Now if it was important for us to orientate ourselves in the past years to work inside of the reformist unions and build our revolutionary opposition, today it is ten times as important in the face of the Industrial Recovery Act and the consequences inside of the A. F. of L. of the Act.

Comrades, last year and months before, we came to Plenums, Central Committee meetings and we reported that the A. F. of L. was weakened. They have lost membership, according to their own figures, six to seven hundred thousand members. We know that the actual membership of the A. F. of L. at the last convention was a million and a half or not more than a million eight hundred thousand, but today the N.I.R.A. gives them the opportunity, as it was pointed out by Comrade Stachel and other comrades, to recruit hundreds and thousands of members into the A. F. of L. if it was necessary and important to work inside of the A. F. of L. in the past, it is certainly necessary to work today.

I do not want to give too many figures, but I tell you comrades, the A. F. of L. has the machinery to utilize such a situation as created by the Act, and there is a possibility that Lewis, Green, and others will come to the next convention of the A. F. of L. and report the growth of one million new members.

On the preparation for the coming convention of the A.F. of L. I have to point out to the comrades the machinery of the A. F. of L. They have hundreds of weekly and monthly journals, small trades and Labor Council journals, in almost every city in the United States. They have 105 monthly trade journals, and to give more facts, I will give you an illustration of how this organization is built up. The A. F. of L. in 1931 reported the following:

104 Nationally established trade union organizations.

49 State federations of labor all over the Union.

804 Central Trades and Labor Councils all over the country.

They have in these 104 Trade Union organizations about

25,000 union locals all over the country.

Now, comrades, I do not say that all these local unions and organizations function, but we see from experience that after the Recovery Act was adopted, all these organizations which had not

been functioning in the past came into existence, issued leaflets, and came out to the workers to organize.

We propose that we organize ourselves and concentrate on the coming A. F. of L. Convention. We believe that the coming A. F. of L. Convention which is going to be held in Washington is going to be a historical convention, and if we were able to mobilize at least 100 delegates last year to Cincinnati, to the convention this year we must mobilize at least 500 delegates from the A. F. of L. local unions and from the functioning opposition groups, and the comrades in the Districts should concentrate on the Central Trades and Labor Councils. The Districts should take seriously this coming A. F. of L. Convention. In the past we have not paid enough attention to these councils.

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*From Speech of a Leading Comrade of Shop Nucleus*

**T**HERE are about 500 to 600 men in the yards where I work and the conditions are terrible, due to the fact that there is no organization there whatsoever. If a man steps outside of the gate and listens to a speaker or accepts a leaflet, he can be stopped from work. If a speaker stands outside, the workers have to go right past without stopping.

About five months ago we started a nucleus in the yards and today there are eight members. We do all kinds of work. The bosses found out that something was going on, and they immediately started a terror threatening that everyone who had anything to do with the nucleus, if foreign born, would be deported, and if American born, he would not be able to work.

The painters who work in the yard are members of local——, A.F. of L. They have the same conditions, wage cuts, speed-up, and all kinds of grievances and our executive of the union will do nothing about it. All kinds of complaints come in.

Through the nucleus we started a painters' social club for the organized and unorganized workers. There are only about 156 members in good standing in the union and about 400 unorganized painters. The local closed the books, so what could these 400 do? We organized a painters' club, and took in both non-union and union painters. Immediately the A.F. of L. came in with propaganda that it was a Bolshevik club, but nevertheless today the club has 42 members and is progressing.

*From Speech of Katherine Erlich, Kansas District Organizer*

**I** want to deal with our experience in the work in the packing plants. There we had some experience which will help the comrades in other cities where there are packing plants. Just two weeks ago we held a District Plenum and decided to concentrate on packing plants in three cities of the district. Comrade Gebert was present at this plenum. This district takes in five states and it is impossible to build a Party with such small forces. We, therefore, decided on the concentration on these three cities rather than spread our activities over the entire district and get nowhere.

In one packing plant, with thousands of workers, Negro and white, we had several connections for years. Meetings of these workers were called. The workers were told that we have to take up the fight against wage-cuts but not told how to begin. The workers didn't know how or what to do, and soon lost confidence in our Party.

**Direct Guidance Given to Concentration Places**

Finally, the district took up the question and sent a representative to work in this city and lay a basis for building something in the packing plants. This comrade had a hard time convincing the contacts that something could be done. He met with two or three of them, met with individual workers at their homes and in this way made connection with these workers. The entire unit was concentrating in the neighborhood of the plant. A Scottsboro mass meeting was held with 500 workers in attendance. The Negro and white workers after the mass meeting were heard saying that "if we organize and stick together, something can be done." We organized a shop unit of five members. They began to take up the grievances of the workers in the plant. They decided to give out leaflets and stickers in connection with a certain grievance and the demands were granted. One grievance for instance: more cattle were driven into the slaughter house than could be killed in nine hours. The workers were compelled to kill those remaining even after the whistle blew without receiving extra pay. The workers carried on a fight against this; they also carried on a fight against the efficiency experts, who were taking the jobs away from the workers. There is a sentiment in the plant for organization and our comrades sensed this. As a result of these struggles a shop group was organized.

Then came the Recovery Act. The newspapers in the city stated that the president of the A.F. of L. wants the workers to organize, and the comrades reported that in some departments there was

word going on of a meeting to be called by the A.F. of L. The capitalist press in fact stated that the A.F. of L. was coming to the city to organize the packing house workers, to organize all workers, because the president says so. The workers said, "Fine, we have the president behind us and now we can organize something." We had an idea and feeling that the A.F. of L. was calling this meeting and we had to prepare our comrades for it.

On Thursday before the meeting we had a meeting of nine packing house workers and they were told to prepare a program for the meeting. Another meeting was called previous to the A.F. of L. meeting and 20 workers showed up. Our comrades proposed that they work out plans. The workers were explained the purpose of this meeting called by the A.F. of L. But the workers insisted upon organizing their own union right away. They also prepared a leaflet for the workers coming to the meeting, calling upon the workers to take the floor at the meeting and to raise the following points:

- 1—For one union in the packing house industry; no craft unions, taking in Negro and white, men, women and youth.
- 2—To raise the question of low initiation fees and dues.
- 3—No bosses, straw-bosses or company men to be allowed in the union.
- 4—Union to take up the question of organizing workers in packing plants for higher wages.

#### Prevent Formation of A.F. of L. Union

The officials of the union at the meeting got up and spoke and asked the workers to join the A.F. of L. They read a letter sent by Bill Green telling the workers to beware of company unions. Those workers who were at Thursday's meeting exposed the A.F. of L. There was a member of the A.F. of L. present, a street car worker, and when he protested against an A.F. of L. union being organized, saying that the A.F. of L. helped to break their strike, he was told to be quiet. The A.F. of L. insisted that the workers join. There was a revolt. Finally some A.F. of L. member made a motion that this meeting go on record to organize into an A.F. of L. local. They took it to a vote and the majority said no. But the chairman said the "ayes" have it. The workers revolted, and asked that another vote be taken by hand and that was rejected. An old Negro jumped up and said, "You are not going to get me to join Local No. 28, we want a union of our own," and the secretary said, "Well, if you don't want Local No. 28 join Local No. 262." The Negro worker said, "Number or no number, it's the same stuff. We want a union of our own." The attempt of the A. F. of L. failed.

Steps are being taken to establish a union in the plant under our leadership.

*The establishment of Bolshevik collective leadership in the Party is a primary prerequisite for development of the Party. Each Party member should take an active part in creating collective Party leadership.*

*There can be no collective leadership without active participation in the Party life and work of each member of the Party, especially those who bear on their shoulders the main weight of the work in the factories, shops, mines.*

—From resolution adopted at the Extraordinary Conference.

## WORK IN MASS ORGANIZATIONS

*From Speech of Max Bedacht, Member Polburo C.P. U.S.A.*

**I**N order to make the concentration of the Party upon the basic industries really an effective effort, it is necessary to kill quite a number of misconceptions that have dominated the minds of our comrades. Our Party members generally, and even our Party leaders have so often made the distinction that there are different kinds of work—mass work, Party work, work in mass organizations, trade union work—each one set up as a category with a wall between it and some other categories. And we have a division of labor organized within the Party—certain comrades are segregated in one kind of work and other comrades are segregated in another. Then we have a distinction as to the importance of the work. Those comrades segregated in the so-called unimportant tasks, are the fewest—and those segregated in the important tasks are the most. Yet the need of the Party is that we do not mechanically subdivide our members into those in one field and those in another, but that the Party as a whole is mobilized to work in every field.

### Each Member Must Become a Leader

In order to have a Bolshevik Party, we must now see to it that all our work is organized in such a manner that *each individual member of our Party becomes* a leader of workers, a leader of a group of workers; this effort must be concentrated first of all in the shop, that is, where they are located whether they belong to an organization or not. That is the place where every Party member must make efforts to become a leader of as many workers as he can; wherever there are more than one Party member, wherever we have a shop, or a mine or any industrial institution with more than one Party member, there the effort to become a leader, to build the Party, to organize a union, to organize and lead struggles in the shop must be a collective effort of all of the Party members there.

If we concentrate the efforts of our leading committees to initiating and guiding the efforts of this work of all of our Party mem-

bers, we will change the Party fundamentally. First, because we will work among the basic sections of the working class. Secondly, because by getting in direct contact with these primitive issues of the class struggle our work will become concrete. We will end the old and often criticized character of the Party, that of being in the main a propoganda Party.

It will be a Party directly connected with the workers and with their problems. We will develop the initiative of the Party from below. A Party that depends for its initiative only on the top must more or less suffer from some abstractions, because the top is not in close contact with these issues. The top will get notice of these issues only when they become big, when they explode. The top will get notice of issues only of larger political character, exploding in the country here and there. But these issues that the individual worker feels, his treatment in the shop, his wages, the conditions of work in general—those issues do not always automatically create such high waves that they reach in their details the leading committees of the Party. These issues from below will strengthen the political life of the Party and will give concreteness to the functions of leadership.

### **How Will Turn Affect Work in Mass Organizations**

One specific question that I want to deal with is how this turn in the activities of the Party will and must affect our attitude to the work in the mass organizations. We have very serious sins to confess in this field. We are confronted with the fact that some of our mass organizations, for instance the W.I.R. or even the I.L.D. which for years have demanded our serious attention—that some, and in fact all of these mass organizations in reality aren't mass organizations at all. In reality they are something that abstractly attracts the attention of quite large masses of workers, but they do not actually draw these masses of workers intimately into work for the solution of class struggle issues, they do not actually organize these workers. We have got to change our attitude to these mass organizations. We have got to drop the idea of the lack of importance of these organizations. I have met during my travels in the country again and again the idea that the I.W.O. is not an important organization; we just tolerate it; we just permit it to exist, but it isn't politically important; why should we "waste" energy to participate in the work of these organizations. They do not see the possibilities of reaching elements that the Party could not directly comprise organizationally, that the Party could at best reach only with general agitation, but not with proposals of immediate organization.

## Sustained Work Impossible without Mass Organizations

Without these mass organizations the Party could not have leadership over these masses in a permanent organizational form. This lack of attention and this underestimation have turned in many instances into a purely financial approach, to a purely financial judgment of these organizations. Comrades that work in these organizations are considered to be unimportant because they do not do "Party" work.

A comrade told me yesterday that a delegate from—to the International Workers Order Convention when he came back to—from the convention told the comrades back there "well we have snatched Bedacht away from the Party and now we have got him." I want to assure the comrades that while I am in the I.W.O. I am not away from the Party but on the contrary, when we succeed in putting all leading members of the Party into active position of leadership of real organized masses of workers, only then their leadership becomes reality and ceases to be an abstraction.

### Party Leaders Must Be Mass Leaders

If every member of the Polburo had 10,000, 15,000 or 20,000 actual organized workers behind him, as a Communist, as a leader, then the Party becomes a mass Party. If each comrade of the Polburo and the Central Committee—and that will be the policy we will carry out in the future—is given the specific task—for instance, one of our Negro comrades who is now the guiding comrade of the Negro Department—to become the leader of say 2,000, 3,000, or 10,000 Negro workers and Negro masses in Harlem, then he will be a real leader of the Negroes in the United States (applause). And we must approach the whole problem of mass organizations from that point of view.

If we can build the International Labor Defense into an organization of 100,000—and that is not a fantastic figure—as a matter of fact I think it is conservative—if we can build that organization into 100,000—100,000 workers not judged as to their quality of membership in the I.L.D. exactly by the number of cents they pay per month in the form of dues, but by the fact that they become active workers in and for the activities of the I.L.D., if we do the same thing with other mass organizations such as the W.I.R., the I.W.O. and build them into real mass organizations then the Party will be able to lead the masses in these organizations; when the Party has grouped around itself such a belt of organizations of hundreds of thousands of workers, only then, comrades, will our Party be a mass Party. Only then will we overcome the isolation of our Party and strengthen the Party in its work.



*The Party can stand at the head of the national revolutionary struggle of the Negro masses against American imperialism only if it energetically carries through the decisions of the Fourteenth Plenum of the C.C. on work among Negroes. The Party must mobilize the masses for the struggle for equal rights of the Negroes and for the right of self-determination for the Negroes in the Black Belt. It must ruthlessly combat any form of white chauvinism and Jim Crow practices. It must not only in words but in deeds overcome all obstacles in the drawing in of the best elements of the Negro proletariat, who in the recent years have shown themselves to be self-sacrificing fighters in the struggle against capital. In view of this, special attention must be given to the promotion of Negro proletarians to leading work in the Party organizations.—From the Open Letter.*

## AGRARIAN WORK

*From Speech of Leading Comrade of Sharecroppers Union*

**I** want to point out and explain the present conditions and status of our organization in the Black Belt, the sharecroppers' union and also explain some of the victories we have won and our perspectives for developing deeper struggles in the Black Belt, the struggle for the right of self-determination in the Black Belt.

First I want to say, comrades, next month about the 6th will mark the first year of the existence of the Sharecroppers Union. During this period we have been able to organize between two and three thousand members. Out of all of these members we have not been able to organize one single white farmer, and have been able to organize only five Party units of 30-35 members.

Our union has accomplished something; some victories have been won. More victories could have been won especially with the tremendous possibilities which we have; but the reason we have not spread the union and have not built up a broader and stronger Party capable of leading the masses, the Negro sharecroppers and tenants, and also mobilize and lead the broad section of the white farmers, is because the Party is so small. And secondly it is functioning in a sectarian line and manner. Third, because we have not developed local leadership.

What are some of our victories? We were able to force the landlords on three plantations to cancel all debts held against the sharecroppers. These debts amounted to, that is the amounts of these debts ranged between 12 and 13 thousand dollars. While there were 3 or 4 hundred Negroes working as sharecroppers and the debts against them were as high as 3 to 4 hundred dollars, on all

three of these plantations we have forced the cancellation of such debts and also forced the landlords to promise that half of this year's debt will be cut.

### Fail to Organize White Farmers

What are our main weaknesses, comrades? Our main weakness in regard to our union is our failure to organize the white farmers, croppers and tenants, especially right now when we have aroused very favorable sentiment among the white farmers who have come out and demonstrated their support to the struggle of the Negroes for the right of self-determination. We have not actually organized any white farmers but we have been able to utilize them to a certain extent so far as getting them to distribute a few leaflets in the communities where the whites are and where it is difficult for the Negroes to go in and we have been able to utilize them to confuse the formation of lynch mobs against the Negroes but we have not been able to actually organize any of them into any kind of organization. Why? It is because we have not built up a strong Party capable of giving leadership to the union, and because we have underestimated the importance, not the political importance or significance of the revolutionary struggle of the Negro masses in the Black Belt, but because we have underestimated the importance of building a strong Communist Party in the Black Belt capable of giving the correct leadership to the union, thereby influencing and bringing into our ranks the white farmers also. We have not spread the union. By this time we should have had five thousand members in the union and 100 members for the Party. We must first build the Party, secondly, spread the union. How will we do this? Firstly, we have set ourselves a quota to recruit for the union 2,500 new members by August First. A part of this quota has already been carried out. Second, in the counties where we have the organization built, the quota has been subdivided by each county.

### Negro Masses Will Fight for Self Determination

On the question of the right of self-determination, I don't think that this conference placed enough emphasis on the work in the South, particularly in the Black Belt. I don't think the slogan of the "Right of Self-Determination" has been properly emphasized.

First of all, one of the main mistakes made by the Party was to take the L.S.N.R. out of the Black Belt, out of the South; since that time continuously we have been asked what happened to it; what happened to the Liberator? The Negroes in the South liked the Liberator; they like all our newspapers.

The next mistake made was to cut off the Southern Worker. Of

course, the Southern Worker is being published again, but this was a mistake, to cut it off. Until recently we have not been getting literature in the Black Belt. We got about ten Daily Workers every thirty days and now we are getting 70 Daily Workers every day and about 200 Southern Workers every two weeks, and no Liberators at all and no L.S.N.R. there, an organization which should be right in the midst of the Black Belt to help in the struggle of the Negro masses for the right of self-determination. We see again in the struggle for the right of self-determination the need for the L.S.N.R. We see again in the struggle of the croppers in Camp Hill in 1931 a shining example which evidenced the fact that the Negro masses in the Black Belt will fight for self-determination.

In the Black Belt the conditions, the pressure placed on the Negro masses are enough to urge them on in revolutionary struggle without agitating them, and telling them to defend themselves against the lynch mob. At the present time, especially in these sections and areas where our union has been built, these Negroes are going to defend themselves against the lynch mobs.

What is really wrong with the struggle is that it was too narrow, this struggle should have been linked up better. If we had had a strong, really disciplined Party, capable of leading the struggles of the croppers no matter what form they might have developed into, there would not have developed this Realtown situation; and there are going to be more struggles developed in the Black Belt.

Now, what are we doing now? We are preparing these farmers to develop and put through a reduction bill against confiscating of livestock, against evictions, and against the compulsory selling and holding of cotton.

We want the national leadership to explain to us how to win the white farmers in struggle with the Negroes, how to popularize the slogan "the right of self-determination for the Black Belt."

## AGRICULTURAL STRIKES

*From Speech of Sam Darcy, Organizer, California District*

**I** WISH to speak on our agricultural strike, on the point that Comrade Toohy raised, that the question of unity between the workers and poor farmers, which at first looks almost insurmountable, isn't so at all. We can give you an example of this: On a small farm six workers were working, when the assessors' deputy officers came down to shut off the water because the farmer hadn't paid his water bill. The farmer came down to the workers and said, "I am very sorry but I'll have to let you go because I have no more water." The workers said, "The hell you say, we'll turn

your water on and we'll have our jobs back." And they went down and turned it on. And in actuality this bridge between the farmers and workers was made through an identity of interest. The poor farmer who has four or five laborers during the short harvest season has no difficulty in granting an increase of 5c an hour because he makes it up by getting his crop to the market early instead of being delayed by a strike; our struggle is against the rich farmers.

### We Organize and Lead Agricultural Strikes

And finally, concerning the agricultural workers' strikes during this year, for the first time the Party and Union led a majority of the agricultural workers who struck in California. In previous years spontaneous strikes broke out all over but our Party came after the strike was organized. This year we had 9 strikes ranging from 250 in the small ones to 3,000 workers in the big strike. In 7 of the strikes we organized them, led them, concluded them, and formed our local union in the course of them. In two we didn't. In one of these two the Mexican Consul walked off with the situation because the American comrades stood in one group and let the Mexicans, excepting the youth, stand separately. The comrades came out and spoke in the name of the Party group but in the eyes of the workers it was the American workers who misled a few Mexican youngsters speaking to the Mexican strikers, and this gave the excuse to the Mexican Consul, who was a slick demagogue, to take the situation out of our hands.

In another strike 300 workers struck spontaneously and were led by the Philippine fakers. We were not able to get a fast hold.

One last word about the question of forces in our agricultural fields; we have the same cry that some districts have about forces; they say, we have no forces. We had a meeting in Santa Clara County of the Agricultural Workers Union. The Section Committee and the comrades said, "These Mexican workers, they sit around and won't speak up; how can we lead strikes with them?" But while these Mexican workers didn't talk in the committees, you should have seen them on the picket line. They were the most militant and effective of the leaders. Later on we said, "Why don't you recruit these workers into the Party" and the comrades said "they are not prepared enough or solid elements enough." A few days later 46 of our strikers were arrested and kept in jail for a week and tortured, the police tried to get information from them and they wouldn't say a word or budge an inch. Yet when we spoke to those comrades and asked why we didn't recruit these workers into the Party, they said they are not prepared! Needless to say, we held our recruiting, partly in jail, and got 24 of them into the Party.

## TASKS IN AGRARIAN WORK

*From Speech of Henry Puro, Head Agrarian Commission,  
C.P. U.S.A.*

**C**OMRADES, what do the farmers' militant struggles signify and what lessons must we draw from them? I do not think it is only the farmers' own situation alone, but also the example which the little contact of the city proletariat with the farmers has been able to give. Lenin, writing on the Russian Party question and the question of winning over the peasants, as early as 1903 and 1905, points out that the peasants are coming to the cities and they learn about the workers' struggle which they do not yet fully understand.

On the question of unity among the workers. In this field we have had very interesting experiences.

In the farmer strikes, especially unemployed workers in Iowa last year, and in the Wisconsin strike unemployed workers assisted farmers in picketing and in fighting for their demands. On the other hand unemployed workers have been participating in many struggles together with the farmers.

In Eastern Pennsylvania we have made some systematic progress on this work. They have also distributed milk for the unemployed families. In the preparation of the Philadelphia strike it is known that there has also been systematic organizational measures in order to prepare for joint action.

At the opening of the farmers' conference in Pennsylvania this solidarity with the workers was not expressed by all delegates at the conference but had been actually recognized in the course of struggles of the workers and also of the farmers. I think mistakes made at the conference are definitely mistakes of right opportunism and hiding the face of the Party at the conference.

### Must Overcome Resistance to Building Party

There has been considerable hesitancy and some resistance in building up the Party in some of the most strategic centers of our mass work among the farmers, for instance, in Eastern Pennsylvania, where by systematic and consistent work we have drawn over a thousand organized farmers very close under the leadership of the Party.

The farmers with few exceptions didn't know that the Party was actually leading these organizations and their struggles. There has been systematic resistance to building of the Party up until now and the leading people in these organizations have not been drawn

into the Party, although they have been very close to, and even willing to accept the leadership of the Party.

There has been even such a theory developed that a Party unit or a Party fraction cannot meet in the countryside, not openly or in a secret form. Of course, this theory must be corrected. How will Party units be able to meet in conditions of terror, illegality, etc.? There can be no such theory that the Party unit or Party fraction cannot meet. This would mean liquidating the Party, this would mean putting such obstacles that would make it impossible to build the Party.

### Must Expose Roosevelt's Farm Bill

Against Roosevelt's Farm Bill I think we must put more definitely the emphasis than even on the cancellations of the debts of the poor, small and middle farmers. We have partially launched this slogan already, but when we explain the real meaning of the Roosevelt Farm Bill, that it doesn't benefit the position of the toiling section of the farmers, but it means further enslaving them and it means more ruthless foreclosures on their homes and farms—I think then we are laying the basis for the cancellation slogan of the debts of the toiling farmers, and although we have been somewhat hesitant in putting forth these slogans, I think when we explain this question thoroughly to a large section of the toiling farmers, they will readily rally around this slogan and this slogan could become a means of politicalizing and revolutionizing our struggles. Around this slogan greater masses of farmers could be mobilized, also further militant mass struggles.

### Party's Tasks to Organize Agricultural Workers

The every-day work of the Party among the farmers and in the villages must be planned and has to be in line with our main resolution, that is with the draft Open Letter to the Party Conference, in order to render active support for broadening and strengthening the proletarian base of the Party. This means also we must take up energetically the organization of the agricultural workers. Some preliminary work has been already done in this respect, and comrades, when I speak on this question I do not mean just that the Party should give an order to the T.U.U.L. in this work. I think we must realize that the task of the T.U.U.L. is now to build red trade unions in the main basic industries, and therefore in regard to the agricultural workers, the Party with its apparatus and its forces in the mass organizations must take chief responsibility instead of the T.U.U.L. in this respect.

## UNITY OF FARMERS AND WORKERS

*From Speech of Ella Reeves Bloor, Member Central Committee, C.P. U.S.A.*

**I** WANT to give you three instances of outstanding conferences that we had recently, one of them only a week ago. But first I want to speak of the Philadelphia conference. That conference was organized by the *Communists inside*. This conference was called by the President of the United Farmers Protective Association of Pennsylvania. They invited all other organizations and it was held in one of the Esthonian halls in Philadelphia, where I used to hold forth to the textile workers years ago. And here we were with farmers, in these big organizations of the workers, and these farmers were led by Comrade Benzley.

They came from New Jersey and all around and that conference was marked by the fact that there were many workers' delegates there, not paper delegates but live men from the Carpenters Union, from the Food Workers, from the Unemployed, from the women's organizations, they came as delegates to this farm conference, but they did not try to run it. They were organized in a Bolshevik manner. They came to me—two or three of them—and said, "we have been invited to serve on the Resolutions Committee—can we serve, do you think?" I said, "yes, two or three of you, of course." After the Resolutions Committee, they came up to me and said, "Mother Bloor, we did not have to protect the workers' interest on that committee as we thought we would have to—why those farmers protected our interests—they said if we raise the price of milk to five cents a quart, then we must lower the price of milk to the consumers, who are the workers, and so they continually fought in the interest of the workers as well as the farmers." The conference passed resolutions and went on record against all imperialist war, against the national guard and the state cossacks in Pennsylvania.

### Break Down Red Scare Among Farmers

And then only a week ago I was way down 500 miles from my home town in Nebraska, at a state conference of farmers called by the Madison County Plan in opposition to the Reno Holiday Association Plan. There was a large bona fide gathering of delegates here, at which we also had our Party representative, Comrade Omholt.

He went down there with us and he said to me, "How am I going to introduce the Party among this bunch?" I said, "Just as soon as the 'red scare' comes up, that is your time." So somebody—an old Norwegian—(Omholt is a Norwegian too)—got up and said,

"I just heard that Mother Bloor is going to speak on Russia at the picnic tomorrow. I think we ought to sing 'America,' we don't want Russia here," so all of us sang America with them. Sometimes I have even had to pray with them. You ought to hear my prayers. Then Comrade Omholt, after the red scare was introduced, came up in good time—just after the Farmer-Labor Party man spoke and a social-fascist—he came up and said:

"I have been hearing about a red scare, and don't know what you mean by that. Are you afraid of the Communist Party? You seem not to be afraid of the bosses' party that feeds you with all kinds of illusions about what Roosevelt promises will do for you"—and then he slammed into the Allotment Bill, inflation and gave them a political speech against Roosevelt's policies—and then ended up: "I am proud to be a member of the Communist Party."

Well, you ought to see how they all liked him all the better after that. And then at the picnic some of the farmers came to me and asked me to speak about the Soviet Union. Why? Because they know it is the *only hope* for the workers and farmers. And the day after, Omholt weeded out fifty men who wanted to form their own party down there and I will tell you the secret of it all. Not what we said there perhaps, but the fact that we had two or three copies of the *Daily Worker* down there in that neighborhood that they had read and this made them come to us to find out more about the Communist Party. We went to one of their houses and with us was a Y.C.L. member, and other comrades and he got 25 members into the Y.C.L. and established three units of the Party.

Every letter to you from the farmers is backed up with *struggles* just like this Negro comrade who came here, and spoke yesterday from North Carolina. Comrades, if these comrades can come here, and express themselves so well about the struggles they are conducting down South like these women we ought to be ashamed of ourselves for taking the defeatist attitude that some of us do in this part of the country, and I want to emphasize what Comrade—— said to you, that the work that is going and will be going on in the South among the Negro workers is tremendous. But as he said, it won't amount to anything, unless we put our whole power behind the organization of the workers in the South. I say again to you miners—I am almost tempted to leave the farmers and come down to your section. But if I do come down—watch out. Comrades, let us have *unity—not on paper—not just cold letters—but* unity of workers and farmers—*unity of our ranks*. Brothers—brother miners, don't be jealous of each other—you are all good workers—some can read, some can write, some can organize—let us push and pull collectively, pull together.



## STRENGTHEN POLITICAL UNDERSTANDING

*From Speech of A. Markoff, Director of Workers School*

**L**INKED up very closely with all the phases of our work is the question of political education. Comrade Lenin, in *"What is to Be Done"* devoted a good deal of time and attention to this question. He said that political education means the immediate reaction to political events on the part of the revolutionary movement and training of workers in the understanding of the events.

The Open Letter deals with this question when it asks: "Why is it that the entire Party, from top to bottom, is not working to determine the best ways and means of establishing contact with the most important sections of the workers; understand and persistently and patiently help them to organize the struggle against hunger? Why is it that the Communist fractions in the revolutionary unions do not have the correct estimation of this in order to overcome these main weaknesses? Because in the Party, and particularly among the leading comrades, there is a deep-going lack of political understanding of the necessity for strengthening of our basis among the decisive section of the American workers."

### Double Task to Educate Members and Masses

On the question of political education, the Party has several tasks: to educate its own members, and to educate the masses. These two, while separate phases of the work, are interlinked, and I am going to deal with these two particular phases—the phase of education within the Party and also the dissemination of the teachings of Marxism-Leninism among the wide masses of workers outside of the Party, and among other sections of the population.

Now let us see what the Party has done so far as education within the Party is concerned. In my opinion, not sufficient. One of the greatest achievements of the Party so far has been the elimination of the contempt for theory that was prevalent throughout the ranks of the Party for a good many years. The Party membership is today really interested in theory. Every Party member should read Comrade Lenin's works or at least part of *"What is to Be Done,"* where Comrade Lenin devoted a whole chapter to the question of theory, and where he quotes from Engels in an introduction to the *"Peasant War in Germany"* that the struggle of the workers is carried on in three phases: theoretical, political, and practical economic. The theoretical phase of the struggle is placed on the same level with the political and economic. This they are beginning now to understand. The Party also conducted practical work in this direction.

## EXAMINATION OF SHOE STRIKE IN LIGHT OF OPEN LETTER

"Such systematic day-to-day work in the factories is the necessary condition for all serious preparation of strikes and for the launching of strikes at the proper moment. The workers will have confidence in us as strike leaders only if they see that we take every necessary step for the careful preparation of strikes, selecting the proper moment for the declaration of the strike, firmly welding the united front of all workers before and during the struggle, through fighting organs based on proletarian democracy, and if they see that we mobilize all moral and material assistance for the strikers and know enough to call a strike off at the proper moment if the mass of strikers are not able to carry the struggle further." (From the Open Letter)

**WE** work in a shoe shop located in Brooklyn, employing from 80 to 100 workers. Our nucleus is composed of four members. For the last year or so, our bosses have succeeded in forcing upon us about 32 percent wage cut, although always after a struggle. About seven weeks ago our bosses decided to liquidate, so our shop closed.

Previous to the closing of our shop, from one wage cut to the next we intensified our day to day activity, making positive contacts and organized a shop group under the leadership of the Shoe and Leather Workers Industrial Union.

When the shop closed down we managed to keep a large number of the crew together, meeting with them and preparing them for the reopening of the shop under one boss or the other. About the end of June, the shop was being prepared for work by one of the bosses with a few new partners.

Immediately we gathered our forces together and a committee was sent to the firm to reclaim our jobs. This was met with a refusal on the part of the firm to reemploy us collectively. With the help of our revolutionary union we got the workers together and declared a strike against this lockout.

After two weeks' struggle we gained all our demands.

Thanks to our clear solid stand and determination and our making clear to the workers the maneuvers of the bosses, we were able to defeat all their machinations. In spite of the self-sacrifice and devotion of the Party members and many other workers in the shop, we committed many errors and had many shortcomings. Our section and somehow our revolutionary trade union failed to give us adequate cooperation, support and guidance. So much so, that we failed from the beginning of the struggle to put forward such

demands as an increase in wages and recognition of the union.

While the union leadership was acquainted with the weak element comprising most of our strikers, we were left alone for almost full days in succession. The union as well as the section failed to mobilize their membership for active support to our strike.

There was the utmost lack of discipline. Especially among the Party comrades was it noticeable at any time during our strike and shop meetings. Due to the lack of consultation among the Party comrades prior to decisive actions, the comrades very often contradicted and attacked each other in open meetings (this includes also the union organizer).

While we decided to try and spread the strike, we failed to do so due to the fact that our comrades were all the time on the go, trying to keep the strikers together, and to develop their fighting spirit. It was due to the lack of support given us by the sections and union membership that we failed to spread the strike.

"All leading bodies, especially those in the sections must reorganize their work on the basis of the carrying out of revolutionary mass work. Revolutionary work is the task of the entire membership. The secretaries of the leading bodies in their work must not replace the work of the membership. It is their task to plan and organize work together with the members, to give the members practical assistance in carrying out of these tasks." (From the Open Letter)

With the exception of the org secretary the section failed miserably to lend us any cooperation. In spite of the fact that the section buro knew of the coming struggle weeks in advance and promises of help were vouched for, they all came to nought. The section membership and especially a shop nucleus working four blocks away from our shop failed to do their Communist duty, when on four consecutive occasions they were called to assist us to picket. We have failed with very little exceptions to bring the face of the Party to the fore during our strike struggle.

In spite of all these shortcomings we have been able to consolidate our forces, so that every worker in the shop has joined the union voluntarily.

In conformity with the Open Letter, we pledge ourselves to intensify our work in the shops in order to consolidate our forces and make the bosses live up to their agreement. We pledge ourselves to avoid the repetition of our past mistakes in failing to follow up our victories by intensified organizational work after the struggle is over. We pledge ourselves to concentrate upon those who during the strike have shown their steadiness and militancy: to bring them closer to the Party and into our ranks.

## Resolution on the Application of the Open Letter Adopted by Section One Conference, Detroit District

**T**HE Section Conference after a thorough discussion of the Open Letter declares its acceptance of it, and pledges itself to carry out its provisions in Section One. The main points of the Open Letter as they apply to our section are as follows:

- 1) Raising the political level of the membership.
- 2) Shop work and building up the revolutionary unions.
- 3) Negro work and the struggle against discrimination and white chauvinism.
- 4) Working out a concrete plan for two concentration tasks: a) Concentration on—plant; b) concentration in the Black Belt.
- 5) Strick check-up to see that all plans and decisions are carried into effect.
- 6) Struggle against sectarian practices; against social-fascists and white chauvinist tendencies.
- 7) Against financial irresponsibility.

### Two Concentration Tasks

1. The concentration task of first importance to our entire section is the organization of the L.S.N.R. in the heart of the black belt. All of our section forces, but particularly units 8 and 9, with the cooperation of the District Negro Committee and some forces from the downtown sub-section must concentrate on building the L.S.N.R. and leading the Negro masses into struggle against race discrimination, hunger and mass misery. In the course of this struggle we must root out every vestige of the bourgeois poison of white chauvinism, both in the Party ranks and in the ranks of the mass organizations, including the language organizations, close to us and among the working class in general.

2. Our second concentration task is the organization of the — plant workers into the Auto Workers Union. While this is also the task of the entire section, units 6 and 7 and one of the — units shall concentrate on this task under the leadership of a comrade from the section and one from the district.

All the regular work of the concentration units must be so conducted that it will aid the concentration task. Leaflet distribution, *Daily Worker* and *Michigan Worker* sales, unit parties, lectures, mass meetings, canvassing for literature sales or signatures must be so conducted that it will aid in the concentration, and unit buros must carefully work out all activities with this aim in mind.

These two concentrations are not the property of only the units mentioned above, but must be carried on with the assistance of the entire section including mass organizations.

In carrying out these two concentration tasks, the work of recruiting new members, of building the Y.C.L. and the Young Pioneers, the improvement of our Party press work, the election campaign and all other Party campaigns must not be regarded as separate tasks taking the place of our main concentration but must be conducted in such a way that they will add to and strengthen our two major concentration tasks. In line with the criticism of the Open Letter we must learn to overcome our careless and bureaucratic organization methods in order that after every struggle we shall be able to realize the proper organizational results. The *Party Organizer* is one of the best guides in overcoming this and the comrades should study it more closely than ever before.

#### Hold Section Conference to Review Tasks

The Section Committee shall work out a concrete plan of action for these two concentration tasks, setting definite aims to be accomplished within six weeks. After six weeks a Section Functionaries' Conference shall be called to check up on how far the plan has been accomplished. During the six-week period, the buros of the cooperating units in the concentration points shall meet jointly. The plan need not be accepted in every detail by the units as presented but the units have the right to work out their own plan.

The Section Committee and its members will have to supervise the activities of the units and fractions more closely. The minutes of the previous meeting must be read, a strict check-up must be made at every section meeting. Leading comrades must be held strictly responsible for failure to fulfill decisions and assignments. Units and fractions also should keep minutes which should be read at the following meeting and then turned over to the Section Org Department.

Members of the Section Committee must meet with the unit buros and help them to prepare their work in such a way that only 3 or 4 points will come on the agenda of the units, in this way assuring sufficient time for a proper discussion on all points.

In Section Committees, units and fractions, a strict financial check-up must be made regularly by the Section Finance and Org Committee.

#### Unemployed Work

In all sub-sections, the Unemployed Councils are completely out of existence. Definite steps must immediately be taken to establish at least one Unemployed Council in each sub-section. Every unit, sub-section and the Section must elect an unemployment work director

who must meet Monday afternoon with the Central Unemployed Council and secure their help in reestablishing our unemployed work.

The concentration units in canvassing for contacts in the— plant concentration streets must not fail to build Unemployed Block Committees, when unemployed cases come to their attention or when they have a sufficient group of unemployed workers to make the establishment of a block committee possible. The other units must immediately select a certain number of streets of their territory as their concentration territory and work for the establishment of block committees in these streets.

The units in the Black Belt must connect their unemployed struggles with the building of the L.S.N.R.

### International Labor Defense

The section must build a functioning fraction in the I.L.D. branches and direct the work in such a way that the I.L.D. branches participate in our concentration tasks along the line of defense work and winning contacts.

### Fraction Work

Fraction members in mass organizations shall be organizationally controlled by the unit. The unit buros shall decide what unit assignments a fraction member can take in addition to his fraction work. Fraction members shall receive collection lists, tickets, leaflet distribution and other tasks from the units, except in special cases upon which the unit buro must decide.

Party fractions must be established in all mass organizations, or strengthened where they already exist, and the Section Committee must give close attention to the work of these fractions.

The Section Committee must see to it that the fractions properly bring all Party campaigns into the mass organizations, particularly unemployed and shop work. An educational campaign on the National Industrial Recovery Act should immediately be organized in all mass organizations and connected up with our shop, union and unemployed work.

The fractions, and particularly fraction committees must be cautioned not to work in such a way as to stifle the leadership of the regularly elected executive bodies of the mass organizations.

### Daily Worker and Michigan Worker

In order to improve the exceptionally poor work of our section in the distribution of our Party press, the following steps must be taken:

1. Systematic check-up on all comrades selling the *Daily Worker*

and *Michigan Worker*, and securing of prompt payment which in turn must be promptly turned over to the District *Daily Worker* office. Lack of promptness in financial matters inevitably leads to confusion which finally results in the loss of large sums of money. This is the way in which most of the large bills have been accumulated, and this is why our Party press is always in a state of financial crisis.

2. Our section must see to it that factory sales are established at least at — and — shops.

3. Every unit should establish a route in its concentration streets, and work hard to get readers in a few streets rather than trying to cover ten blocks to get ten readers.

4. In every unit a unit workers' correspondent shall be elected whose duty will be to write all publicity about the struggle, conditions of the workers or the activities of our organizations to the Party press. These unit workers' correspondents to be called to a conference once a month together with the *Daily Worker* and *Michigan Worker* staff.

5. Section *Daily Worker* Committee must be elected to arrange ways and means for regular financial assistance to our press.

All work for the building of our press must be carried on in such a way as to further our concentration tasks.

### Literature

The Section Agit-Prop Committee must establish a literature fund and develop the mass sale of literature in our section in such a way that it will be connected up with the section concentration tasks.

The section pledges itself to organize a full time functionaries' school in the immediate future and calls upon every unit to organize discussion groups including even close sympathizers where a program of discussion on important points can be taken up in the light of the Open Letter.

Our section pledges itself to participate in the District Concentration on the — plant, to help in the sale of — and to connect up our propaganda and organization work with this central District Concentration.

We pledge ourselves to turn all — contacts into the Organization Department and to assist in the establishment of — shop groups and shop nuclei.

## CHECK-UP ON PLANNED WORK IN LIGHT OF OPEN LETTER

*Statement on the progress achieved in carrying out the Plan of Work in Section — Chicago during the month of June 1933:*

The Section Committee, reviewing the results, records first of all the fact that the units in the section are not guided in their daily work by the Plan. It seems that the prevailing opinion is that the Plan does not mean anything for the units. The unit organizers and the buros forget about it. The Section Committee has failed to remind continuously of the Plan and also to concretize some of the tasks.

The results during the first month are as follows:

1. *Shop Work*—A new unit has been organized in the H. shop. A union group has not been started.

In the M. shop there is a possibility of organizing both a Party unit and a union group because of developments in connection with the Industrial Recovery Bill. In the V. and A. shops, nothing has been done with the exception of visiting a few of the connections from the V.

The only thing done at the W. has been preparations for a meeting of Party members who have connections with employed workers of the W.

There is information received that there are favorable conditions for organizing in the R.

2. *Unemployed Work*—The West Suburban U.C. has not been organized yet. Attempts were made to organize an U.C. in the — Township, but the mass meeting was broken up by the police and we have no organization there as yet, in spite of favorable conditions.

In — we have established the U.C. finally. The open hearing at the end of the month was a success.

The G — U.C. is practically non-existent because it has failed to carry on any struggles. The Party members in it have failed most miserably to organize the workers for the struggle. After discussion with some of the comrades of unit — we came to the conclusion that it is not advisable to open up other headquarters in —, because it is impossible to raise finances during the summer months.

We have failed to organize women's committees and home owners' committees in the U.C.

3. *Recruiting*—Six units have failed to recruit any new members. Recruiting is very unsatisfactory. No working women have been recruited.

4. *New Units*—New units were established in — and — during the month of June.



5. *Young Communist League*—Y.C.L. unit of 10 members was established in B—. In M— and L— nothing has been done to establish Y.C.L. units. No Pioneer troop has been set up. Unit— has even allowed the — troop of 30 members to go out of existence.

6. *Daily Worker, Workers Voice, Literature*—No subs for the D.W. No subs for the W.V. Unit— is getting 10 copies a week now. We are selling 200 copies of W.V.

7. I.L.D.—Units— and — have secured about 20 names for the formation of an I.L.D. branch in —. The first meeting will be held on July 7th.

8. I.W.O.—The Italian comrades have organized a new I.W.O. in— of 30 members. In— there are only discussions about the I.W.O., but no organizational steps have been taken. The S.C. is not in touch with the Czechoslovak branch.

9. *Cultural Work*—No steps were taken to organize New World Club, or a workers' chorus or orchestra. Comrades are of the opinion that not very much can be done until late summer.

10. *United Front on Homeowners' Issues*—This important work has been neglected entirely. The Section Committee has failed to assign comrades for this work, and those comrades who were active before in this work have not done much to win taxpayers over to our program. This is just what the petty politicians, the reformists in control of the taxpayers' organizations want. The fractions in the B— and C— taxpayers' organizations are not functioning.

For all this activity the fractions will be responsible in the future. Comrades G— and P— are to call meetings of the fractions.

11. *Dues Payments*—Dues payments are satisfactory, but have not been organized properly as yet, and that is why we have not yet reached 100 percent stage.

This statement is issued so that the units can check up on their work and improve their activity. It should be understood that the Plan of Work is not to be read and put away, but should be used as a daily guide to action.

*Is it possible to carry out such a turn in our work? Of course, it is possible. The members of the Party have shown in countless activities in strikes, in hunger marches, demonstrations and in painstaking day-to-day work, that they are loyal and self-sacrificing revolutionists. Now all members and all Party organizations must at once proceed to determine how the work of the Party can be improved and what practical measures must be adopted in order to guarantee and carry out the turn in the Party.—From the Open Letter.*

# Party Organizer



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Vol. VI

OCTOBER, 1933

No. 10

Issued by  
CENTRAL COMMITTEE, COMMUNIST PARTY U. S. A

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# PARTY ORGANIZER

Vol. VI.

October, 1933

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## Opportunism Greatest Obstacle in Recruiting

**T**HE strike wave rapidly spreading throughout the country is now taking on added tempo as more and more workers are fighting against the effects of the National Recovery Act on their living conditions. The militant industrial unions are gaining numerical strength in the process of leading hundreds of strikes throughout the country.

In these recent strikes, we have even succeeded to some extent in overcoming many of the weaknesses of the past, chief of which was our sectarian approach towards the developing of broad cadres of new proletarian forces. In the present strikes with new locals being set up, we have brought forward many non-Party workers into the leadership of the unions and struggles.

In this very favorable situation for the building and strengthening of our Party into a real mass force, we find our Party is not making the necessary headway. In fact, recruiting of these excellent new forces into our Party is still proceeding at a snail's pace in relation to the rapidly developing movement. Why is it that our Party is not growing more rapidly?

The main reason, of course, for the lack of recruiting is the lack of systematic planned activity of the fractions and units; the failure to select the best fighters in the shops and winning them for our Party. But behind these weaknesses there was and is even today, in many places a dangerous opportunistic approach to our mass work, which is in the main responsible for the failure to build the Party. In many instances, we find that recruiting of these militant workers into our Party is consciously pushed to the back-ground. In other places, some Party members have developed the theory that our work of building the union will be hindered if we ask the workers who are participating in the struggle to join the Party. We have even cases where the Party units are prohibited from distributing Party leaflets to striking workers.

The danger of pursuing such practices can readily be seen in some of our recent experiences. The bourgeoisie very skillfully maneuvers with the "red scare." The A. F. of L. bureaucrats and other agents of the bosses use this issue against the Party and the industrial unions. Our Party fractions in the unions and the Party organizations do not sufficiently meet this issue. In most cases we still capitulate before the reactionary forces, fearing that bringing forward the Party in these struggles would endanger the strike or the building of the union.

### Wrong Methods

In the practical application of this opportunist tendency we find the following experiences: the Party organizations (section committees, units, etc.) are working hard to make contacts and develop struggles in a given factory. After a strike breaks out, the Party organizations no longer act as a collective body, but our comrades as individuals actively participate in the strike and very often forget the Communist Party. The Party organizations stop functioning. The Party no longer speaks to the workers. No more Party shop papers, no more leaflets or meetings by the Party are arranged. Or else, the Party organizations are not disturbed by the strike. They continue their regular routine life, and do not realize that their revolutionary duty is to participate in every struggle of the workers. These comrades do not understand that there cannot be revolutionary life apart from the mass struggles. In both instances we have similar results. The Party's face is entirely hidden. The workers don't see the Communist Party.

We have in the struggles that have taken place, comrades who have been in the very forefront of the fight, who have gained prestige and the confidence of the workers. A Party comrade who militantly fights with the workers in their strike has in most cases no reason to hide or deny that he is a Communist. Who could better convince the workers about the Communist Party, than just this Communist, who fights together with them? And when is there a better time to build our Party, than during the struggle, when the Communist workers show the non-Party workers through their self-sacrificing, untiring activity that they are not a secret "red spectre" as the bosses and reformists want the workers to believe, but militant fighters in the defense of the workers' interests. This is the time when we can show the workers best, that we are part and parcel, flesh and blood of the working class. If we would consciously build around these comrades groups of non-Party actives, at the same time winning them for the Party, the tempo of recruitment would increase a hundredfold.

No one can deny that our Party comrades, our fractions in the industrial unions, in the A. F. of L. and independent unions are working hard during strikes. To recruit members from the factories or from the unions is not an easy task. The Party fractions and shop nuclei have to work systematically, selecting the best fighters, the most promising workers, and patiently, persistently develop them politically and win them for the Party. Sometimes we have to spend many days before we convince the worker that his place is in the Communist Party. We shall not have the illusion that radicalization

of the masses means that they are all ready at once to join the Communist Party, that only a general leaflet or a mass meeting is needed to bring them to our ranks. What is important above all, in addition to improving our political mass education of the workers, is this personal attention to individual workers, this planned recruiting of the new forces that are being brought forward as a result of the struggles. Unless this becomes an integral part of our work in the unions, we cannot conceive that our Party will march forward at a more rapid pace than heretofore.

### Recruit Into Our Ranks

Our systematic planned recruiting in the factories and unions will develop more rapidly if we simultaneously strengthen and improve our mass agitation and propaganda. The workers should see the Communist Party every day, everywhere. The Party must explain all political events in leaflets, shop papers, meetings, through the *Daily Worker*. And in all of the activities in the shops, in the unions, among the unemployed and other mass organizations, we should recruit for the Party. No district, section committee, unit or fraction meeting should conclude without taking up correctly the problem of recruiting. The Party must be there where the masses are working, living, suffering and fighting, if we want to win over the majority of the proletariat. And in these places we have to recruit the best, most class conscious, most active, most courageous workers into our ranks.

Never before was the connection of the government with the bosses of the factories so evident as now. There is no economic struggle or strike where the N.R.A. does not play a strike-breaking role; where the city, state and federal administration does not directly intervene against the workers, through arbitration and with the aid of the city and state police, or national guards. In such a situation the Party and every single member of the Party has the revolutionary duty to bring to the workers on the basis of their practical experiences the role of the capitalist state, the essence of bourgeois democracy, the betraying role of the social-fascists on the one hand and the revolutionary role of the Communist Party on the other.

The Open Letter has stated that "never before was the situation in the country so favorable for the development of the Communist Party into a real revolutionary mass Party." This must be understood by every Party member. This should permeate the ranks of every Party unit. And with confidence and boldness we should not hesitate to bring into our ranks thousands of new workers.

—J. P.

### Some Problems of Fluctuation

**M**ANY times we have analyzed the reasons for fluctuation of our Party membership. Each time we have correctly attributed the disparity between the initiation and the actual membership to the bad inner life of the units. There is, however, another important factor which we seem to forget and this is the mechanical methods and inefficiency in handling new applicants.

*There are hundreds and even thousands of workers who have applied for membership in the Party and have never gotten near enough to drop out because of the bad inner life of the Units and the fact that the workers actually never became members of the Party on account of inefficiency in handling their applications.*

#### Neglect of Sections in Acting on Applications

Delay in acting upon applications or contacts is not considered a most serious crime by the units and sections. Sometimes applications are taken from the District and are never acted upon. Recently in going over the membership material of Section 4 we found about three hundred applications and contacts which have not been acted upon.

In checking up the records of the District we traced only six of these who were persistent enough to apply to the Party for membership, through other channels, and joined months ago. Some of these are now leading forces in the mass organizations in Harlem. What happened to the others, no one knows.

The same occurred in Section 6, Williamsburg. Scores of applications were found which were not acted upon. The reason given was that letters had been sent to the applicants but they were returned by the post office as "not found." On further checking up on the returns we discovered that the addresses were copied wrong and it was not the fault of the workers who gave them. We also found that upon return of the letters, the section committee didn't check back on the returns immediately and trace their mistakes.

#### Red Tape in Units Causes Delay

Contacts of workers wanting to join the Party are as a rule not taken care of promptly and efficiently. For example, in Section One, a worker sent a letter on January 16th asking for more information about the Communist Party. About six months later in June the contact card was sent to the District with a notation that the Old Broadway is not in their section. In other words it took the

Section 180 days to find out that the particular place was not in the territory of their section.

We want to bring another example. During March a woman worker who has been contributing to the Party sustaining fund applied for membership at a mass meeting. The application was sent to the respective section. In July four months later the application was returned to the District with a notation "cannot be found." By that time the applicant was already a member of the Party and had succeeded in getting in through other channels. We noted that the address was the same as that originally turned over to the Section. It seemed that the Unit didn't make a real effort to locate the applicant.

What happens in such cases is, that the Unit gets the contact from the Section. The Unit then assigns a comrade to visit the applicant. This comrade may not show up to a few meetings of the Unit after he gets the assignment. Such "investigations" cause serious delays. Often we find determined applicants full fledged members of the Party and functioning, having succeeded in "breaking in" through other channels before the units get through with their "investigation."

### Blind Recruiting

Some comrades are too eager to get "credit" for recruiting workers in the Party. They don't take time to explain to the workers participating in strikes and unemployed struggles the nature of the Party that they are asked to join which often results in these workers, who sign applications, not replying or responding to the call to come to the Section for their membership book.

Very often they state that they are not yet ready to join. A typical case is that of \_\_\_\_\_, a Negro needle trades worker. During the last needle trades strike she was asked to sign an application for the Party. This application was countersigned by a responsible Party functionary and the membership book was sent to the Section without any delay through investigation or other red tape. The Section, however, kept the book for three months and then returned it to the district with the notation "does not respond." The district sent a letter and the applicant responded. When we asked her why she didn't call for her book and attend meetings, she stated that she was already attending meetings at St. Luke's Hall in Harlem and so we found out that this worker was attending meetings of the I.L.G.W.U. and thought that this was the organization she joined when she filled out the application for the Party.

—D. L.



### Editorial Note

THE above examples show clearly the serious results of looseness in dealing with new applicants. It is one of the major factors which prevent many good elements from joining our ranks, which demoralize some of the new, enthusiastic Party members. These examples are taken from the experiences of New York district, but they characterize the general situation which prevails to a greater or lesser degree throughout the Party.

At the present time when the Party is leading many struggles, where new leading forces are springing up from the ranks of strikers, (among the metal workers, mines, textile, etc.,) more intensified recruiting is the way to build our Party into a mass proletarian Party. We must take steps to break down all hindrances which prevent workers from joining the Party. Because of the "red tape" in joining our Party too many workers are given the impression that the Party is a sect that doesn't want them.

### Carry Good Decisions Into Life

How can we make the drive more effective and prevent the loss of good elements who are willing to join the Party? This problem was discussed many times and good decisions were made. These good decisions must now be put into effect and checked up:

1. Each section should have a membership committee of five who will be responsible for the handling of new members in the section, under the supervision of the Section Org. Sec'y.
2. Applicants should be brought with their application cards to the section membership committee in order to avoid red tape and delay.
3. The section membership committee shall secure the address of the endorsors of the applicants (and the unit and section to which they belong) in order to establish the trustworthiness of the applicants.
4. The visiting of the applicants shall be made directly by the members of the membership committee. No sections shall be given credit for any new members on the basis of applications or paid initiations, but only on the basis of how many were actually assigned to units.
5. The captain system shall be re-enforced, not only with the view of a better distribution of work among the members of a unit, etc., but also to establish a better relationship between the Party members in the same group; notifying them of the next meeting place, etc. In this manner we will prevent the dropping out, es-

pecially of new members, who sometime miss one or two meetings and are therefore unable to find their own unit meeting place.

6. That all sections establish a unit for night workers.

On the basis of the situations in the districts and sections, other steps can be taken to secure a more speedy procedure in admitting the new members into the unit and preventing the dropping of members.

#### Must Develop Section Political Leadership

In connection with this problem steps must also be taken to prevent the frequent change of unit leadership. As the case now stands, in some districts the unit leadership changes sometimes on an average of three or four times a year. This means that practically every member of the unit has had some leading function during the year. It is very good to develop the unit members, but this is not the way.

First of all we have to develop the unit buro as the real leader of the unit. It is only in this manner that the Buro will be able to develop the individual members of the unit to leading positions in mass work.

This problem has been discussed many times, and a series of articles were written, based on experiences. However, all these good experiences have not yet been co-ordinated, are not summarized in a small manual of instructions for unit functionaries—a manual which would explain the function of the unit, the different phases of work, the method of handling new applicants, leaves of absence, etc. This manual should also contain the constitution and program of the Party. This would not only help the leadership of the unit but also the new Party members, who many times join the Party because they realize that this is the Party that is leading the struggles of the workers, because they feel that they are part of the best fighters, but yet do not know completely the program of the Party.

“Is it possible to carry out such a turn? Of course, it is possible. . . . Now all members and all Party organizations must at once proceed to determine how the work of the Party can be improved and what practical measures must be adopted in order to guarantee and carry out the turn in the Party.”

“The discussion of this letter must not take place merely in a general way. Every nucleus, every organization, every Party fraction must link this discussion up with concrete tasks, working out ways and means how to bring about immediately a real turn in the entire work of each individual organization, for the carrying out of this turn.”—Open Letter.

*"The systematic application of the united front in the big factories is of decisive significance in the question of leading strikes, the establishment of a united fighting front, and in tearing down of the barriers between the revolutionary workers and the masses of other workers. The decisive factor in carrying out this united front is tireless revolutionary everyday work among the workers, in order to prove in every question the correctness of our slogans and our proposals for action."—Open Letter.*

### Shop Concentration and the Strike of the Silk Dye Workers

**T**HE general strike of 15,000 silk dye workers in Paterson and Lodi, New Jersey, is one of the most significant battles witnessed since the "New Deal" of misery for the workers was inaugurated. As an example of rapidly developing radicalization of the masses, as a militant struggle against the N.R.A. codes under the leadership of the National Textile Workers Union, in which the fight for unity of the workers has advanced to a new high level, this strike has many important lessons for the entire Party.

Here in this article, we deal with only one outstanding feature of the strike, namely, *that it began as a result of serious efforts to apply the Open Letter and to develop factory concentration in the dye industry in Paterson, and shows the decisive role which factory concentration plays in the development of strike struggles.*

Paterson is the largest silk dyeing center in the country. When the New Jersey district was organized, in the summer of 1932, the District Bureau attempted to turn the attention of the Party membership in Paterson to activity in the dye plants. For months previous to the outbreak of the present strike, the District leadership had been hammering away on the necessity of this concentration, trying to break down the resistance of some of the leading comrades in Paterson, who argued that they had no forces, that the big dye shops were not as important as the small broad silk shops where strikes occurred almost daily, that the dye workers were backward and would not respond to appeals for organization and struggle.

The District Bureau, however, was not sufficiently insistent upon a *plan of concentration* in the dye industry, and did not closely enough guide the work of the Paterson section to enable the comrades to find the necessary means for carrying out the many decisions on dye mill penetration. Consequently, the rumblings of discontent in the dye plants were not heeded.

The National Conference of the Party held early in July of this

year, the publication of the Open Letter, aroused the comrades in Paterson, as well as the District leadership, to the necessity of organizing and preparing the dye workers for struggle, of overcoming once and for all the hesitancy, the resistance, to concentration in the large plants of key industries.

Shortly after the National Party Conference, when the N.R.A. blanket code adopted by the silk dye bosses was producing widespread discontent and resentment among the dye workers, the Party section committee in Paterson and the N.T.W.U. decided to concentrate on the United Piece Dye works—on its Weidmann plant in Paterson and its mill in Lodi.

Personal contact was established with some workers in the key departments of the Weidmann plant. Through these workers, several group meetings were called at which recruiting for the union immediately began. For several weeks there continued close daily contact with these members, with workers of various departments. Scarcely a day went by without making definite advances in establishing connections, holding meetings, recruiting into the union.

Open mass meetings of the workers in the plant were held with the consent of the union members, at which the N.R.A. codes were exposed, the treacherous role of the American Federation of Labor clarified, and the policies of the National Textile Workers Union explained. Department meetings were called and concrete demands on hours and working conditions discussed with the workers. Recruiting into the union developed on a mass scale.

Finally, after several weeks of agitation and organization, when hundreds of workers in the shop had already been brought into the union and the demands had been agreed upon, a strike vote was taken and the strike of the Weidmann shop declared. *This was the first dye shop to close down as a result of organized preparation and action. The striking of this plant was a signal for other dye shops in the city, and several days later the National Textile Workers Union issued a general strike call to all dye workers which was a decisive factor in closing down all the dye shops in Paterson and Lodi.*

While the preparations were going on in the Weidmann shop, increased activity developed in the Lodi plant of the company, employing over 3,000 workers. There we already had a shop nucleus through which attempts were made to reach out into the various departments of the mill. The work carried on in this shop, together with the mass picket demonstration of 5,000 workers, made possible the complete shutdown of the mill, an outstanding victory in the strike.

During the first two weeks of the strike, a shop nucleus was organized in the Weidmann plant, and the nucleus in the Lodi plant

more than doubled its membership. The workers of the Weidmann plant, the first to be organized, are the most militant section of the strikers and are looked upon as leaders of the strike. While there were many objective factors making the strike possible, yet it is clear that the organized preparation of the Weidmann shop for strike was a decisive element in the general strike as a whole.

There were, however, serious shortcomings in the preparations for the strike and in the methods of concentration. We did not utilize our Party press, especially the *Daily Worker*, nor our literature, to help develop the understanding of the workers and raise their political level. One of the major weaknesses was the fact that while the union was being built in the Weidmann shop, no serious efforts were made to bring the role of the Party before these workers, to recruit for the Party, to establish a Party core among the workers which would be able to give direct leadership in the forthcoming battles. Furthermore, the Party membership as a whole was not involved in this concentration, activity being limited to a few of the leading comrades.

Another shortcoming was the delay in rallying the dye workers generally in Paterson, through mass meetings, leaflets, etc., to prepare for the strike. This delay, due partly to an underestimation of the readiness of the workers outside the Weidmann plant to struggle, and partly to an incorrect view that to concentrate means to take only one shop at a time, regardless of the need for a general mobilization in a period of strike preparation, made it easier for the American Federation of Labor to step into the situation and attempt to rally the workers in plants not touched by the N.T.W.U.

We did not quickly enough intensify our work in the Lodi plant of the United Piece Dye Works, although the unity of the workers in both plants was essential for victory. Where a company has several plants, especially when located close to one another, concentration requires increased and organized activity in all of them at the same time that special attention must be given to the rest.

Despite these and other shortcomings, the work carried on in the Weidmann and Lodi plants following the publication of the Open Letter gives an example of the results to be achieved through concentration, the lessons of which must be brought before the entire Party membership in New Jersey and be utilized as a guide especially for the penetration of the steel and metal plants in the district.

—REBECCA GRECHT,

District Organizer, District No. 14, New Jersey

*"Why is it that the entire Party, from top to bottom, is not working to determine the best ways and means for establishing contacts with the most important sections of the workers, learning to overcome their prejudices, speak a language they understand and persistently and patiently help them to organize the struggle against hunger? Why is it that the Communist fractions in the revolutionary unions do not make a concrete investigation of the weaknesses in the work of the revolutionary trade unions in order to overcome these weaknesses?"—Open Letter.*

### Review of Concentration Plan

THREE months after the Open Letter was issued to the Party membership, it is important first of all to review and analyze our concentration plan and methods used in carrying it out. For the first time our section has made an attempt to sit down and try to organize our activities on a planned basis. It is therefore very natural that mistakes have been made and shortcomings found.

One of the most serious mistakes in our Section plan is that while we have given a lot of time and thought in discussing a concrete and simple plan of work, we have not bothered at all about trying to get the necessary organizational forces (that is, the man power) with which to put the plan into effect. As a result of this mistake we came out of the Section conference with a very good plan but with no people to carry it out.

#### Concentrate on Marine and Metal

Our plan calls for concentration in two basic industries, metal and marine. I will deal only with marine concentration. We decided to concentrate on two docks, the \_\_\_\_\_ and \_\_\_\_\_. We figured out that after proper concentration on both docks for a few months we would succeed in establishing a Party nucleus on each dock and a dock action committee. This would make it possible to develop some kind of a struggle on the dock by the time the International Longshoremen's Association was to sign the new agreement with the shipping owners (Oct. 1st).

#### Perspective to Develop Struggles

The struggles of the committee would not necessarily have to be a strike; any small action on any section of the waterfront would spread like fire and from then on we would be in a position to develop this movement to its proper conclusion. But this didn't work out and the reasons are the following:

In order to accomplish the above it was necessary to do two things: First, to arouse the section membership to the importance of work on the waterfront to the extent where the section membership would feel it an honor to be assigned to work there; Second, that the comrades assigned come in close contact with the workers on the docks, and begin to acquaint themselves with the problems facing the workers on the waterfront.

#### Slow in Getting Forces for Concentration

It took two weeks after the Section conference before we succeeded in getting ten Party members who are at the present time functioning on the docks. Four of these comrades are at the docks from 7 A. M. to 2 P. M., their main activity being to mingle with the workers on the shape-up and to contact the best elements among them; four other comrades are responsible for the sale and distribution of the *Daily Worker* and other Party literature and to carry through Party open air noon gate meetings.

During the past few weeks as a result of these activities there has been an increase in the sale of the *Daily Worker*. A few months ago we couldn't even sell a single copy of the *Daily*. The attendance at the open air meetings has increased tremendously. At the last open air meeting every single man working on the Morgan line was present.

Why is it that the Party met with good response while it is more difficult to get response for the Marine Workers Industrial Union? One of the reasons is the fact that these workers, having been betrayed by the I.L.A., and seeing our union insufficiently involved in struggles on the waterfront, look with scepticism on unions as a whole. We can, of course, overcome this ideology and propaganda among workers by explaining to them through agitation and propaganda the difference between the role our union plays on the waterfront and the role of the I.L.A.

We are faced at the present time with the problem of finding a suitable form of organization (dock committees, action committees or the like) for the bulk of the unorganized workers through which to carry on struggles on a united front basis for immediate demands. Such struggles are a necessary prerequisite for the building of the Marine Workers Industrial Union.

In order to accomplish this, we must call together all of our contacts from the docks at a meeting and not only limit our meetings to small groups. The psychological effect is much better when there is a large group of workers. At such a meeting we should discuss and let the workers decide the form of organization they are ready to build at this time.

### Must Build Strong Waterfront Unit

We are facing the immediate task of drawing in a number of workers from the docks into the unit so that we may be in a position to liven up the inner life of the unit by listening to some concrete facts concerning the conditions of the longshoremen on the docks. We must also bring into the unit an additional number of the best comrades within the Section, comrades who are pluggers, who will work, rain or shine; only then will the work be done, and struggles developed.

During the present election campaign it will be necessary to mobilize the whole Section membership for one day on the waterfront, for holding a series of open-air meetings at various points, to distribute a number of leaflets in the name of the Party on the election campaign, and to try to reach every worker on the dock with the *Daily Worker* and Party literature.

### Mass Organizations' Support Important

The Section will immediately have to issue a special leaflet in the name of the Party pointing out the reasons for the postponement of the shipping code and what this shipping code will mean to the workers on the docks. Besides involving the Section membership on the waterfront it will be necessary for leading members of the Section Committee and the union to go around to a number of mass organizations, such as Katovis branch of the International Labor Defense, Gli-Grand Workers' Club, etc., where there are a great number of American youth who could be made to become interested in the work on the waterfront, and in this way try to draw some of them into the work. We should also try to have a number of mass organizations arrange an affair for the benefit of the Union, for the Waterfront Unemployed Council or the Unit and other means to involve the mass organizations in our concentration work on the waterfront.

### Must Extend Work Among Negroes

There are a number of problems of great importance which we must tackle in our work. First of all, the question of work among the Negro longshoremen who make up as high as 50 to 80 per cent of the workers on some docks, the question of how to bring forward the role of our union to these workers.

I am sure that after a few months of continuous activity, plugging away along the lines we began and increasing the present tempo, we will gain years of experience within a few months and be in a better position to carry through our plan.

J. B.



### Buffalo Foundry Strike Result of Concentration

ON June 10th approximately 300 of 450 workers employed at a local foundry went on strike against a wage cut ranging from 23½ to 31 percent. *This wage cut took place more than a year ago.* It was, until the strike, a burning grievance of the workers. Prior to the above cut there was a cut of nearly 50 percent in piece-work rates. The above figures speak loud but the words of one of the strikers speak louder, "we are worse off than the unemployed."

Every week for more than a year the employers deducted the 23½ percent to 31 percent from every dollar earned for piece-work. Every week the workers complained against this economic robbery but they did not know how to stop it. Unfortunately we were isolated from the shop. Recently, however, as a result of the slight pick-up in economic activity members of the Black Rock Unemployed Council and very close sympathizers were called to work in this shop. These workers, having experience in organization and struggle, sensitive to the grievances of the workers, reacted very quickly and correctly to those grievances. They immediately suggested organization and militant struggle as the way out. The response was splendid. The results of their actions and proposals were immediately reported to the Unemployed Council organizer who gave further suggestions on how to develop the struggle.

Our comrades decided: 1) that on pay day when the indignation of the workers was highest the broadest agitation be conducted for a strike for higher wages; 2) that the strike shall be pulled on June 10th because it was the most strategic time. The above date was selected because the company had a rush order that had to be gotten out by the 15th or else it would be given to some other company. These decisions were carried out. The result was that our former Unemployed Council members were able to pull out 300 men and march them a half mile to the U.C. headquarters where they held a meeting, worked out their demands, elected their strike committee, publicity committee, defense committee, organized their pickets into squads to immediately picket the shop to pull out the night shift. A collection was taken for the Unemployed Council to get out leaflets and assistance in picketing. The unemployed and employed and assistance were worked out of the shop is on piece-work. The workers are very bitter against piece-work. Consequently the demands were worked out on the basis of the abolition of piece-work. They were:

1. No discrimination against strikers.
2. Recognition of the shop committee.
3. No piece-work.
4. The 8-hour day with increases in rates of pay.

The above demands were presented to the employers. The employers refused categorically to grant them. After much discussion with one striker I worked out the following set of demands which I discussed with the strike committee:

1. No discrimination against strikers.
2. Recognition of the Shop Committee of the Union.
3. Withdrawal of the 23½ percent to 31 percent wage cut.

My position was that it would be impossible for us to regain everything that has been lost at one stroke of the pen but that we should compromise, that the tremendous partial victory would strengthen the morale of the strikers, that we should build the Steel and Metal Workers Industrial Union in the shop, elect a shop committee and go back with the determination to continue the struggle for the maximum demands. The workers agreed and when the strike committee presented the latter demands they readily accepted. The result was tremendous. The strikers were very happy and enthused. In a day and a half, as a result of the strike, they increased their pay from \$8 to \$10 more a week.

More than 300 of them have joined the S.M.W.I.U. They have their charter and meet regularly every Sunday. "Every worker a union man" is their slogan. They have elected their department committees and shop committee which are taking up the daily grievances of the workers. The chairman of the shop committee stated at one of the meetings, "we used to be short every week; now, since our shop committee has been functioning in the shop, we get every thing that is coming to us." This clearly shows that the best way to show the workers the value of shop committees and unions is by leading struggles for their smallest grievances.

At the very outset of the strike we considered the question of building the Party. The most active elements were singled out to be approached to join the Party. As a result we were able, when the strike had terminated, to have a shop nucleus formed. There are many good elements that will be approached to join the Party.

The outstanding mistake of the strike was the inability of the leading Party committee to mobilize the Party on short notice for participation in the strike.

—M. J.

## Comparative Results of Recruiting in

District	1932		1933		1932		1933		1932		1933	
	January	February	March	April	May	June	July	August	September	October	November	December
1	75	27	118	30	69	27	27	9	54	16	162	41
2	501	189	428	206	517	197	223	301	248	86	16	52
3	227	43	223	103	151	45	24	51	30	53	91	30
4	15	32	57	28	70	29	14	30	89	140	172	93
5	117	133	426	77	322	72	120	110	149	84	75	22
6	109	155	220	200	179	116	110	149	56	330	10	10
7	79	63	107	75	163	50	206	56	330	75	24	145
8	391	211	558	279	536	140	330	156	330	112	192	15 new
9	176	122	131	76	127	90	74	124	10	6	20	100
10	25	31	19	13	20	38	33	45	24	8	34	8
11	14	25	9	57	10	22	38	55	46	51	34	34
12	31	53	89	48	99	69	58	124	112	51	34	34
13	66	63	95	207	201	127	120	139	112	51	34	34
14	—	36	—	20	—	43	—	23	—	—	—	—
15	17	—	28	10	33	—	27	—	—	—	—	—
16	40	—	20	—	60	40	40	—	—	—	—	—
17	—	20	50	85	—	40	—	100	—	—	—	—
18	10	48	—	32	74	32	74	25	—	—	—	—
19	30	25	32	51	30	24	44	49	—	—	—	—
20	New District											
Total	1923	1276	2610	1597	2661	1201	1562	1525	1343	1225		

The figures included in this report show that in the first nine months in 1933 there has been a considerable falling off in the recruiting of new members into the Party. While in the first nine months in 1932 the Party recruited 14,983 members—in the same period in 1933 we recruited only 11,629 members. In the chart 12 Districts show a decrease and only 7 an increase.

An examination of the first three months of 1932 (Recruiting Drive) and 1933 shows that in 1932 we recruited 7,194 members and in 1933 in the same period 4,074. These figures are very illuminating. They indicate that the recruiting capacity of the Party is being utilized to the highest degree only because of special recruiting drives as the records of 1932 show. The figures prove that recruiting has not yet become a daily task of the Party. The figures bring out especially the glaring weaknesses in this respect in the concentration districts.

The records of recruiting of the months of July, August, September 1933 have special significance for the entire Party. These figures demonstrate quite

## First Nine Months of 1932 and 1933

1932	1933	1932	1933	1932	1933	1932	1933	1932	1933	1933
June		July		August		Sept.		Tot'l Rec'd Comp. '32		
22	22	33	14	33	9	19	33	450	187	- 263
49	171	147	107	213	150	52	241	2478	1724	- 754
48	80	40	39	39	41	119	19	957	462	- 495
14	19	24	26	52	15	12	31	288	226	- 62
87	73	37	51	66	63	49	91	1277	701	- 576
24	65	105	59	83	70	155	94	1225	999	- 226
62	30	53	12	97	17	73	56	924	389	- 535
86	174	286	132	200	159	206	178	3123	1601	-1522
115	50	122	44	92	71	70	83	982	753	- 229
18	21	38	36	24	29	40	29	227	264	+ 37
—	30	10	24	10	23	30	35	145	281	+ 136
56	167	62	83	41	79	44	97	526	865	+ 339
86	127	99	136	129	156	—	232	908	1379	+ 471
50	26	49	9	51	15	26	54	176	241	+ 55
19	16	43	8	10	7	25	34	202	81	- 121
20	—	20	20	20	—	—	40	220	120	- 100
115	78	90	52	—	162	10	115	265	752	+ 487
—	36	37	18	72	24	45	29	154(158)	252	+ 98
28	26	31	18	17	26	35	24	298	277	- 21
—	30	—	30	—	—	—	15	—	75	+
1299	1241	1326	918	1249	1116	1010	1530	14983	11629	

clearly and forcefully that recruiting is still very much separated from the mass struggle of the workers that the Party has organized and led in these months. These are also the months which followed the Extraordinary Party Conference where the central task put forward in the Open Letter was the building of a mass proletarian Party through rooting the Party in the basic industries.

The figures show that precisely in the months of bigger struggles the recruiting was weakest. In 1932, July, August, September, we recruited 1195 members; in 1933 in the same period, the recruiting is only 1188. The main reasons for this serious situation are enumerated in the resolution of the C. C. The concentration districts throw additional light on this problem: Figures indicate recruiting for first nine months in 1932 and 1933: New York—2478 and 1724; Pittsburgh—1277 and 701; Cleveland—1225 and 999; Detroit—924 and 389; Chicago—3123 and 1601.

### Mobilizing Forces for Concentration

**F**OR years we have been concentrating on this large steel plant. The shop paper was issued, discontinued, then issued again with no regularity, no system, no perspective. Shop groups were set up, and after months of planless work and lack of concentrated attention, the groups disappeared. A shop unit was established which functioned for some time and it also was permitted to disintegrate.

Since the Open Letter a detailed plan of concentration on this plant was drawn up. But this plan was impracticable since it did not take into consideration the actual situation in the city, the forces to be utilized in concentration upon the factory, the elements inside the shop, the methods of agitation, etc., in order to realize in practice the plan worked out. However, we started work. It was only after we had succeeded in winning back two former Party members that the first work in the plant was begun. These two comrades were energetic, willing to do work but had dropped out of the Party because of our lack of systematic and persistent work in the shop. It was essential to begin in the most elementary manner to organize in the department in which these comrades were working and begin to establish through individual connection some organization in the shop. We discussed almost daily with these comrades the problems of their department and the possibility of organizing around grievances, against effects of the N.R.A., etc.

The workers in this department were dissatisfied. After receiving an increase of 15 per cent during July, they were still making only 44 cents an hour. They did not receive lunch on company time or pay for lost time and had many other grievances. It was around these grievances that the two comrades from the section bureau assistance of one of the leading comrades from the section bureau began the work in the shop. Gradually a group of 20 workers signed up with the steel union. But the workers demanded action. They formulated their demands and a petition was passed around the department to which, with the exception of but a few workers who could not be reached, every worker signed his name. The sentiment in the department was such that the workers were determined to walk out even before presenting the demands to the company. It was decided to send the signed petition to the company by letter and if no reply was received within the designated time to elect a committee of the department to present the demands and then strike if the demands were rejected. The company ignored the letter of the workers. The committee elected from the various shifts in the department negotiated with the company represent-

atives, but received no satisfaction. The workers struck and within five hours won increases in wages and improvement in conditions.

This strike in the plant succeeded in stimulating the activities of the Party members in the plant, activated many comrades in the street units and was the first step toward making some inroads into the plant. Four fundamental problems had to be met by the section leadership:

1. Re-establishment of the Party shop unit, bringing back first of all, old Party members and transforming the shop unit into a force to build the union in the other departments, to build the Party and increase the circulation of the *Daily Worker*.
2. To orientate the entire Party, which was almost completely inactive, in the work of concentrating on the plant, to begin systematic activity in helping to build the Party and union through activity in the neighborhood and outside of the plant.
3. To spread the organization into other departments, utilizing the existing organization in the department which struck.
4. The developing of the local leadership in the existing union organization, recruiting the best elements into the Party.

How are these four problems being met? Immediately after the strike we succeeded in getting together the majority of the former Party members and re-establishing the Party unit. The unit is not yet functioning as the Party in the shop, giving leadership to the existing local and bringing forward broader political issues connected with the day to day issues the workers face. Already the unit is discussing the issues in each department, the establishment of department organizations, the issuance of the shop paper, and the role of the Party in the local union. The chief problem of the shop unit, however, is to win over some of the new militant elements as a step in the direction of transforming the life and work of the Party. This is being tackled by discussing concretely the names of those workers in the union who should be won for the shop unit, the gaining of *Daily Worker* subscriptions among these workers, the individual connection with these workers, developing them into responsible leaders of the union and showing them in this the necessity of being a Party member if they are to do more effective work in the shop. The shop unit has set itself the task of recruiting at least five members, during the month of October, into the shop unit from among these workers.

The second problem of drawing the entire Party membership into work of concentration still remains a chief problem that will have to be given considerable attention by the section leadership. The Party in the city is composed in the main of unemployed workers, many of whom have contact with steel workers in the

shop. The failure of the section leadership to show the membership how to really conduct its work in the neighborhoods so as to strengthen the work in the shop has brought about the situation whereby the Party membership does not feel the necessity of really helping to build up the shop organization.

The problem of the units remains in the main a problem of creating an understanding in the ranks of the membership of the real essence of the Open Letter, how to apply the Open Letter to the problems in the shop and to understand that concentration upon this important plant is the chief task not only of individual members of the Party or the shop unit, but of every single member in the Party.

The third problem was considered from the viewpoint that in this plant first emphasis shall be given to concentration on the decisive departments in the plant and from these departments spreading into others in the factory. The first steps were taken in organizing through Party members and one or two other contacts in another department, solid organization and calling of meetings of even small groups of two or three workers in as many departments as we have contacts.

Fourth, there is not yet a conscious policy in the Party or among the leading comrades of the union of how to develop the new forces that are coming into the union. Although the new elements have been drawn into the leadership of the local union, have come forward as the leaders of the union, they are not yet a conscious force who understand the difference between our union and the Amalgamated Association, who understand the program of our union, who can present this program to the masses of workers and win them for our program against the policy of the A.A. Especially is there still weakness in educating these workers on the whole purpose of the N.R.A. and the effects that are already taking place upon the masses of steel workers. The tasks laid down of establishing these local forces as the responsible leadership of the Party, of carrying through an educational campaign on the N.R.A. by giving concrete examples of how it works at the present time, especially in connection with the mass struggles of the workers, are all immediate tasks of the Party in the city which have to be met if the Party as a whole is to grow and carry through the tasks laid down in the Open Letter.

B. G.

## Application of Open Letter Brings About Change in Section and Units

**T**HE following is the report of Section — on the plan of work adopted at the Section Conference.

First, we want to state here that the Open Letter has not been studied by all the Party members sufficiently.

In applying the Open Letter into practice we find the following:

(1) That the new Party membership is willing to carry on the work and is doing the work, but not in an organized manner precisely because the Unit Buros do not give proper guidance and leadership to the new members and the members as a whole in the units. There is too much mechanical application to the tasks of the units by Unit Buros.

(2) Since the Conference and the Open Letter we find changes taking place in the life of the Party units and the Section Committee itself. We have such members who cannot face difficulties, who have a pessimistic outlook on the whole situation and are really hindering the work of the Party. These are precisely the old Party members. This has expressed itself especially at the points of concentration. These comrades are hesitant, they cannot face the masses. They point out the difficulties, but do not give any solution. This ideology is being expressed at a time when the Party must make a turn to mass work, fearlessly and boldly, to win the decisive masses of American workers in the basic industries.

What is necessary is to fight to the end this ideology which prevails at the present time within the ranks of our Party and clean the Party of such elements and tendencies.

The Section Committee of Section 1 is determined to do its utmost in this respect and go forward and face the difficulties and at the same time overcome them by building the revolutionary unions and the Party in the basic industries in Section 1.

Now what has been done concretely on our plan of work? At the — shop we brought seven workers into the Steel and Metal Workers Industrial Union. We have there at the present time a group of eighteen members and a Party nucleus of twelve members. It is true that the membership is not active as a whole, but there is much improvement in the unit since the Section Conference. So much so that the shop unit at the present time is one of the best units in Section 1.



Secondly, our concentration is improving daily. Only last night we sold thirteen copies of the *Daily Worker*, and the following evening eleven copies, at the tractor plant, our concentration point. However, much more can be done. We are just beginning to do a little work there and are learning how to concentrate by taking part in selling the *Daily Worker*, *Workers' Voice* and other literature.

The flop-houses are another point of concentration. What has been done there? We have organized a flop-house nucleus of six workers from the flop-houses. We are calling a meeting once a week of the flop-house workers, also electing action committees in different flop-houses. The work is improving, although not sufficiently. We also organized a nucleus in a small furniture factory employing approximately fifty workers, and they are making arrangements to organize a group of the Furniture Workers Industrial Union.

#### Bring Forward Party Press

The *Daily Worker* and the *Workers Voice* are not sufficiently brought forward in our daily activities. It is true that we sell hundreds of copies in Section 1 territory every day, but the *Daily Worker* and the *Workers Voice* play very little part in the shop nucleus. There are no subs coming in at all from the basic points of concentration. This is because there is an under-estimation on the part of the comrades in the shop nucleus as to the importance of the *Daily Worker* and the *Workers Voice*. The papers are not brought forward in the daily activities of the comrades in the shops. The *Daily Worker* is looked upon as a separate problem. We have gotten a few subs, but not from points of concentration.

There is also a little improvement in our unemployed work. Some of the branches and the block committees are being activated again. Some of the branches are preparing open hearings, demonstrations at aldermen's homes, etc.

This, comrades, gives you a picture of what is taking place in our Section, and I am sure the Section Committee will do its utmost to carry out its plan of work in the light of the Open Letter.

—S. Y., Chicago

## How New York District Got \$500 in Profit in Literature Sales

**M**ANY comrades think that the successful organization of a literature department depends only on the amount of literature sold; the more literature sold, the better the department. This is only part of the battle-front on the literature field. There cannot be successful sales if there is not enough of the widest assortment of theoretical, propaganda and cheaply priced agitational literature. There cannot be a sufficient amount of literature if there is not a good literature fund or sound credit.

Realizing that the above was true, we did the following to guarantee the organization of the financial end of our literature department: We took up the question with the Workers Library Publishers, explaining how we wanted to spread the sale of literature in the New York District. We convinced them that we would not allow any of the money that came in from the sale of literature to be used for anything else but the payment of the bills. We also realized that we could not expect the Workers Library Publishers to give us our entire literature on a credit basis. We, therefore, managed to raise \$100.00 on which we placed a \$200.00 order.

### We Raise Literature Funds in the Sections

The New York District started a campaign throughout the sections and the units for the immediate raising of literature funds in every unit and section. At first we worked strictly on a cash basis. We found, however, that this was quite a handicap in the proper sale and distribution of literature. We took up the question with each section literature agent. Where the comrade showed a definite understanding and personal responsibility and where we also saw that the section committee would give him full leeway and cooperation, we began to extend credit beyond the immediate cash payment. We also introduced the policy of taking back pamphlets that could not be immediately sold (that is, everything except the 1c, 2c and 3c pamphlets which can always be sold). In this manner the sections did not tie up whatever profits they had in a stock of slow-moving literature. The literature was changed on an average of once a month.

At first a few of the sections used up the literature money for their rent, leaflets or for some other important immediate purpose. Every time this came up we immediately brought this to the attention of the section, raised a protest and showed them that it is contrary to the Party policy to use literature money in this manner.

We found that by giving credit to the section that showed its responsibility to the literature, the sales went up immediately, a wider assortment of agitational and theoretical pamphlets were sold.

Following this policy we started to open up accounts with the various branches of mass organizations. Where the payment was slow, we tightened down immediately and would not give any more literature and saw to it that the old balance was cleaned up by visiting the branch, or by impressing the literature agent with the political importance of not tying up our money in dead accounts and thus stopping us from getting more literature.

#### District Cooperates in Extending Literature Sales

The district financial department co-operated to a great extent to make it possible for the literature department to build up its own fund by not demanding any of the profits of the sale of literature.

They were willing to wait for us to establish a credit with the sections and many of the mass organizations (about \$3,000.00), this credit being turned over in a period of between six and eight weeks. If the district financial department would have been short-sighted enough to demand money in advance, it would have stopped the correct functioning of the literature department.

The result of this policy was that about \$700.00 was given to the district up to the month of March; \$500.00 was given the latter part of September, leaving quite a substantial literature fund in the form of current stock, amounting to about \$3,000.00 on hand.

This can be done in varying degrees by each district and by each section, with the fundamental principle that literature money is not to be used for any other purposes; that all literature taken from the district literature department, whether for section purposes or agit-prop work, is to be paid for; a close and consistent check-up of accounts, not to allow them to become overdue; personal attention to each literature agent in the financial as well as organizational problems in his section.

#### Planned Work—Checkup—Only Formula Now

Comrades, in commenting upon the progress that was made in District 2 in the building of a literature department, ask, "How were you able to build this department? How is it possible for you to sell so much literature? What formula do you use?"

The answer is a constant check-up. No formula, no matter how well put, will ever replace the above. Understanding the necessity of planned work, we called a meeting of all section literature agents. Each section literature agent gave a report on the conditions in his section. First, as to the literature

apparatus they had; secondly, the political development of the leadership insofar as recognizing the organizational value of literature in the Party work. Each section gave its suggestions and after a full discussion, we found that, in the main, the poor sale of the literature was a result of:

No appreciation as to the organizational role that literature plays in the building of the Communist Party.

The agitprops of the sections never connected up literature with their agitational work.

Very little, if any, mention of literature by the chairman or the speakers at meetings.

Very few individual comrades carried literature with them all the time for distribution in the places where they work, or in their mass organizations.

No attempts made to place literature in the hands of the unemployed Party comrades through a unit fund.

No check-up in house to house canvassing as to whether and how literature was sold.

#### Utilize *Daily Worker* to Promote Sales

These and quite a few other reasons were brought forth as to the poor circulation of literature. Understanding these problems and realizing that a good portion of them could be overcome by the education of the Party leaders and the membership, we started a campaign in the *Daily Worker* and in the *Party Organizer*. We issued a monthly bulletin on ways and means of selling literature, with personal experiences.

Although great progress has been made in comparison with the number of pieces of literature sold two years ago, we still find the following is true:

Only one section has a literature committee.

Practically no tie-up with the section agitprop and the section literature department.

Only 50 per cent of the units buy literature regularly.

Very little theoretical literature sold.

Still a great lack of understanding as to the role that the literature plays in a revolutionary movement.

We hope to further increase and improve our distribution apparatus by trying to overcome the above defects. In a district like New York, there is no question but that the literature department should be able to pay most of the wages of the district staff and this is the goal that we set ourselves to achieve. This will mean not only making it easier for the district office to function, but will also have the result of a tremendous distribution of literature in the hands of workers and the attending organizational results gotten from them.

—ROBERT FRANKLIN

*"The necessary concentration of our work on the most important factories does not, of course, in any way mean that we should allow our work among the unemployed to slacken. In carrying out this main task we should not for an instant lose sight of the fact that we represent the interests of the entire class, and that, especially under the present conditions the unemployed constitute a factor of greatest revolutionary importance. One of the chief tasks of the Party is the organizing and mobilizing of the millions of unemployed for immediate relief and unemployment insurance and the linking up of their struggles with the struggles of the workers in the big factories—full-time, as well as part-time workers—especially now, in view of the introduction of militarized forced labor for the unemployed and the increased attempt to bring them under reformist and fascist influence. But the Party cannot carry out this task successfully unless at the same time it establishes its base in the decisive big factories. Hunger marches and other activities of the unemployed must be accompanied by sympathetic actions on the part of the workers in the factories, while the actions of the workers in the factories must receive the most active support from the unemployed."*—Open Letter.

### Force Unemployed Struggles in A. F. of L.

**I**N the past year or so, our Unemployed Councils have led many struggles for relief and against evictions, both in Iowa and Nebraska. In Des Moines, we put up a fight for more relief and also against evictions. The Unemployed League had quite a few organizations and had the semblance of a mass organization. By carrying on persistent work, we were able to build the Unemployed Council and win the respect and support of many workers who were following the Unemployed Leagues. Through our militant fights in Waterloo, we were able to win workers who were following all kinds of fake relief organizations. The Unemployed Councils in Sioux City led many militant struggles. As a result of this militant policy, the Unemployed Councils won for themselves a good reputation among the unemployed and employed workers; so much so that the American Federation of Labor was forced to invite us to take part in their state convention.

At the state convention, the delegates of the Unemployed Councils raised the question of Unemployment and Social Insurance and after discussing this on the floor, the convention went on record endorsing the Workers Unemployment Insurance Bill. We took

advantage of this and a preliminary conference was held to plan a huge state-wide campaign for cash relief and unemployment insurance through a state-wide unemployed conference to be followed with a state march to the capital.

The Mooney campaign helped us to make an entre into the American Federation of Labor and we are following it up by involving these people in the fight for unemployment insurance. In the meantime, demonstrations for cash relief and for more relief are being held.

A similar movement is now going on in Nebraska. There, too, the Unemployed Councils have been able to establish themselves as the leaders of the unemployed through their militant policy. Through the united front policy of the Unemployed Council, a strike was conducted against forced labor in Lincoln. The prestige of the Unemployed Council has grown throughout the state. Quite a few new councils have been built around Lincoln. In Lincoln itself, the Unemployed Council is recognized as the leader of the unemployed even though there are a number of other unemployed organizations. Here, too, the American Federation of Labor has entered the united front, although they have a very small membership. The Central Labor Union has delegates on the united front committee in Lancaster County (Lincoln). A state-wide unemployed conference was held in Lincoln July 23rd-24th. To this conference came delegates from the A. F. of L., from the Unemployed Leagues and from the Unemployed Councils throughout the state. The Central Labor Union in Lincoln has also endorsed the Workers Unemployment Insurance Bill. At the conference, the struggle for unemployment insurance was the central issue. The conference decided on a state hunger march. The state convention of the American Federation of Labor will be held in Omaha on September 11th and 12th. The state unemployed conference was asked to send 5 delegates to the convention.

At the Nebraska unemployed conference we established a state unemployed federation and decided to issue a state unemployed paper. The state unemployed paper will be printed as the official organ of the federation and supported by all the organizations that took part in the conference. This will give us the possibility of bringing more organizations into the federation and also to guide the workers ideologically; to bring experiences of the workers from all over the state and nation.

—K. E.

### How Not to Carry Out Open Letter

**A** CONCRETE example of how not to carry out the Open Letter is given by Unit — of Section —, insofar as Party leadership is concerned. Under the cry of "mass work" the unit discussed for hours before finally electing a new unit bureau. All of those who had been most wordy in the declarations of agreement with the Open Letter, systematically and stubbornly *refused* to accept the nominations for Unit Buro. Such an attitude was taken under the flag of "carrying out the line of the Open Letter" and "being too busy with mass work." The result is that these "defenders" of the Open Letter elected a unit buro on which there is not one shop worker—not one trade union member—not one real leader of masses.

On the buro are one office worker, two housewives, all very loyal and devoted Party members, and a fourth comrade (why 4 on the buro is also a mystery) who for months has not understood the Party line and has defended a right-wing opportunist position. Even though he today declares agreement with the Open Letter, deeds must be shown before words can be taken too seriously.

#### "Mass Work" no Excuse

The arguments about being "too busy in mass work to accept on leading Party committees" are fundamentally false and contrary to the whole line of the Open Letter. The Open Letter states:

"The center of gravity of party work must be shifted to the development of the *lower organizations*, the factory nuclei, local organizations and street nuclei. . . . Every Party member, and especially every Party functionary, must be a real organizer of mass struggles in his particular sphere of work. From this standpoint the Party must judge the activity of its functionaries and must choose its leading bodies."

This means very definitely that it is just specifically those comrades who are "real organizers of mass struggles in their particular sphere of work" who must form the unit leadership, otherwise we will have a continuation of past bad practices where there was developed a theory of "inner party work" and "mass work." Such non-Bolshevik ideas must be burned out of our Party and the discussion and understanding of the Open Letter should have been the instrument. There cannot be two categories of comrades—those who do inner party work and those who do mass work. *All Party work is amongst the masses or it is worthless.*

The Open Letter states further:

"In order to effectively carry out this turn to the decisive sections of the American workers, it is necessary to carry on a persistent struggle against the sectarianism which expresses itself in all Party and trade union work. . . . All leading bodies, especially those in the sections must reorganize their work on the basis of the carrying out of revolutionary mass work. Revolutionary work is the task of the entire membership."

#### Buro Members Must Be Mass Workers

To elect a buro whose members are all isolated from mass work, shops and mass organizations, means to strengthen the sectarianism of the party units.

It must be emphasized that the unit buro must essentially give political leadership and organize the work of the unit, especially in the shops, unions, unemployed organizations and other working class organizations and is not just a technical body, which carries out some specific functions. The Open Letter emphasizes "revolutionary work is the task of the entire membership" and this must be organized and led by the unit buro.

The so-called "small" event in the life of Unit — is important because it shows that the Open Letter is being distorted in such a way as to make impossible its realization. Furthermore, the same tendencies exist elsewhere. The present prevailing characterization of Party functionaries, where leaders of mass organizations don't belong to the Party leading committees and where section and unit organizers don't belong to any mass organization or are not involved in mass work, is the very essence of the question of Party leadership that must be changed in the light of the Open Letter.

#### Carry Through Open Letter in Deeds

Unit — must immediately review its action and take such measures as will put it in line with the Open Letter in action as well as *in work*. This action of Unit — is only another substantiation of the Open Letter where it states in answering the question "why decisions are adopted and not carried out" as follows:

"Because in the Party, and particularly among the leading cadres, there is a *deep going lack of political understanding* of the necessity for strengthening our basis among the decisive sections of the American workers."

—J. W.



### Plan of Work of Greek Buro of the C. C.

**T**HE resolution and plan of work of the Greek Buro of the Central Committee on the basis of the Open Letter, while pointing out some achievements in the various fields of activity among the Greek toiling masses since the Fourteenth Plenum, at the same time clearly and sharply points out that this progress is extremely insignificant on the basis of the present favorable conditions—"the tremendous sharpening of the economic crisis and the new severe attacks of the bourgeoisie on the workers and toiling masses." Progress has been made in building up some new workers' clubs in New York, Chicago and Detroit, some good beginnings among the unemployed, the increased circulation of the *Empros* by 2,000, etc.

The Greek Buro of the C.C. failed to develop mass workers' clubs, and did not pay sufficient attention to the basic industrial cities and districts where hundreds and thousands of Greek workers are concentrated (Pittsburgh, Ohio, and Chicago districts). It must be recorded that the buro failed to develop opposition work in the reactionary Greek organizations.

The *Empros*, the official organ of the Party in the Greek language, is not as yet the mass propagandist and organizer of the Greek workers. The buro states: "The frank and sharp criticism of the Open Letter of all phases of work of our Party can be directed also, without any hesitation, towards the Greek buro of the C.C."

In line with the Open Letter the buro decided to concentrate its activities in the following districts: New York, Pittsburgh, Ohio, Chicago, Detroit and in the city of Baltimore where over 500 Greek workers are employed in the Sparrows Point plant. In the above districts the buro will concentrate on metal and food. The members of the National Buro were assigned to be responsible for certain concentration districts.

#### Tasks for Six Months in Light of Open Letter

The buro set itself the task to accomplish the following within six months:

- 1—To build six new workers' clubs in the following cities: Brooklyn, McKeesport, Canton, Youngstown, Milwaukee and San Francisco.
- 2—To double the membership of the existing workers' clubs.
- 3—To increase the circulation of the *Empros* by 4,000.
- 4—To recruit 300 new members into the Party with special attention to recruiting workers from basic industries.

5—Trade Union and Unemployed Committees to be established and activized in all the workers' clubs.

The buro in its resolution points out that "in order to be able to carry out our decisions and plans and to enable the members of the buro to fulfill their assignments at the points of concentration, *new* forces must be developed and drawn into the leading committees as quickly as possible." The first practical step was taken to draw in new forces with the establishment of the editorial board of the *Empros* of five members, which has already begun to function collectively. Further, the buro already took the necessary steps for the organization of a six weeks National Training School towards developing new cadres for the National Buro and for the basic concentration districts. The school will open the first week of November in New York with about twenty students.

#### Conference to Discuss Open Letter

Also, in line with its plan of work to help the fractions understand the significance of the Open Letter and to discuss with the fractions directly their local problems, the buro is calling a conference of representatives of the different fractions of the Chicago district and the eastern states for September 23rd-24th in Cleveland, Ohio.

As for the *Empros*, the buro is making serious efforts to transform the *Empros* from a sectarian propagandist paper into a mass propagandist and organizer of the Greek toiling masses. Already, in spite of all the difficulties, with a new inexperienced worker as chief editor, and the new editorial board, we can see some definite improvements.

It is about five weeks since the Greek Buro of the C.C. issued its plan of work. The district buros, especially in the concentration districts, are seriously moving forward to put the line given in the Open Letter into practice. The workers' clubs of New York, Pittsburgh, Cleveland and Chicago have already elected trade union committees and decided to concentrate on important factories. In the cities of Pittsburgh and Cleveland the trade union committees of the workers' clubs started a campaign for the organization of the food workers into the Food Workers Industrial Union. In Pittsburgh the committee has already recruited seventy-five members into the Food Workers Industrial Union.

In conclusion, the buro states: "The publication of the Open Letter in Greek and the resolution of the Greek Buro have stirred up the Greek Party members. We are confident that with the concrete plan of work before us and under the leadership of the C.C. we will be able to carry out our decisions and to put into effect the instructions of the Open Letter."

### "Every Member an Active Member"--But How?

**I**N the closing paragraph of the "Open Letter" to the Party members, it is pointed out that "Every Party member, and especially every Party functionary must be a real organizer of mass struggles." By that, one would think that every Party member is assigned to a certain specific task—and his duty as a Party member is to see to it that he carries out his revolutionary work there.

But is it so? Let's go down to a Party unit. Usually the bureau report is read, followed by some points from the district and section letters and the assignments to the various comrades, and what happens—you find that comrades are assigned and only on unusual occasions are they assigned to the same work consecutively.

Let's say a comrade is assigned to help build the I.L.D. in his section. He goes there once, or perhaps twice, for several months, then, after getting acquainted with that particular work he gets another assignment and is usually replaced by someone else and the new comrade has to start all over again.

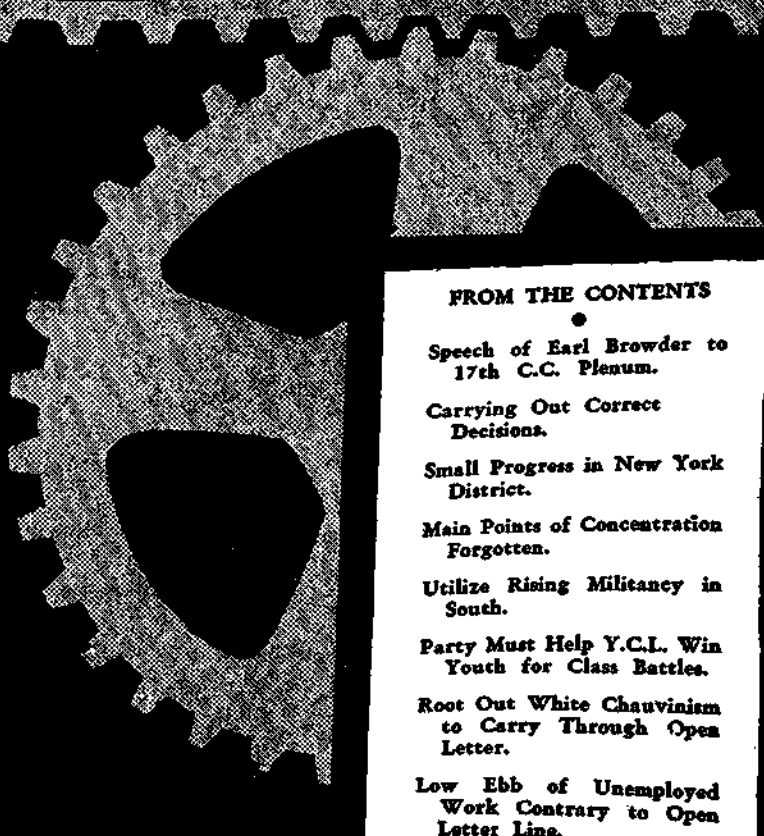
I think that this is one of the biggest weaknesses of our work. That is one of the outstanding reasons why we have such weak internal organization. The Party must make a sharp turn in this direction—we must make up our minds once for all to assign comrades to a "particular sphere of work" and to keep them there so they can become "real organizers of mass struggles in their particular sphere of work," and when we do succeed in this we will have gone a long way in carrying out the Open Letter.

—J. S.

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*"... Never before was the situation in the country so favorable for the development of the Communist Party into a real revolutionary mass Party. But from this it follows also that failure of the Party to understand its chief task—namely, to become rooted in the decisive industrial centers, in the important big factories—never before represented such great danger for the fulfillment of our revolutionary tasks as a whole."—Open Letter.*

# Party Organizer



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Vol. VI.

NOVEMBER, 1933

No. 11

*Issued by*

CENTRAL COMMITTEE, COMMUNIST PARTY U. S. A

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# PARTY ORGANIZER

Vol. VI.

November, 1933

No. 11

"Three months of carrying out the Open Letter in active participation in class struggles have shown that in the Party and its growing circle of sympathizers there exist those forces which can and will carry out these tasks. It is now necessary to have a full mobilization of these forces, to bring them all into activity, and into posts of leadership, develop searching self-criticism of all weaknesses and mistakes, to thrust aside all hampering and obstructing elements, to overcome all weaknesses and obstacles, develop self-initiative from below, with activation of every Party member and unit and to march forward to the winning of the decisive strata of the American workers who will lead the entire working class and exploited masses into the coming decisive class battles."—From Resolution of 17th Plenum, C.C., C.P., U.S.A.

## Excerpts from Earl Browder's Speech to Seventeenth C. C. Plenum

**T**HE Open Letter and the Resolution of the Fourteenth Plenum remain in full force as the basic analysis of our weaknesses and tasks. The recent events have especially confirmed the estimate of the situation given by the Open Letter at the Extraordinary Party Conference, as one of deepening of the crisis, sharpening of the class struggles and intensification of the danger of new imperialist war and especially of intervention against the Soviet Union. We have to especially emphasize that the deepening of the crisis and the sharpening of the war danger have raised the class struggle to a higher level and have greatly intensified the development of the trend towards fascism in the United States.

Now we must review the work of our Party in its main aspects of carrying out the Open Letter since the Extraordinary Party Conference. We state in the resolution that since the Extraordinary Party Conference the Party has made certain beginnings in carrying out the Open Letter. We point out the increased and more effective participation in strikes, especially in the basic industries, and the beginnings made in the building of mass trade unions. Second, some improvements in the methods of concentration. Third, improved application of the united front policy shown in strikes, especially in the silk strike, in the Cleveland Conference for united action where we established before the masses our program of struggle against the N.R.A. and in the successful U.S. Conference

Against War. Fourth, serious beginnings in the transformation of the *Daily Worker* into a mass paper by the improvement in its contents and circulation. Our draft resolution, however, emphasizes that these advances are marked by the most serious slowness, weakness and inadequacies.

We emphasize that the whole Party has not as yet fully understood the application of the Open Letter, that the leading cadres have not succeeded in fully mobilizing the Party for these tasks. *We emphasize that the advances have been of a very uneven character.* Some important districts, such as Cleveland, have hardly participated in these advances. Other districts, for example Detroit, which had made important beginnings have lost their grip for a period and even slipped back. And even in the best of districts, there is a most serious unevenness in the work, an instability of the advances which have been made and continued weaknesses. We have to emphasize that generally throughout the country and in practically every industry we have not made any serious beginnings in mass work inside the A. F. of L. with the possible single exception of some beginnings among the miners in Western Pennsylvania, where we are still largely working on the basis of the old N.M.U. cadres that were swept into the U.M.W.A. in the recent struggles. We have to point out also that in perhaps not a single district has the Party seriously taken up the question of building the Young Communist League or given the youth any serious political guidance or material help.

#### Weakness in Negro Work

Outstanding among these various weaknesses has to be mentioned the serious lack of engaging the Negro workers in the struggles that have taken place, of recruiting them into the trade unions, or the Unemployed Councils, with a few good exceptions, such as the St. Louis nut pickers and Chicago garment workers, which occurred even before the Extraordinary Party Conference. And we must further mention the extreme weaknesses of development, the lagging of the unemployed struggles during the past three or four months.

The explanation of these weaknesses come under one head. This is the *underestimation of the radicalization of the masses, of their readiness to struggle; rising out of this, doubts and hesitation about the Party line, as expressed in the Open Letter, the failure to apply this line boldly and uncompromisingly and the tendency to retreat before or capitulate to the illusions about the N.R.A., to fail to develop struggle against it as a precondition for all revolutionary work. . . .*

We must say it is essential to bring forward the revolutionary

program, the revolutionary character of our Party, to propagandize the revolutionary way out of the crisis, the problem of the seizure of power, the problem of building socialism in America as a problem of the next future of the United States. And on this basis, standing on our revolutionary program, not only in our inner councils, but before the masses of workers, we will not weaken but on the contrary, we will strengthen the daily struggle, we will strengthen our position in the trade unions and other mass organizations, and we will strengthen and build our Party. . . .

There must be the rejuvenation of the Party from the bottom to the top. We must bring forward all those forces who hitherto have not had the opportunity to develop in our movement, whom the Open Letter brought forward, who have proven in practice that they can do it—these elements must be brought to the forefront and all obstructive elements put to one side. This must be the slogan for the Eighth Convention of our Party, for the accelerated tempo of the carrying through of the Open Letter.

## EDITORIAL

**T**HIS issue of the PARTY ORGANIZER contains reports presented at the 17th Meeting of the Central Committee. The plenum was a control plenum to measure the extent to which the Party has begun to carry out the Open Letter. This material should be read and studied by every Party comrade. The Plenum disclosed the fact that only a few districts have systematically taken up the problems of the concentration factories and have checked up on how the work was progressing.

The Open Letter created enthusiasm among the membership and an eagerness to make the change in our methods of work. The Plenum has shown that a decisive change has not taken place as yet. While a certain section of the membership, larger than ever before, has thrown itself into the work with marked results (Buffalo, Youngstown, Indiana Harbor, Paterson, Lodi, Easton, Utah, New Mexico, California, Seattle, etc.) the big majority of the membership has not been sufficiently mobilized to carry out the control tasks. Our Party has prepared and led militant and heroic struggles with a handful of comrades. If we had succeeded in mobilizing more Party forces, the various mass organizations, etc., our results would have been much greater. If the Open Letter had penetrated the entire membership and all the mass organizations, larger numbers of forces would be mobilized for concentration work, and



the tasks demanded of our Party by the Open Letter would be carried out.

Most of the districts have selected five or six factories for concentration. But in many districts we repeated the mistake which is characterized by the Open Letter as being "driven by events", and did not work out "carefully with the comrades of the lower organizations, ways and means for carrying out the resolutions and checking up on their execution". The comrades assigned from the district committee were compelled to run from one strike to another, and consequently had to neglect their original assignment. This is the main reason why in many districts we have had struggles everywhere except in the concentration factories (Districts 4, 5, 6, 7, 8). For example, we developed mass unions in steel, in the Pittsburgh District (McKees Rocks, Greensburgh, Ambridge) and led heroic struggles, but in the concentration factory very little headway was made during this period. On the other hand, where we boldly stuck to the control tasks and the assigned comrades did not permit themselves to be "driven by events", good results were achieved. For example, in the dye strike in Paterson, the backbone of the splendid struggles was the Weidemann shop where through our concentration work, we succeeded in building up a solid organization. *We do not wish to create a conception that the spontaneous struggles of the workers should be neglected by the Party. The Open Letter very clearly states that we have to be at the head of the struggles, but this should never be at the expense of our concentration work.* Concentration means that once an industry, a factory or an area has been selected for concentration, there must be a genuine political mobilization for the job. It cannot mean that because some struggle develops elsewhere that concentration work is to be dropped until there is more time to take up its special problems. Concentration means that available forces of the Party, its committees, the unions and other mass organizations under its influence are to direct their main efforts toward concentration, *using other struggles to advance the concentration tasks.*

While in many places we have developed new methods of mass agitation among the factory workers, there are some districts where the orientation of comrades has not changed with the changed situation. We continue to hunt for contacts and to meet with individual workers. While we must not underestimate the value of this patient building of factory organization, at the same time we must not forget that mass agitation through leaflets, meetings, *Daily Worker*, etc., mobilizing the workers for struggle for better conditions, against the terror of the bourgeoisie, for the right to organize, etc., will bring quicker and better organizational results. No headway

has been made in establishing shop papers in the concentration factories. Even many of the old established shop papers no longer appear regularly.

The *Daily Worker* has not been sufficiently utilized in the past period in our concentration work, in spite of the splendid opportunities which the recent period has afforded us for penetrating the factories with the paper.

We have not succeeded to sufficiently develop and strengthen the leadership of the section and units. Most of our section committees are composed of unemployed comrades and have very little direct connection with the workers in the concentration factories. This fact alone explains many of our weaknesses in leading the struggles of the workers in the factories.

In spite of all these weaknesses of our concentration work, we have succeeded in building organizations in the factory and in gaining considerable influence among that strata of workers who never before were in contact with our movement. More than ever before the districts are striving to build shop nuclei. Many of the old shop nuclei, which have been in existence only on paper, have been revived and are starting to function. It is necessary now to take up very thoroughly the problems of the shop nuclei especially in the concentration factories and in the other important shops.

The Communist Party must be the leader of the workers. To do this we must consolidate the Party. We have to build and consolidate our lower organizations. As Comrade Edwards said at the Plenum, "We have to weld more firmly our connections with the masses in the factories, to sink these solid roots in the factory, to make it impossible for the bourgeois reign of terror to destroy them. To accomplish this, especially in view of the present situation, requires a much more rapid tempo. This situation demands the rallying of all our energies and forces for the carrying through of the Open Letter".

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. . . Never before was the situation in the country so favorable for the development of the Communist Party into a real revolutionary mass Party. But from this it follows also that failure of the Party to understand its chief task—namely, to become rooted in the decisive industrial centers, in the important big factories—never before represented such great danger for the fulfilment of our revolutionary tasks as a whole.—*Open Letter*.

**MINING****Hiding Face of Party Greatest Error**

**T**HE source of all of our weaknesses in Pittsburgh and in other districts is due to the comrades who are afraid to bring out our Party, who have no faith in the workers.

For example, take Ambridge. Our comrades in steel had a big head. They seemed to think that they were going to have 100,000 people in the union. Not a bad idea; it was brought very clearly to them, by members of the District Buro and by Polburo members, that these movements have collapsed before, that we had ten and fifteen thousand in our N.M.U. and now we haven't got them, and the reason we have not got them is because we did not build the Party, did not explain our Party to the workers.

For example, I spent three days in Ambridge. My main purpose in Ambridge was to get our fraction together in the leading strike committee. Three days, and I did not get it. True, I took up other matters. Again, we called a fraction meeting of the McKeesport strike, and not one of our leading Party comrades of the steel union was present. Just myself, but the leaders of the union were not present.

When we discussed steel and made the decision in the District Buro, the Party units met to discuss it and Comrade — would bring up something else in the strike committee. There were twelve decisions, and not one single decision was put into effect, not a single one. And our parade to strengthen the support of the strike was postponed three times because the N.R.A. official wanted to have a conference and then we gave up our parade to see what the conference was, and we have not had the parade in Greensburgh yet.

There was really no terror in Greensburgh, although we were told there was tremendous terror. When we investigated we found that not a single bomb was thrown, not a single striker was arrested. But some of our union leaders were intimidated, and a mental terror was created. Especially did Comrade — suffer from this and completely collapsed, with the result that the workers were driven back to work. We have to take up very seriously the role of individuals in our Party. Our main Party contact is leading comrades in the field and how many times have decisions to be made and not carried out before these comrades are removed? It is all very well to say go and get somebody else. If we were dealing as an opposition in the

A. F. of L. we would know what to do. But these are good comrades leading our work, and what are we going to do when they do not carry out decisions they help to make?

Maybe in Ambridge if I had been there oftener it would have been different. Would we have defeated the terror? I don't think so. The terror was too great. Our weakness was that our comrades didn't realize that they are fighting the steel trust and the government.

The terror in Ambridge is not one that we say we will be able to defeat without much better organization. Of course, we received a setback, but this will be determined in the coming week if we do not get a Party unit. If we are able to weld together three or four hundred workers, then we have not been set back because we can depend on this. When we are fighting the steel trust, we are going to run into terror and if we could get out of these struggles with organization, some clarity, that would lay the basis for bigger struggles.

In Greensburgh we have no excuses, it was a debacle; we allowed intimidation that took the form of terror instilled in the minds of the workers by our own forces. They were terrorized by threats rather than acts. The comrade who was assigned by the union to take care of Greensburgh was not fitted for the job of leading these mass struggles, he is not the type to lead this work. The whole question arises, how are we going to organize our Party? We have talked about this in Pittsburgh and we have not found the solution for it. It is not an easy thing to find. We are laying the groundwork which we will eventually get some good out of, but it is not good at the present time. We have to be able to know whom the Party can depend upon.

How we can talk about the Communist election campaign without building the Party is a thing which I cannot understand. We have national miners' organizers who are also Party members. How is it possible to have such a strike and have no members come into our Party?

Well, of course, if the workers are not asked to join our Party, they will not join. It is not because they forget to ask them to join, it is fear and lack of faith in the masses; and everyone we asked to join our Party in Ambridge, joined the Party. They could have been in the Party two or three weeks before.

—JACK JOHNSTONE.

### Party Functioned Poorly in Mining Strike Districts

**I**N Western Pennsylvania there were 75,000 miners on strike and in Central Pennsylvania a little over 20,000 steel workers on strike in the Pittsburgh District in the last month. And in addition to this I think there were about 1,500 cleaners and dyers on strike in the Pittsburgh District, with the strike sentiment penetrating practically every factory in the District, with all the mines shut down. In these struggles, comrades, with the exception of the steel industry where our union played a leading role—we have played a very insignificant role. We have played practically no role as far as the Party is concerned, that is, the Party as the political leader of the workers, with the exception of a few leaflets—one in the mining industry and probably a couple in the steel industry—not even in view of the election campaign. With all of these strike struggles going on, our Party will not be on the ballot in many places, including the city of Pittsburgh itself. And therefore, comrades, it is necessary in my opinion to speak above all about the position our Party finds itself in at the present time in Pittsburgh, because unless we are able to put our Party to work it is useless to raise any perspective and expect to fulfill any. In the mining district our Party as a Party is not in existence as far as the strikers are concerned. Our Party is composed almost exclusively of the blacklisted, foreign-born miners.

#### Change Organizational Structure

Our organizational structure, in my opinion, in the entire district is such that it is impossible for the Party to function as a Party. We have approximately 90 units in the Party in the Pittsburgh District, but only one functioning section committee in the District. The rest of the Party is being led through letters from the District office, through personal visits as much as it is possible for the few leading comrades to visit various units in the Party. I think that this in itself explains why it was impossible for us to mobilize our Party as an organization and make out of the Party a real driving force both in the mining and in the steel strikes. Secondly, our leadership, because of the lack of organizational machinery, that is, the District Buro, is separated from the Party units to such an extent that the Party membership does not know what is the policy of the Party, what are the daily decisions of the Party leadership, and therefore it is impossible to expect that the Party will carry out these decisions, because there is no way of explaining these instructions to the Party units with the exception of letters. On the other hand, those comrades who are engaged in trade

union work and in other forms of activity, such as in the I.L.D. and so on, still do not consider themselves responsible for building the Party, and do not undertake steps to build the Party. I think that now we have the best opportunity really to establish our Party at least in the mining industry. We have established quite a few contacts in the course of the present miners' strikes. We have established some old contacts that have been lost for us since 1931. We have established many new contacts and in discussing this question already there is the possibility of immediately building at least ten units of the employed miners, or at the present time striking miners, who are taking an active part in the leadership of the strike. I do not think that this is sufficient. We cannot simply expect that the workers will join the Party without their seeing the Party in action.

#### Leadership Isolated From Members

If we can establish the necessary machinery of the Party in the Pittsburgh District, a machinery that will be able to understand and to transmit to the Party units the decisions of the Party leadership, it will help the Party units to carry out the decisions of the C.C. and the District Buro; otherwise these decisions will not be carried out and I think, comrades, that the separation of the District leadership, and this applies also to the leadership in the units and the lower organizations of the Party, was expressed at every stage in the development of the miners' strike. We were making one decision and the Party membership was carrying out something else. This did not only happen on one occasion but this happens repeatedly, and this expresses the isolation of the Party leadership from the Party membership. A comrade at one of the District Buro meetings expressed this very correctly when he stated that the workers are not isolated from us but we are isolated from the workers. In this strike the miners were actually carrying out our policy without our being involved as a driving force in the strike.

At the rank and file U.M.W.A. conferences we are holding there are sections of workers that are ready for the Party, and yet I think that in the entire strike period we have succeeded in building only one unit.

—B. FRANK.

At the same time the Party must carry on a systematic struggle against the bureaucratic isolation of the apparatus from the Party masses, against the suppression of inner Party democracy, for the development of political life in the lower organizations, particularly in the factory nuclei, for the development of thorough-going self-criticism, for the development of initiative in the lower organizations and for the improvement of its functioning cadres.

—Open Letter.

### More Attention to Women in Concentration Districts

**T**HE Open Letter and the Fourteenth Plenum resolution reminded us of the need of collective responsibility from the top committees down. I found for example in the Pittsburgh District, as Comrade Johnstone pointed out, that whenever there is a District Buro meeting the decisions are not carried out in the lower units. Not because the comrades don't want to carry them out, but because in many instances the lower units are not informed of the decisions. We had a concrete example of this in the funeral of the comrade shot in Ambridge. Although we had a meeting of the fraction and all details were worked out, the comrades who were at the fraction meeting did not transmit the decisions to the other comrades in charge of the funeral. As a result of this the action at the funeral did not correspond with the decisions made, and caused the arrest of several comrades.

We can and must at all times strive to bring forward our Party. We had our chance even at the funeral in Ambridge in face of the most terrific terror. When I spoke of the problems facing the workers in Ambridge and ended my speech by saying that I represented the Communist Party I received much applause. This showed us that the workers are not afraid of the Communist Party.

There are times when we are not only hesitant in bringing forward our Party but our Industrial Union as well. I want to give an example of how we can speak even at A. F. of L. meetings. In the strike of the coal miners in Pittsburgh a real united front meeting of miners' wives was held which included 19 locals of the United Mine Workers of America. You have heard of this meeting but do you know the significance of it? When you go back to the coal field you must see to it that these women are instruments within the locals of the U.M.W.A. to win the men over to us.

I went to the meeting. Being a stranger, the women of the U.M.W.A. looked at me with suspicion, for the women have been warned that National Miners women would be there. Even so the meeting laid a basis for real united front action and the women arranged a mass meeting for next week. This shows us that we can work with women of the U.M.W.A. I wish somebody would once in a while say something about the women in the steel and metal workers' strikes. We don't have to say anything about the textile strike in Paterson because they are doing a pretty good job there. The women are leading the strike and doing it well.

—ELLA REEVE BLOOR.

## Carrying Out Correct Decisions

**WHAT** is one of the main things to be overcome before we can carry on good work? There is much looseness on the part of the comrades, especially the union comrades, in remembering and carrying out decisions. The district bureau meets, has good discussions, good decisions are made; the comrades leave and do not carry out these decisions. In some cases, when they leave, they get a new idea; and they carry out their own idea. They ignore the bureau decision.

One of the most important decisions recently was the decision to hold a district meeting of the miners, to discuss the agreement, the question of taking over the strike and all that. One comrade was sent down to work with me and to gather up workers for the meeting; we gathered left wing miners and had a very good meeting, but we didn't mobilize out of this meeting for the Pittsburgh conference because the comrades didn't tell me about the Pittsburgh conference, and the decisions of the bureau. We didn't carry out the decision. Why is it that the comrade, after he left a bureau meeting, did not carry out the decision, did not explain to me the decision and discussion and mobilize these workers for the Pittsburgh conference? What is true of that is true of many other decisions; I can't go into them because I haven't the time. But this is one thing that has to be done. The comrades must know the district bureau is the district bureau; that it discusses the problems, makes motions and decisions; then we must carry out the things decided.

### When Are Decisions "Correct"?

In regard to correct decisions. Yes, comrades, we made a lot of correct decisions, but in this question of correct decisions comes another question. When are "correct" decisions made? There is a "correct" time to make "correct" decisions and also a too late time to make correct decisions. On the whole situation of the United Mine Workers, some will remember at the Extraordinary Conference we had quite a conflict. What was the situation on the question of the United Mine Workers? At that time some of the comrades said the campaign was already beginning to collapse. I had only been in Pittsburgh for some hours, but in those hours I saw a tremendous campaign. I think, while we may make correct decisions now on what we want to do, if we would have made them then, we would be much stronger now; the comrades of the United Mine Workers and the National Miners' Union would have been oriented in the right way. When the masses joined the United Mine



Workers, what was left for the local comrades to do but to join the United Mine Workers too and work with them; I don't mean to liquidate the National Miners' Union; it as such must remain, but the majority (local leaders, etc.) had to go to the United Mine Workers. After I got back to the Brownsville section, when we started to carry out the decisions, what were the results? Some members went into the United Mine Workers, five got jobs and are now working in key mines.

#### Lack of Centralized Leadership

Now one other thing that has to be corrected is the situation among the comrades; some of the leading comrades here after meetings, or in private discussions, express ideas they do not express in bureau meetings. Then I ask, "Why don't you say so in the bureau meetings?" they say, "Hell, if I would say this, they would all jump on me." The comrades must be brought to express their opinions, and if they think they are correct, to fight for them, and show them also they have the right to be wrong, if they are wrong; and this jumping on them must be eliminated.

Now, on the strike. One of the main shortcomings was the lack of a centralized leadership on the part of the miners to carry out the good strikes; our main job should have been to organize a good leadership. This could have been done by a policy of concentration. In places where we have more, for instance —, we could have concentrated there; I could have gone there because I was once the leader there and we would have built such leadership, and then the rest of the locals could have built a leadership around this small base. How did we go into this question of building a leadership? I was informed a short time ago, since we came here, that a leaflet was gotten out to the miners in the name of eight local unions, calling a conference. One thing is very definite; we are not going to build a central leadership on the basis of fakery. Let's say that out of these local unions, just one gets up and says this is a lie; our union didn't endorse the call, and the eight local unions did not sign the call, but this was invented in the head of Comrade —; that is not the way to draw miners in; that is the way for defeat for us and not to organize these miners.

—T. M.

Every Party member must now understand that it depends on correct policy and above all the execution of the correct policy whether we will be able to mobilize the masses of workers for struggle and whether our Party, in this historically favorable situation will become the decisive mass Party of the American proletariat, or whether the bourgeoisie with the help of its social-fascist and fascist agents will succeed in disorganizing the mass movement and keeping it down.—  
*Open Letter.*

**STEEL****D. O. Must Lead Workers' Struggles**

**D**ISTRICT Four has made some progress in the carrying out of the line of the Open Letter. True, this progress is not commensurate with the tremendous possibilities.

These beginnings have been made, first, in the penetration of the basic industry—steel—where we have succeeded in building up the Steel and Metal Workers Industrial Union into a mass union. Second, the penetration of the light metal, furniture, shoe and leather and the rubber industry. We have also made some serious beginnings in the development of unemployed work, relief strikes, etc. Third, we were able to make deep inroads among the farmers of western New York and have established new groups there.

There has also been a steady and sharp improvement in the work and inner life of the Party; section committees have been established and are beginning to function.

**Progress in Negro Work**

Progress has been made in the development of our Negro work, precisely due to the fact that we were always conscious of the necessity of drawing Negroes into the leadership, not only in the trade unions, but in the mass organizations, taking up the grievances and every single issue and developing a struggle on the basis of these grievances and issues. In practically every strike we put Negro workers on the strike and every other committee that was negotiating with the company. We have drawn Negroes into all the leading committees of the unions and in the department and shop committees. At present we have two Negroes on the District Board of the Metal Workers' Union.

We have made some progress in the League of Struggle for Negro Rights. Its influence is felt to such an extent that it recently affiliated two groups and is taking steps to affiliate churches to the League of Struggle for Negro Rights.

On the question of drawing Negroes into the leadership, the ——— steel strike in Buffalo was led by a Negro worker, a member of the Party who came in from Gary, Indiana. We worked with him to organize the entire department and without a strike we were able to force the ——— Company to grant the demands for this department. The workers in the other department, hearing of

this victory, consulted the wire drawers on how they achieved this victory. It was on the basis of the work among the wire drawers that we were able to draw into a major battle the workers of this decisive steel plant in Buffalo, through which we were able to build the Party, to establish the Steel and Metal Workers' Union in Black Rock. The A. F. of L. is active in Buffalo, but we did not stand on the sidelines. Everywhere the A. F. of L. was active we were there, challenging the A. F. of L. for leadership of the masses. One of the workers pumped a question at John C. Johnson, Secretary of the Central Labor Council, and a Negro worker took the floor and challenged him on the Negro question, and this threw him off his balance, and then I spoke for thirty minutes, after which I told the workers to join the Steel and Metal Workers' Union, and they did join that union.

#### Against Mechanical Separation

There have been weaknesses also in our work. Leading comrades are often afraid to bring in the role of the Party in these struggles, so deep-rooted is the fear of bringing in the Communist Party. When I was active in the strike in Buffalo the workers did not raise the question of the "Reds," and I myself brought in this question. I said, "You know that I am a member of the Communist Party, but I am also a steel worker and I am here to help you organize for higher wages and better conditions." When this question was raised, the comrades said that the workers would call the union a red union, and although I worked in the steel mills in Buffalo, I had to fight them to get a book for the union, and only a few days ago, after three months of struggle, I got a book to the Steel and Metal Workers' Union. This mechanical separation of the Party from trade union work, this fear that when a Party comrade becomes a District Organizer he cannot have anything to do with mass struggles, is absolutely incorrect. The place of a District Organizer is among the workers and not in an office.

There was also a tendency to put the highly skilled, former aristocracy of labor and certain petty bourgeois elements into the leadership instead of basing the leadership of our unions on non-skilled and semi-skilled workers. Because of this situation the comrades were influenced by the ideology of those skilled and petty bourgeois elements, and we have suffered from this because some of these unstable elements became the active agents and tools of the steel barons in fighting against the union. This should be a lesson not only for our District, but for the entire Party, not to base our unions upon the skilled only, but mainly on unskilled and semi-skilled elements.

—MANNING JOHNSON.

### Main Points of Concentration Forgotten

**W**HILE our Party has participated in a whole series of strikes, the main points of concentration have been forgotten in the midst of this activity. Of course, we cannot fix the class struggle according to blueprint, but these various struggles in which we participate must be utilized to further our organization work in the concentration factories.

For example, in the city of St. Louis, where the main point of concentration was packing house and steel, we find that we led 17 strikes in miscellaneous trades, and that there exists a definite resistance to work in the concentration points. The same thing is true in practically every section, as well as in Chicago, with the possible exception of Indiana Harbor, where we carried through our objective of developing a movement in the ——. This situation exists also in Cleveland and Pittsburgh.

We must see from this that the warning that we must fight against all efforts to divert our attention from the control tasks has not been heeded, but instead we have fallen into the mistake of doing work on the basis of daily events.

#### Absent During Struggles

Another feature of concentration is that some struggles have actually taken place in concentration sections, but we were not there at all. We find today, for example, as a part of this whole strike wave, that in the East Ohio Section we have had the largest strike of steel workers. I refer to the — situation, where the steel workers carried on a militant struggle, going over the heads of the A. F. of L. officialdom. Mass picketing was carried on. Committees went through the plant department by department to make sure no scabs were there. We had no union or Party members there.

Another phase of this problem is, that while we very correctly emphasized that we should concentrate in key departments inside of the given shops and mills, sometimes we tend to narrow this down. We started a strike struggle in Youngstown among the chippers, but there we limited the strike and made no serious effort to utilize our base to spread the strike and organization. We find, for instance, that the workers have come to the comrades raising the question: "Why doesn't the S.M.W.I.U. worry about the other departments?" While we correctly approached the idea of rooting ourselves in key departments, we failed to understand that we do this only to get a foothold throughout the entire plant.

One of the reasons why the work since the Extraordinary Con-

ference has not progressed so rapidly is because, down below in the ranks of the Party, our approach is not political enough. In many cases we find a complete failure to fight the Industrial Recovery Act. Instead of understanding the N.R.A. as the medium of the bourgeoisie and the State to defeat and attack the growing strike struggle of the workers, we talk about the strike wave occurring because of illusions among the workers that the N.R.A. is for them. In dealing with the N.R.A., where it was dealt with at all, where we were not afraid to deal with it, it was too often done in a general way, instead of relating concretely what did the N.R.A. mean to this or that category of workers.

If we take the Akron section, another concentration section in District No. 6, where the A. F. of L. has over 3,000 members in three big Akron rubber plants, our union hasn't one member. When we asked the comrades why is it that on the one hand the unemployed work is declining and on the other hand we are doing nothing to build the Rubber Workers' Union, they said, "It's the N.R.A." We asked them what happened to the membership and leadership of the Unemployed Council. They said, "They are all working." And when we asked whether these men were being used to build the union, they said "No." They had forgotten all about that. We did not place the question sharply enough, in a political sense, and did not draw the organizational conclusions, which resulted in a weakening of our mass work among the employed and unemployed.

In the election campaign in Cleveland, taking place in the midst of the whole N.R.A. drive, in which Cleveland is boasted of as the best example by the bourgeoisie, where each candidate boasts that he is the best supporter of the Roosevelt program, our election program has not one word about the N.R.A.

This right opportunism which permeates our election campaigns, especially in those localities where we have workers' tickets, this whole opportunist policy of hiding the face of the Party in the election campaign, in the course of strikes, etc., actually helps to defeat the struggles of the workers, because it cuts off the Communists as the active leaders from participating in these struggles.

The basis of the entire opportunist action is lack of understanding of the workers' ticket, and I believe that we should have initiated local united front workers' tickets, in which the Communist Party would come forward boldly and openly, and adopt a minimum program and select candidates—whether the candidate be a Communist or not is not a decisive thing—but a local united front ticket, in which we would play an open and leading role. Instead of this, as we have seen, opportunist ideas developed.

—J. WILLIAMSON.

**CONCENTRATION****Small Progress in N. Y. District**

**W**E can say for New York that some *small progress* has been made since the Extraordinary Conference. I want to emphasize the "small." But what we have done is to direct the serious attention of a section of our Party towards the basic industries. We have got some little achievements already in this connection—*achievements not to be stressed because of the shortcomings, which are the things that must be stressed.* We are checking up a little on the work being done in the basic industries. We have meetings (and have now made a system of this) involving everybody concerned in concentration in each particular industry. Our District Buro regularly takes up concentration industries. Our District representatives in the Section see to it that the Sections do likewise. This is a step forward in New York.

In Marine we find as a result of our small activities in Red Hook that we have been able to get quite a few of the longshoremen there to come toward us on one occasion or another, such as for instance a showing of "Potemkin" where about 1,000 longshoremen came. Many comrades in the trade unions are of the opinion that workers who are Republicans, Democrats and even fascists cannot be approached, but you may be surprised to know that the greatest applause when these workers saw "Potemkin" was when they showed a picture of Stalin, and these were Italian workers into whose ranks surely fascism has penetrated.

**Can Build Party**

We recently called a meeting at a school and 400 or 500 of these longshoremen responded although the school was closed against us at the last moment and the meeting had to be held on the street—with some success. A little organization is being crystallized as well and this is a beginning, especially when we see that for a long time we have been "concentrating" in Red Hook and now with small efforts we are getting some results.

On the West Side, in marine, much too slowly, it is true, but nevertheless some real effort, with the result that whereas in one unit we never had any longshoremen and in the other unit we had a few, but not from the concentration docks, we have now one group and already sufficient members, three of whom are Negroes, to build a Party nucleus on one of the concentration docks.

In metal, there was a strike, mainly in the light section of the industry. But we can't say this is as a result of our concentration.

The most important metal plant that we concentrated on was the Robbins Dry Dock where there is now a strike; we find that although we have been concentrating here for a year or more that things were happening inside that we did not know about, namely, that the A. F. of L. was organizing the most basic workers in that drydock. We had a painters' group, but we did not know that the A. F. of L. was organizing. We had some effect on the strike. Through our agitation and the militancy and determination of the workers, the A. F. of L. was forced to call the strike, which has spread to several other shipyards in this port.

City transport—last week's report shows that we have a group of about 40 workers in this industry, which is a step forward, although very little—four groups with some units concentrating on some of these shops. They do not know the best methods of work, we must teach them that.

Harlem, another concentration task, some progress in several directions—one a real consolidation of the leadership in Harlem, which is a tremendous step forward because in the past, due to lack of this consolidation, all kinds of misunderstandings, all kinds of dissatisfied elements were pulling in different directions, which has now been considerably stopped and almost liquidated.

#### Revolutionize Workers During Struggles

In bringing forward the Party, this must be said—that the leaders in the struggles, and particularly our trade union leaders, have not sufficiently made efforts to revolutionize the workers in the course of the struggle. If this is not done, we cannot be successful to the maximum in bringing forward the Party.

True, the Party itself, aside from the comrades within the trade unions, who are part of the Party, has a task to perform and we have had very serious shortcomings in this connection. For instance, in not one of the big strikes did the Party issue leaflets as to the role of the Party in these struggles. This was done in a section or two.

The *Daily Worker* was barred from a few of the strikes by our own comrades and we should have used leaflets through which we could have reached all of the strikers. Meetings likewise were not held to the degree they should have been. Very few, as a matter of fact, in the name of the Party inviting these strikers. We are trying to overcome this now.

I want to speak about recruiting. Comrade Stachel has already given an illustration I wanted to use, namely, in fur. We had these major struggles of the last few months. We find ourselves with the

same number in our fraction that we had preceding the struggle. One or two died, one or two kicked out, and one or two gained. But 10,000 workers, a background such as no other sector of the labor movement has, struggles over a period of years, the red issue raised dozens of times and successfully combatted, so that we have the industry organized almost 100 per cent in our union. And still only 100 members in the Party.

Another instance. A meeting of the shoe fraction, 50 present, our criticism of the leadership for not revolutionizing the strikers in the course of struggle. The rank and file picked this up and criticized the leadership for hiding the face of the Party, but when the question was asked, how many had spoken to workers about the Party and given them literature, five raised their hands out of fifty, and only one (after a period of five or six weeks of struggle) recruited a Party member. This shows the situation.

In metal a little success in recruiting, with the result that in a few of the big shops we now have nuclei, in one of them about 20 members in a shop of 300-350 workers. Some little attainment and particularly showing the possibility because these workers are also young Italian Americans and others who the other comrades say are so permeated with fascism and such good Republicans and Democrats that we would isolate ourselves from them if we raised the question of Communism. However, the small results we have had show the possibilities.

### Utilize Rising Militancy in South

ONE of the most important developments in the South in the recent period has been the growth of the fighting militant spirit among hundreds of thousands of Negro masses. This does not always show itself in an organized way. In former years, following lynchings, the general outward expression of the Negro masses was one of despondency. They didn't see a way out, there was no leadership in the fight against lynching. But, particularly following the Tuscaloosa lynching, you find everywhere the desire of the Negroes to fight in one form or another against lynching and other attacks on them. This development of the rebellious spirit breaking out in the open here and there on the part of the Negro masses in the South is of great immediate consequence to our Party.

There is one other side to this picture, and that is the question of the white toilers. Here is the weakest point in our work. However, in the last few months we can observe a new spirit among certain sections of the white workers, and here and there among the white toiling farmers. Our share-croppers write to us that two white



farmers are going along with them to the Chicago Convention in November. There can be noticed a growing interest on the part of certain sections of the white farmers and white workers and a desire for unity with the Negroes. The whites are still opposed to social equality, but at least there is the definite step forward for economic struggles with the Negro masses, which is at least one step forward in the fight for complete equality. Therefore, our important task now is to find ways and means of developing the white workers to take part in joint struggles with the Negro masses.

We have also found this: that wherever the Party has deviated, we have fallen back. Sometimes we talk about right and left mistakes, and think it is an academic struggle. Our experience in the South has shown us that every time we went off the Party line and made mistakes to the right and left on the Negro question, we fell back in our work and the progress we did make in the South came when we carried out the Party line and moved forward.

#### Fail to Develop Trade Union Movement

The fundamental weakness in all our work was our failure to concentrate our forces and develop a trade union movement, to take the leadership in at least a few of the strikes that have broken out in the South. We failed to link up the various elements of the struggle. There was too much of a division between the economic struggle and the political and the national struggle. There was a failure on our part to link up the struggle of the Negro masses with the struggle in the shops.

I will give one example of the possibilities, despite the weaknesses in our work. The I.L.D. has 200 members in the \_\_\_\_\_ territory. Over 50 of them work in the \_\_\_\_\_ in Birmingham and we have not been able to bring them into the union and Party.

In view of the developing situation, the question of cadres becomes a life and death question, and I don't think the Party as a whole has grappled with this question seriously enough. We had one experience, which shows the spirit and determination of the new masses coming forward in the struggle. The District Bureau decided that I was to take up all questions with the various active comrades in Birmingham—40 Negro and 10 white comrades. I met about 10 of them each day, speaking with them personally. And the main reaction from these comrades was their desire to do more work! They wanted to work. And if we know how to handle the new forces, adopt a bold policy and a patient attitude with these new workers, we will forge the necessary instruments with which we can carry out the struggles in the coming period.

—N. ROSS.

### Communists Must Build Party During Strikes

**W**ITH regard to recruiting into the Party, we have in the silk strike the same difficulties which other speakers have dealt with. It is true that we succeeded in recruiting about 50 silk workers into the Party in the course of the strike. However, we could have easily doubled that number. What was the difficulty? Our Union organizers, especially in Paterson, claim to be so busy that they never have time to talk to workers about joining the Party.

The dye workers have learnt much about the Party since the strike began, and the prestige of the Party has grown greatly. At one of the last meetings which I addressed, when I stated that Jack Rubinstein, a Lovestone renegade now one of the A. F. of L. leaders in Paterson, had been expelled from our Party, there was a roar of applause from the workers present—1,500 of them. But when I told a comrade at this meeting that many of these workers could be recruited into the Party, this comrade laughed; he told me I was dreaming. But the very next day I called a group of them together and seven joined the Party.

I want to give another example along the same lines, not in connection with the silk strike, but with the work of our organizer in an important section in New Jersey. This organizer has contacts with workers in shops. He walks about some sections of Trenton and is hailed by workers who know that he is a Communist organizer and have seen him active in struggles. This comrade, however, did not recruit one worker into the Party in a period of six months. When we asked him to explain this, his answer was, "How can I go to the same workers whom I am trying to organize in the shops, into revolutionary unions, or in the A. F. of L. opposition groups, and at the same time ask them to join the Communist Party? How can I speak to them as a Communist organizer, at the same time that I am acting as a union organizer?" This comrade seems to have the idea that the task of a Communist organizer is to sit in an office, and as soon as the Communist organizer begins to participate in mass work he loses identity as the Communist organizer and cannot recruit workers into the Party. We are beginning to break this impermissible attitude down, and we have just received a letter from the Section Organizer stating that he is at last organizing a shop nucleus in a big pottery factory. He actually talked to the leaders of the opposition group in the A. F. of L. in that shop which he himself helped to organize, and found that once he asked them to join the Party, they were ready, they agreed. Many more examples along the same lines could be given.

—R. GRECHT.

### Making the *Daily Worker* a Mass Paper

**T**HE *Daily Worker* has tremendous responsibilities and tasks in the present situation, with the war situation developing as it is, with the development toward fascism, with the strike struggles taking place in all parts of the country. The pressure on the *Daily Worker* is tremendous. The paper is compelled to react very quickly to many developments of utmost importance; therefore, in making an estimate of the paper, we must do this, not on the basis of what the paper was three or four months ago, but on the basis of our role now in organizing and leading the struggles of the workers. We have to state that while some achievements have been made in the direction of popularizing the paper, making it more interesting for newer sections of the workers, the paper has not yet been able to meet its tasks at the present time, and furthermore, we have to state the Party is not conscious of the role that such a paper can and must play in preparing and in organizing the struggles of the workers. We have to bring about an improvement both with regard to the paper and a change in the attitude of the Party toward it, because it is not being made use of now to the extent it should be, and the comrades are not cooperating sufficiently in solving the problems.

#### Mass Leaders Must Cooperate to Improve *Daily*

The paper during this past period has not been able to take up the problems confronting the workers in the industries, the general political problems that arise, and become a real agitator, a real propagandist, a real organizer of the workers. This is our greatest shortcoming. The overcoming of this will require the conscious attention of all of the comrades on the staff. It will require more than that. It will require that the comrades in the unions, in the districts, the comrades who are engaged daily in mass struggles, will themselves have to be brought much closer to the staff of the *Daily Worker* in two senses.

First, they must give to the *Daily Worker* their criticism so that we are constantly checked by the comrades engaged in this work; Second, we have to have contributions from the comrades, answering the actual problems as they arise. This is almost entirely absent at the present time. We do not get this cooperation from the comrades of the unions or districts, and the result is that we are not checked in the tendency that naturally finds a place in the paper and the pressure on the paper to transform it into other than a real leading organ, capable of organizing the workers for struggle.

The next period of development in the paper must be the stressing of it as an organizer, as the agitator and propagandist of the masses, their leader in preparing them for struggles, etc. This is the weakest phase of the paper and must be overcome. In this we must have the support of the entire Party.

During the past period there has been some change in the situation of the paper. It has developed somewhat of a broader mass appeal and its circulation is increasing. At the time of the Extraordinary Party Conference the figures showed a circulation of 23,000. The average circulation for July was 24,000; for August, 26,000; for September, 28,000, and for October, up to the 15th, 30,800. This shows a steady and consistent increase in the circulation of the paper. These figures exclude the Saturday issues, which are much higher, the two Saturday issues in October being 74,000 and 44,000. This increase in circulation, which is not an inflated circulation and does not include the special orders that were sent out in one strike situation or another, as well as the bundles which were not sold, shows that the paper can be built into a mass paper.

#### Weaknesses in Our Circulation Drive

In noting this increase in the circulation of the paper, however, it is also necessary to note that this increase has taken place without any well developed campaign for increase of circulation throughout the Party. We must point out particularly that the paper is not being used in strike situations to the extent it can be, and there is even a definite resistance to the development of its circulation in such situations. For example, in Paterson, where we had thousands of silk workers on strike, the *Daily* had its own correspondent there, covering the situation and adequately covering the activities. Nevertheless the circulation of the paper was very small in the Paterson area. Neither the circulation department of the paper itself, nor the comrades of the district, undertook to spread the paper in this area. The same is true in many of the other strike situations, and in some cases there has been actual resistance to bringing forward the paper on the theory that the paper would brand the strike as a "red" strike, and this has served as a means of keeping the paper out of the strike area.

When we consider the question of the finances of the paper we find here also the same failure of the districts to function in the mass organizations. The drive for \$40,000 has, until now, been a weaker drive than most any other drive conducted by the paper. We tried to avoid the development of hysterical appeals in the paper itself. We did not begin to write long and frantic obituaries. We thought it would be possible for our readers and the Party to

properly organize this campaign without these frantic appeals. But because these screaming appeals were not made, our Party members thought we were joking when we raised the question of money. But we must state that the question of the \$40,000 is not only a matter of the life of the larger paper, but it is a question of the life of the paper itself. The weakness of this campaign is that it is not organized in the Party, and the drive and the leadership of the Party has not been placed behind the campaign.

The staff of the *Daily Worker* is very conscious of the shortcomings of the paper. And we shall strive very hard to bring about the changes that are necessary in it. But we must stress that the *Daily Worker* will perform its functions properly, only providing that the Party as a whole gives political collaboration to the paper, political criticism to the paper, and provided at the same time the Party sees the necessity of building the paper among the masses of workers.

—C. HATHAWAY.

## YOUTH WORK

### Party Must Help Y.C.L. Win Youth for Class Battles

**T**HE sharpening class relations in the country, the N.R.A., the preparations for war, and the developments toward fascism, all raise to a new plane the question of work among the younger generation.

We cannot call ourselves a revolutionary Party without realizing that the working class youth play a very decisive and determining role in the class war. But too often our Party looks upon the question of work among the youth the same as work among other sections of the population, without realizing that it is the youth who will carry the guns in the next imperialist war and will carry the guns in the final civil war.

The winning of the young generation in America is not a very difficult task once the Party understands its importance. There is no section of the American population today which is so ready for the revolutionary way out of the crisis as the working class youth. The youth in America today have no future before them under the present system. Capitalism can offer them nothing and millions of them are beginning to see this.

This change in the working class youth, in our possibilities of work among them, is experienced every day in the week, on every battlefield of the working class. The youth are in the forefront of the picket lines, of the unemployed demonstrations, in every single struggle in which the working class and the Party are engaged at the present time.

While I emphasize this radicalization of the working youth, I want also to emphasize one other point, that is, that this youth, this new generation in America, has not lived through the experiences of the last war and the post-war period. This new young generation does not remember the betrayals of the reformists, and for this reason, despite their militancy, they are susceptible to the left phrases of the reformists and can be misled by them. It is also important to remember that even the fascists attempt by the utilization of left phrases to create a stronghold among the working class youth, especially among the unemployed masses of youth.

### How Do We Fight for the Youth?

The Party must understand that the question of winning the young generation has as great an importance today to the revolutionary movement as the development of mass trade unions and the development of a mass movement among the Negro people. But how do we fight for these youth? How can we talk about winning the youth for the revolutionary way out of the crisis, when in practice we have no different approach to the masses of youth than the reformist organizations? First of all, I want to ask the comrades some questions: Is it an accident that the first position that our revolutionary trade unions and our Party took on the question of child labor was no different from that of Roosevelt and the A. F. of L.? Is it an accident that none of our unions today is raising sharply the question of discrimination against the youth as a result of the industrial codes? These are no accidents whatever.

The Electrical Industrial Code signed by the manufacturers and agreed to by the A. F. of L. has the following clause: "Employers shall not employ anyone under the age of 16 years." The code drawn up by the Steel and Metal Workers' Industrial Union for the General Electric says, "There shall be no employment of youth under the age of 18 years." The A. F. of L. and Roosevelt state no youth under the age of 16, and our unions go one step further, they say no youth under the age of 18!

Unless we wipe out this reformist approach to the youth question in our leadership, in our Party and unions, all the way down the line, we are not going to make a change in youth work. You

can't win the youth for the revolutionary way out of the crisis until you prove to them in practice that there is a difference between us and the reformists.

Every time we come here we beat ourselves on the breast and say, "We must build a mass Y.C.L." But if we fail to understand that the youth in America have special problems, special demands, that we must fight for, we will never build a mass Y.C.L. in America despite all our good intentions.

#### Must Understand Youth Problems to Give Leadership

When we have this understanding of the youth problem, then I think we will have some leadership for the youth work. Then, the District Organizers of our Party, instead of saying that they are too busy to give leadership to the Y.C.L., will understand that giving leadership to the Y.C.L. is as important as giving leadership to any other mass work. Then the *Daily Worker* will pay attention to the youth question, and every editorial in the *Daily Worker* which deals with the struggles of the masses of workers will also speak about the special problems of the youth. The comrades who edit the paper will understand that the Y.C.L. is the closest co-worker of the Party in the struggle for the majority of the working class, and that the *Daily Worker* must become an instrument to bring the message of the Party also to the broad masses of American youth.

In regard to the special role of the Y.C.L. and the tasks of the leadership of the Y.C.L. We are trying to do our bit of the work. Since the Extraordinary Conference, we have doubled our shop nuclei from 22 to more than 40. We have made some headway in the Young People's Socialist League, also in the struggle against war. But if anyone believes that the weak forces in the Y.C.L. alone are going to build a mass revolutionary youth movement, they are badly mistaken. How do you expect the Y.C.L. in New York, for example, to become a larger organization than the Party, when in the Party you have some 6,000 members and a relatively developed leadership, and in the Y.C.L. you have a membership of 1,000 with a relatively weak leadership? I want to raise this sharply because the Party leaders in the districts leave to the weak youth leaderships in their districts the sole responsibility for work among the youth. If this continues we are not going to make the necessary headway in our work among the American youth.

—G. GREEN.

## NEGRO WORK

### Must Root Out White Chauvinism to Carry Through Open Letter

IT is stated correctly in the reports of Comrade Browder and in other speeches made that we can record certain successes in the carrying through of the tasks that were set by the Open Letter. But at the same time, I want to state here that on one question, the question of work among the Negroes, I do not think we can say that real progress has been made in the application of the Open Letter and the resolutions of the Fourteenth Plenum.

One bright spot in our movement in regard to the Negro question is the work of District 17.

The discrimination against Negroes under the N.R.A. codes, that is, the exclusion of Negroes from industries where large numbers of Negroes have been occupied, the whole question of the cotton plowing under in the South, and the new lynch wave—in this situation the Party is lagging behind in the Negro work more than in any other work.

#### We Lag Behind in Negro Work

In the trade union work, we can also record no real advances so far as the Negro masses are concerned. In the recruitment into the trade unions, where we have made some progress, particularly steel and mining unions—this recruitment has not brought a sufficient proportion of Negro workers into the union.

At the same time we can say that the campaign against lynching, and the whole campaign of the Scottsboro case, has almost completely collapsed. This happens at a time when lynching is almost a daily occurrence and the struggle against it is one of the most urgent demands of the Negro people.

The failure to concretize, to develop local struggles, is the explanation for the collapse of the campaign against Scottsboro and lynchings. This is the reason why we are able to develop tremendous mass movements around dramatic moments in the Scottsboro campaign, such as after the Decatur trial, and then in a few weeks this movement collapses.

Where are we to look for the source of our weaknesses? In our failure to seek out and develop struggles around the specific demands of the workers, particularly in the shops, factories and neighborhood.



The Open Letter says the following in this connection:

"The Party can stand at the head of the national revolutionary struggle of the Negro masses against American imperialism and if it energetically carries through the decisions of the Fourteenth Plenum of the Central Committee on work among Negroes."

What does the carrying through of these decisions mean? This means first of all that we direct our work to the organization of proletarian and semi-proletarian Negroes to bring them into the Party, the revolutionary trade unions, organizations of poor farmers. The Fourteenth Plenum says that the red trade unions must become the main channel for our work among Negroes. The Open Letter also elaborates this point and says:

"In all mass actions, strikes and unemployed struggles the Party must pay particular attention that in formulating practical demands, it takes into consideration and gives expression to the special forms of exploitation, oppression and denial of the rights of the employed and unemployed Negro masses."

#### Failure to Raise Negro Demands Costly

Now, comrades, this has been stated often. It is not new. But it is quite clear that up to the present time we have not sufficiently understood this and it has not been seriously considered by the Party or the trade unions. And why is this? Why do we fail to raise the demands of the Negro masses, particularly in the revolutionary trade unions? We will find that behind this failure, which at times takes the form of resistance, is a social-democratic concept which still exists in our movement; namely: a tendency to regard the struggle for equal rights for Negroes not as a part of the general class struggle of the workers, but as something apart from and even detrimental to the class struggle—a failure to understand the relationship between the struggles for Negro rights, and the general class struggles of the working class, failure to understand that the Negroes in their struggle for equal rights are allies of the working class as emphasized very sharply in the Open Letter. Now this, comrades, is a form of expression of white chauvinism in our movement which is particularly prevalent in our revolutionary trade unions.

We have a most glaring example of this attitude in San Francisco in connection with the local election campaign there. Here we had the crassest capitulation before white chauvinism on the part of the District leadership. First of all they failed to put forward any Negroes on the local election ticket. But this is not all. The Negro question, as well as the question of the other national minorities in

San Francisco, that is, the Japanese, Chinese and Filipinos, were not raised concretely but in a very abstract manner in the election program. On these questions the program had the sole demand, "unemployment relief without discrimination on account of nationality, creed or color."

Now, comrades, this mistake of the comrades in San Francisco had very serious repercussions among the Negroes there. Immediately after we had noticed this omission, we received a protest circular that was gotten out by some non-Party white fellow. This circular had been distributed among various Negro organizations and called upon the workers of these organizations to send in their protest to the District Office of the C. P.

Behind this error it is quite clear that the comrades think that the importance of the Negro question and the other national questions there was to be measured solely on the basis of the numerical strength of the Negroes and other national groups in San Francisco, i.e., their numerical proportion in regard to the rest of the population. If considered on this basis we have to come to the conclusion that the Negro question is of small importance in San Francisco because there are only 21,000 out of a population of 750,000. It is quite clear that this sort of mechanical conception has nothing in common with the Bolshevik theory on the national question.

#### Building L.S.N.R. Immediate Task

In regard to the L.S.N.R. Our main emphasis, of course, is building up of the Party and the revolutionary trade unions, Unemployed Councils and poor farmers' organizations among the Negro workers. However, in addition to these main forms, we must meet the need of the rapidly developing movement among the Negro masses, to provide the necessary forms for its fullest development by taking up the task of launching the League of Struggle for Negro Rights.

*EDITORIAL NOTE: Since this speech has been made, the L.S.N.R. has worked out a program, set up a national council and has launched a nation-wide campaign against lynching. Directives have been sent out by the C. C. for the campaign and the initial steps to be taken for the building of a mass movement for Negro rights. All Party members and especially functionaries should become acquainted with the policy, program and tactics of the L.S.N.R. by studying the new 5c pamphlet, EQUALITY, LAND AND FREEDOM, containing the draft program and by-laws of the L.S.N.R., and by reading the special material in the Daily Worker on this question.*

## UNEMPLOYED WORK

### Low Ebb of Unemployed Work Contrary to Open Letter Line

**T**HERE is a serious situation among the unemployed. It seems as though our Party comrades have read only the first part of the Open Letter, but they have not read the second part which calls for organization of the unemployed and a struggle for unemployment and social insurance. The struggle for unemployment insurance has hardly begun.

This is going to be a very bleak winter for the unemployed. I don't think it is necessary to go into any details except to say one thing: the number is hardly diminishing, but on the contrary we can expect it will increase, and the relief appropriations are continually decreasing. This is true of the Federal, State and city governments, if we can accept the statements that are made. None of the promises of N.R.A. can be fulfilled.

Our propaganda against the N.R.A. has not been concentrated in a general sense. One thing is clear: It is up to us, if the workers are not to be drawn into further illusions, but are to follow our leadership, to carry out concrete programs and concrete propaganda. That is, we must apply the facts of the codes to each city, each industry, so the workers will understand concretely how the code applies to them.

#### Uneven Development of Work Because of Lack of Direction

What is the state of unemployed work? In Pittsburgh, to a lesser degree in Detroit, and to a still lesser degree in Chicago, the movement is going forward. In some districts, the situation is appalling. We are at the lowest ebb in the unemployed situation in New York. In other districts, we have practically no connections. Nevertheless, toward the West the movement is developing very well. Only recently the Washington Unemployed League, which Muste thought was his, affiliated to the Unemployed Councils together with all other organizations in the State. In Portland, Oregon, where we have a small unemployed council, two other large organizations with a membership of 8,000 to 10,000 are in existence and our organization had no knowledge of them or contact with them at all. Nevertheless Comrade Benjamin, who was making a tour of the State, was able to bring them into contact with each other and already they

have had a successful joint demonstration. In Los Angeles, where the Unemployed League claims it has 126,000 members, we had a conference whereby we brought 84 organizations of the city of Los Angeles together to plan a struggle for adequate relief and unemployment insurance. This is very important since the base of the Unemployed League in Los Angeles is the barter movement.

In certain sections some unemployed work is being done, but it receives little direction. In the South the districts are so large and scattered that the movement does not make sufficient headway. Nevertheless, the Party, I.L.D., and the Unemployed Councils play, perhaps, the leading role in the South.

We will be able to estimate the status of the movement when we say that the taking out of cards and getting stamps has slumped to a great degree. On the other hand, the Muste, the New York Socialist organization and the Borders movement in Chicago have all sagged very seriously.

Our united front has been at the top and has not penetrated down below. Our united front with Muste has been entirely at the top. Although at the convention in Columbus and Cleveland agreements were made, we have been able to get no action out of the Musteites, as far as concrete activity in the localities is concerned. Work was begun by the District in Columbus, which is the national and state center of the Muste movement, only a few weeks ago. The experience we had there should convince all comrades that if we will do work on the basis of the concrete situation we will be able to build up a united front from below.

#### Mechanical Party Control of Unemployed Councils

On the question of the Unemployed Councils and the Party. I think there is no organization under the leadership of our Party that gets the treatment given to the Unemployed Councils. Go into any of our unions or I.L.D. branches and take an organizer out or put one in, and you will have a rebellion of the whole mass organization. But so far as the Unemployed Councils are concerned, they are "ours". We think we can remove and appoint and do exactly as we please. The organizers that we put in are responsible to the Party but have no responsibility to the masses. Second, we have a fluctuating corps of Party members in the Unemployed Council. It is time for the districts and sections to establish that a certain number of capable unemployed comrades shall have unemployed work as their only Party task. They shall remain there, work there, build up new forces and develop the organization. At the present time the membership does not know from day to day who the leadership is.

Our unions, with the exception of the marine, steel and mining,

are doing nothing. I want to ask whether unemployed work is an inherent part of our revolutionary trade union movement or not? I think our comrades do not realize what tremendous value the unemployed can be for organizing shops. We had a concrete example of this in the McKeesport strike which was successful largely because we were able to bring on the picket line thousands of workers who were unemployed in joint struggle with the employed. The failure to do this work on the part of our unions, can be a serious menace to our shop and trade union work. We have to regard the building up of the unemployed councils simultaneously with the building up of the trade unions, as of the utmost importance. In Cleveland I was informed they were trying to recruit Negro strike breakers. This is extremely serious. We may be faced with race riots because we are not carrying on sufficient work among the unemployed.

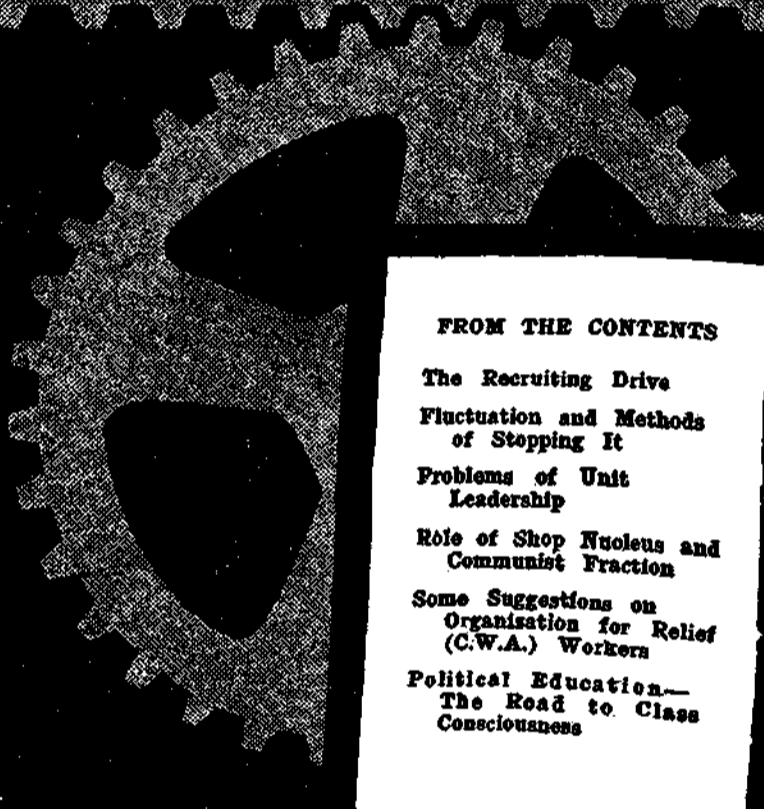
Then there is the matter of the reforestation camps and the veterans in the camps. We are doing little or no work here. In all the fascist countries, especially in Germany, such camps form the best recruiting ground for fascism. We must begin serious work in these camps.

The campaign for unemployment insurance was begun on August 5th. So far as most districts are concerned, they haven't even begun. Our fractions among the unemployed have not taken it up. This is an issue for the whole working class. I would like to know what district has formulated a plan to take the unemployment insurance campaign into the organizations and really rally support. By means of the unemployment insurance issue a mass movement can be created in every district whereby we will be able to reach mass organizations that we have not reached before. This central task is being neglected. The districts must wake up to the necessity of doing this work, or the campaign may slip out of our hands under the demagogy of the social-fascists.

#### I. AMTER.

It is necessary, above all, to instill the most complete understanding into *the whole Party* that the campaign for social insurance, alongside and including the struggle against wage-cuts with the shortened week (irrespective of whether such a short week is adopted) and the struggle for immediate aid for the unemployed, touches vitally, in addition to the anti-war campaign, the most urgent and burning interests of the proletariat, and that this campaign at the present time is the chief link to be seized to tug the whole chain, that this campaign demands the mobilization of all Party forces for a whole period of indefinite length, and that a planned, "unbroken, every-day and persistent conduct of this campaign is necessary."—*Organize Mass Struggle for Social Insurance*, by S. I. Gusev and Earl Browder.

# Party Organizer



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Vol. VI.

DECEMBER, 1933

No. 12

Issued by

CENTRAL COMMITTEE, COMMUNIST PARTY U. S. A

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# PARTY ORGANIZER

Vol. VI.

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## The Recruiting Drive

**T**HE resolution of the 17th C.C. meeting states that "Characteristic of the moment in the inner life of the U.S.A. are the many signs of breakdown of the N.R.A. operation, the bankruptcy of the New Deal as a capitalist solution of the crisis" and that "the fifth winter of the crisis is plunging the masses of the U. S. into unprecedented misery and starvation, on a scale hitherto unknown."

In the very near future we will face still greater struggles and our task is to equip the Party to take the leadership. And one of the most important prerequisites for equipping the Party is the strengthening of the Party through the recruitment of the best elements of the American workers.

The resolution of the XVII Plenum laid down the task for every Party Unit, fraction and committee "to recruit immediately into the Party the broad surrounding circle of supporters and especially the most active fighters in the struggles now going on." Let us examine briefly the recruiting in the last six weeks in the concentration Districts. Let us see how we carried out the Open Letter—whether we understood that "it is nothing but phrase-mongering to speak about building up the Party and the revolutionary trade unions without doing this among the important bodies of workers, in the big factories, in the important industrial centers."

### Analysis of Recruiting in Concentration Districts

In the month of November approximately 1700 members were recruited, which, although considerably higher than in previous months, was practically the same number recruited in October. During November and the first weeks of December, Pittsburgh District, which concentrates on steel and mining, with a dues paying membership of approximately 900, recruited 7 employed steel workers and 6 employed miners, 6 unemployed steel workers and 7 unemployed miners. The total number of new recruits during these five weeks was only 54, of which 28 were unemployed. Only two Negroes were recruited. The one good feature in this very unsatisfactory recruiting is that 50% of the new recruits are native born. Cleveland District concentrates on steel, metal and mining. During the six weeks, beginning with November 1st, this District, which has a dues paying membership



of about 1200, recruited 87 members, of which 7 were employed and 7 unemployed steel workers, 2 employed and 8 unemployed metal workers, and 2 employed and 2 unemployed mine workers. 53 of the 87 are native born, and 17 of these are Negroes. Detroit District concentrates exclusively on automobile. During three weeks in November and 2 weeks in December, 4 employed and 37 unemployed auto workers were recruited out of a total of 61. Only 3 were Negroes, and only 30% of the new recruits were native born. The dues-paying membership in this District is approximately 1,000. The Chicago District, whose main concentration is Packing House, steel, metal, mine and railroad, in the same five weeks recruited only 2 unemployed and 4 employed packing house workers, 6 unemployed and 7 employed steel workers, 7 employed and 6 unemployed metal workers, 2 employed and 5 unemployed mine workers, and 1 employed and 2 unemployed railroad workers. The total recruiting in this period was 170, 62% of which were native born, and 30% Negroes. New York District concentrates on metal, marine, and transportation. In five weeks the District, which is conducting a recruiting drive, recruited 20 employed and 15 unemployed metal workers, 5 employed and 10 unemployed marine workers, and 2 employed and 3 unemployed transportation and railroad workers. Out of a total of 512 new members, only 34 Negroes, despite the fact that New York contains the biggest Negro center in the country (Harlem). Approximately 50% of the new recruits are employed and about 35% native born. This is the accomplishment of a District with a dues-paying membership of 5,000.

There are about 11,000 members in the five concentration Districts, with many times that number in the revolutionary unions, opposition groups in the A. F. of L. and in the mass organizations. Yet only 884 new members were recruited in five weeks, and only 69 of these employed workers from the concentration industries!

These figures speak for themselves. There is no need for further emphasis. They demonstrate very clearly that the Open Letter has not yet become a guide for daily practical work; that the resolution of the last plenum of the Central Committee has not had sufficient effect on our recruiting.

The recruiting in the other Districts, as shown by an analysis of the figures, shows the same tendencies,—an insufficient number of new members, a large proportion of unemployed, and only an insignificant number of employed workers from the basic industries. The only good feature in the present Party recruiting in almost every District is that a com-

paratively large number of native born workers are won for the Party.

The Central Committee, considering this unsatisfactory situation, has decided to launch a recruiting drive, ending at the Lenin Memorial Meeting.

### Tasks of Recruiting Drive

The first and most important problem which we face in connection with the recruiting drive, is: how will we be able to mobilize the whole Party membership for recruiting from the factories?

It would be wrong to set the task mechanically, that during the recruiting drive we must organize so many shop nuclei. We have to understand that recruiting of new members—the strengthening of old or formation of new shop nuclei—will take place only as a result of mass political work of the Party organizations, in the course of the preparation and organization of mass activity, and during the struggles of the workers in the factories. At the same time, this result will not be achieved, if the membership of the Party does not receive a clear and consistent explanation of the political line of the Party, its slogans and immediate tasks, the difficulties in factory work, and how these difficulties can be avoided and conquered.

Systematic recruiting of new members must be carried on, under the direction of the Party Committees, in the concentration factories, mines, docks, mills. The higher committees have the responsibility of giving daily guidance to the nuclei in carrying out this task, in giving particular attention to the concentration points, which are the strategic sectors in the class struggle of the proletariat, from which the foremost revolutionary elements must be recruited into our Party.

This recruiting from the concentration points cannot be left to the Party members inside the factories, mines, mills, docks, etc. The street units must also be mobilized for this task. The street unit, concentrating on the factory, plays a very important role in developing struggles inside of the factory in the recruiting drive. The street unit can organize shop gate meetings, mass distribution of leaflets, literature, Daily Workers, shop papers, and create mass sentiment for the Party and revolutionary unions and lay the basis for organization.

### Recruiting in Unions

The Open Letter and the resolution of our last plenum emphasized the necessity of intensifying the unions, of building and strengthening the Party fractions there. How was this decision carried out? The figures for the five weeks'

period give a vivid picture of our activity in the unions. Out of 884 new members recruited in the five concentration Districts, 121 were members of the A.F.L. and 230 of the Revolutionary Unions. The following table shows the picture:

	Number Recruited	From A. F. of L.	From Revolutionary Unions
Pittsburgh	55	—	29
Cleveland	87	2	—
Detroit	61	3	13
Chicago	170	22	25
New York	512	84	163

We cannot be satisfied with this result, particularly in Cleveland, Detroit and Chicago. Pittsburgh has failed completely in recruiting from the U.M.W.A.

This weakness in our work will have to be corrected in the present recruiting drive. We will have to intensify our work in the revolutionary unions, in the A. F. of L. and in the independent unions. The fractions must be strengthened by the recruitment of the best elements from these unions. We have thousands of Party members in the various unions, who in their daily activity could win thousands of splendid fighters for the Communist Party. This must be their first task during the period of the Recruiting Drive.

**"Too Busy to Recruit"**

Comrade Browder at the 17th Plenum, reviewing the recruiting activities of the Party, pointed out very sharply that:

"Our Party seems to have the conception that if we are in mass activities, we cannot build—recruit into the Party. 'We haven't got time for such a thing. We have more important things to do. If we could stop all the struggles, then we would have time to recruit; then we could build the Party.' What does it mean when the comrades say, 'We are too busy with more important things and haven't time to build the Party.' Such an answer, such an attitude as this to the question of building the Party displays a serious lack of understanding of the role of the Party in the mass struggles.

"Comrades, we must speak very sharply. It shows a Menshevik opportunist conception of the Party. It is impossible for us to lead and organize the masses in their struggles in a revolutionary way without building the Party. If we do not build the Party as the basic part of organizing and leading the mass struggles, we will

inevitably go into the swamp of opportunism. The Party is the heart of all of our work. We are the Party of the revolutionary way out of the crisis, we say, the Party of the Proletarian Dictatorship, the Party that is going to lead the workers in America to the establishment of Socialism in this country. But with this program we go into the mass struggles and say we are too busy leading strikes to build the Party. I think it is clear, comrades, that this is not an organizational question. This is a political question of the first magnitude. And here we have expressed in the sharpest form the political weaknesses of our Party."

These words of Comrade Browder's must be the political guide in our recruiting drive. We have to break down the opportunistic tendencies existing in the Party organizations. The units must come forward boldly as Communist Party organizations in their daily activity through leaflets, presenting the program of the Party, connected up with the concrete issues facing the workers. The Communist Party must be a revolutionary mass party of the proletariat! Forward in the Recruiting Drive!

### **"Every Shop Worker Out of the Street Unit and Into His Shop Nucleus"**

**I**N analyzing the recruiting drive in New York District for the past six or seven weeks we find that not only is the number of recruits brought into the Party small, but the composition of these recruits does not reflect the struggles led by our Party and revolutionary trade unions during the last few months.

If we were to make a detailed analysis of the recruiting we would find that there has been very little recruiting from those industries where we have led thousands of workers in successful struggles for better conditions.

Our general Party membership, and particularly the functionaries of the units, do not as yet understand what recruiting really is, i.e., they do not understand whom we want to recruit, and from where these recruits should come.

Let us for a moment analyze the present membership in the Party in the New York District. Out of 4600 dues paying members we have close to 50% employed, i.e., about 2300 Party members working in shops. Only 350 of these 2300 are members of shop nuclei. That still leaves us 1950 members

employed, the majority of them in shops, who are members of street units. Let us assume for the moment that one thousand of these members are working in small shops and such enterprises (building trades, etc.) where shop nuclei cannot be organized. This still leaves us 950 Communists working in almost as many shops from which the major amount of our present recruiting should come.

### Shop Workers Must Recruit From Shops

We have a situation at the present time in the Party, where a Party member, working in a factory with dozens of workers, finds himself distributing literature and carrying on more propaganda on the block in his neighborhood than among the workers in his shop. This does not mean that we should not carry on our propaganda and endeavor to recruit from the neighborhoods, but that the comrades working in shops should first of all recruit from their shops.

There are two basic reasons for this situation. One, the lack of understanding on the part of our Party membership and lower functionaries of the importance of bringing our recruits from the shops, and in this way rooting our Party in the shops.

Second, considering that 50% of our Party members in the district have been in the Party for not longer than one year, it is very natural that a great majority of these members working in shops, in spite of the fact that they are willing to recruit among the workers, do not know how to go about it. Once we succeed in clarifying the above two problems our recruiting will take a different form.

### How the Fractions Can Help

In this connection we must consider the role of our leading fractions in the trade unions. Let us take as an example any one of our unions, where we have a number of Party members working in various shops. Some of these are members of shop nuclei. There are still many Party members in the general fraction of the union who are working in individual shops. Since it is the task of the leading fraction in the union to bring forward the Party, and root the Party in these shops, they should therefore organize a series of meetings with these comrades working in the various shops, and discuss with them ways and means of organizing shop nuclei in their shops. Leading comrades from the fraction should be assigned the special task of checking up on these Party members every day.

But it is not sufficient to assign this task to a leading comrade. The leading fraction must from time to time call in the comrades in charge of these Party members and check up with them on the progress of the drive. In this way we

would know at all times who is recruiting, what means and methods are used, and the entire Party could learn from the experiences of the various comrades.

### A Shop Nucleus in Every Shop

Let us again consider the assumption that we have approximately 950 Communists working in 950 shops of over 10 workers in each shop. Now, if we were to organize a campaign through the district in every street unit and in every fraction, with the main slogan: "A Shop Nucleus in Every Shop Where a Communist Works at the End of this Recruiting Drive", I am confident that while we would not succeed in organizing 950 shop nuclei, nevertheless our shop nuclei would greatly increase. We have the possibility for the immediate organization in the New York District of from 100 to 200 new shop nuclei.

### Task of Street Units

How can the street units effectively start carrying out this campaign? The greatest responsibility in this connection falls upon the shoulders of the political leader of the unit. We must make our unit organizers feel that it is not only their personal responsibility to see that the shop workers in their units know how to recruit from their shop, but we must make them feel that it is their political responsibility to show the comrades working in shops how to organize a shop nucleus. Our unit organizers must immediately, at the next unit bureau meeting, discuss this problem. Find out how many comrades are working, call these comrades in to the next unit bureau meeting and have a discussion with them on the ways and means to be used for recruiting in their shops. The unit organizer should prepare to have at this meeting such literature as Bittleman's pamphlet, *The Communist Party in Action*; Browder's *What Every Worker Should Know About the N.R.A.*, and other such small pieces of propaganda which our comrades in the shops can easily sell and distribute without exposing themselves as Communists. All kinds of leaflets and literature sold by the section or distributed to the units must first of all get into the hands of our comrades working in shops. The unit organizer should make it his or her personal responsibility, after such a meeting, to check up on the progress made by every shop worker, speaking to the comrade personally, if necessary visiting them in their homes, and discussing with them why and how they should recruit for the Communist Party. If the unit bureau feels that they themselves do not understand this problem, they should get in touch with the factory head of their particular section and see that one of the leading members of one of the shop nuclei now in existence should be

assigned to that unit bureau to tell the comrades how his nucleus is carrying on Party agitation and propaganda among the workers in his shop.

What will be the effect of, let us say, an increase of 200 shop nuclei in the New York District? It will help to solve many of the burning organizational problems recently discussed at the District Org. Conference. We would find a much different relationship between the sections and units of the Party and our fractions and leading comrades in the trade unions, because the Party would be rooted in the shops.

I would propose that each unit bureau, after reading this article, should immediately have a discussion on it at the next bureau meeting, and take steps to carry out some of the tasks discussed in this article. Individual members of the units should see to it that their unit bureau does not neglect the immediate discussion of this question, but that it becomes a first order of business in your unit.

Let us establish Socialist competition and see which will be the first unit to transfer the shop workers from their unit into new shop nuclei. Unit bureaus and individual comrades, especially those working in shops, should send their opinions and experiences to the *Daily Worker* for publication in the "Party Life" column. Comrades in the shop nuclei particularly should write in their experiences on how they brought new members from their shop into the Party.

United work by the comrades in the sections, units, shop nuclei and trade union fractions will change the map of the Party, and will root our Party in the shops.

— J. B.  
EDITORIAL NOTE:— Comrade J. B. raises in this article a very important problem. We would like to make two remarks. Is it sufficient if the unit organizer or the unit bureau alone helps the comrade in building the Party in his own shop? We don't think so. It is necessary that the individual comrade should get the help of the whole unit, especially if he is working in an important factory. The comrade must have some outside help for *Daily Worker* and literature distribution before the factory gate. This help must come from his street unit.

The second point: shall we say that we must build shop nuclei in every shop which employs ten or more workers? We can not be mechanical on this question. In every case the higher committee should be consulted as to whether it is advisable and necessary to organize a shop nucleus in certain small shops, although everything that is stated in the article about the necessity of recruiting is correct in the article is correct and should be applied in the present recruiting campaign.

## How Two Units Were Established In The Steel Mills

IN the Calumet Steel region there are tremendous possibilities of rooting the Party in the steel industry. The fact that in a concentrated area there are tens of thousands of steel workers working in but a few mills enables the Party, through proper methods of concentration, to reach these workers with our program and recruit the most advanced workers into our ranks. All the activities of the Party invariably affect the steel workers, and therefore even the conduct of general campaigns (November 7th; Anti-War; Building the Daily Worker; Scottsboro and the Struggle for Negro Rights) puts the Party in touch with these thousands of steel workers and creates the basis for their organization into the Party and mass organizations. The work among the unemployed steel workers and the struggles of the Party and the Unemployed Councils for immediate relief served as a link with the employed workers when thousands of workers went back to the mills with the temporary pick-up in steel production last summer.

### Concentration Results in Organization and Struggle

As a result of the concentration of the Section Committee on the \_\_\_\_\_ Co. plant in Indiana Harbor, a Party unit was established and the local union of the Steel and Metal Workers Industrial Union strengthened in this plant. Through the correct formulation of shop demands and a thorough discussion of these demands with the broader groups of workers called to special meetings on a shift basis, sentiment for strike struggle was developed. A strike was called and the plant was closed 100%. This was the first strike in this region since 1919: Incidentally this plant was one of the few that did not come out on strike during the great Steel Strike of 1919. The Party unit took the leadership in the planning and developing of this struggle. Throughout the duration of this 6 weeks' strike, the unit exercised its leadership and planned all actions in an effort to win. In the course of the strike this unit recruited another 3 workers, members of the strike committee, building up a shop unit of 10 comrades in the plant. Through dealing in a correct manner with the "red scare" the Party created a basis for broader recruiting, but because of insufficient attention paid to recruiting, more workers were not brought into the Party during the strike.

Another example of how the Party is able to root itself among the steel workers is the method used in building up



a shop unit in the steel plant of the ——— Foundries. For many years two comrades were working in this plant and despite many discussions and decisions that they work for the establishment of a shop unit in this important mill, no results were achieved in this direction. The reasons given for the inability to build the Party were many and quite common ones. With the attention of the Section Committee turned towards dealing with the building of the Party in the mills, with the best forces thrown into this activity, the "impossible" was achieved. The two comrades were called to a special meeting, and there detailed discussions were had on the importance of shop units and concrete steps of how to agitate and organize in the plant. As a result of the pick-up in steel production, new workers were called to work. A Party member of a street unit got a job in the plant. Now the three comrades were put to work to build a local of the Steel and Metal Workers Industrial Union. With this work proceeding, another two workers were recruited into the Party. This unit of five started to give leadership to the Union local and as a result, a shop program of demands was adopted which gave the basis for the establishment of a broader local and some 12 workers joined the S.M.W.I.U. During the strike, these workers issued leaflets calling for solidarity and support of the strike. Funds were raised for relief, and even the possibility of spreading the strike existed, but due to the lack of attention to this unit during the strike, this situation was not taken advantage of and as a result no strike struggle developed in this plant.

#### Must Have Shop Paper

There is one weakness in the work of these units and that is their failure to issue shop papers. While they issue leaflets on current events through their respective union locals, and distribute Party agitational material inside the mills, they have no independent voice of their own in the form of a shop paper. Steps are now being taken to have all shop units prepare shop papers so that the Party will have its voice in all the mills where shop units exist at present. With correct concentration on the part of the Section Committee and the entire membership, shop units can be established in the remaining mills and all existing units strengthened to become real leaders of the steel workers of the Calumet region.

— D. M.

## Recruiting Experiences During the Ambridge and Greensburg Steel Strikes

It is necessary to point out at the very beginning that in organizing the union, both in Ambridge and Greensburg, the question of Party recruiting was not taken up seriously at the beginning, especially by some of the leading comrades of the union. At a later stage, during the organization of the union in Ambridge, the leadership of different local unions, especially the officers, were approached to join the Party. The feeling among the leading Party comrades in the union was that there would be many difficulties in approaching these workers. However, to our surprise, many workers wanted to know why they weren't approached before to join the Party because, they said, they knew that without a strong Party group in the union, very little headway can be made.

It was quite easy during the height of the strike in Ambridge to carry on a mass recruiting into the Party. At one time one of the union organizers in Ambridge stated he had 50 workers on the list who could be approached for the Party, but we never arranged a meeting with these 50 to explain to them the role of our Party. Those whom we succeeded in bringing into the Party we did not prepare ideologically as to the role of the Party in strikes and the tasks of Communists within the trade unions. We failed to establish a functioning fraction of these comrades within the strike committee. The Ambridge Party unit did not meet during the strike to discuss the further steps to be taken and to prepare the new members for a clear understanding of the problems. The Greensburg unit met only two or three times during the strike but the discussion at these meetings was not outside the immediate problems facing the strike and therefore did not help to clarify politically the new Party members. Especially was it necessary in both of these strikes to discuss in these Party units the "red issue" that was being raised, and explain to the new comrades how to face this and other attacks against us.

While we used a great deal of literature in recruiting Y.C.L. members and also gave out some literature to those whom we took into the Party, we did not follow a systematic policy of taking up with these comrades various problems that they were unable to answer and to which we could have helped them get the answer had we given them the necessary literature.

### Lessons From These Strikes

In recruiting into the Party during these strikes we failed to utilize the *Daily Worker* sufficiently as a means through which to reach the best workers in the strike committees and among the strikers. In Greensburg, when we decided to concentrate on the few leading workers in the Strike Committee and we followed this up concretely, we succeeded in getting the best members of the strike committee into our Party. This proves once again that the militant workers are not afraid of our Party or the "red issues" raised against us, and if correctly approached will willingly join our Party. Our main weakness in recruiting during these two strikes expressed itself among some of the leading comrades in the union who hesitated at the beginning about recruiting new workers into the Party. The lesson to be drawn from these two strikes is that we must fight against all hesitation in connection with Party recruiting and begin the recruiting, not after the strike has occurred, but during the process of organization of the union, consolidating our union forces through the establishment of functioning Party fractions.

Though temporarily the workers in both of these strikes have been defeated, it is possible and necessary to build our Party. We must utilize those new Party members who came in as a result of the strike as a link with the other workers inside the factories in order to begin to re-establish functioning union groups in the various departments, and strengthening our Party in order to prepare for the battles which are ahead of us.

— L. D.

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"In spite of the fact that there have been widespread movements among the workers, and many workers have come forward in the struggles, the cadres of functionaries of the Party have not been rejuvenated and strengthened from the ranks of these workers, and sectarian elements, who are beyond hope of improvement and have lost touch with the masses, have not been replaced by new worker cadres who have distinguished themselves in struggle."—OPEN LETTER.

## Fluctuation and Methods of Stopping It

**T**HE large turnover of our membership is one of the biggest problems confronting the Party. When we look at the continuous stream of thousands of workers joining our Party of which only a small percentage remain, as shown by the slow growth of our Party, it is time to pay a little more attention to this problem. Fluctuation of membership reflects the very life of our organization. It is that barometer which shows to what extent our Party is able to absorb and assimilate the new workers that come into the Party, to give them a basic understanding of the role of the Party.

In District 8 this has been and still is a burning issue. Reviewing the period between March 1st, when the claimed membership of the district was 3,513 and October 7th, when the claimed membership was 3,757, we have a gain of only 244. During the same period, however, we recruited 1,134 members, and lost 890, a fluctuation of over 78 percent, which is rather serious.

### Wrong Theories About Cause of Fluctuation

A number of wrong theories have been put forth to account for and correct the situation. At first the blame was placed on the "old members" who cannot adapt themselves to the new requirements in the Party and therefore are a hindrance to the growth and development of the Party and the new members that were recruited into the Party. Therefore the solution that was proposed was to get rid of the old members and then we will have a fine Party. Some have carried this theory to a ridiculous point where it almost looked disgraceful to claim membership of a few years standing in the Party. That such an argument holds no water can readily be seen when you analyze those who drop from the Party.

Another wrong conception developed and that is that the Party is recruiting quantity instead of quality, and that we must be more selective in getting members into the Party. Take into the Party only those that we are sure will stick, those that have already an understanding of the Communist Party theoretically and organizationally. Such a theory is only an easy way out in trying to solve the problem of fluctuation. Comrades who put forth such a theory obviously do not take into consideration the role of the Party in making good Communists out of the newly recruited workers. According to them there is some mysterious outside force that prepares ready-made Bolsheviks to enter the Party. Yes, we must improve the quality of our recruits, but only in the sense of recruiting workers from the shops, from the basic

concentration industries, in proportion to the unemployed. Only in this sense can we speak of changing the quality of our recruits. However, such an erroneous theory was used in explanation for the decline in recruiting in the recent months and as a means of reducing fluctuation. But it is clear it is not a remedy for stopping fluctuation.

### Basic Reasons

We must therefore find more basic reasons, if we are to overcome this problem. The real cause for our fluctuation lies with (a) the political life of our units; (b) the inadequate development of cadres; (c) the methods of recruiting into the Party.

Our units are not political factors in their territory. At best they carry out mechanically the decisions of the higher committees without any initiative in concretely applying the line and decisions to the specific conditions of the workers among whom they are to work. The unit meeting is no inducement for any new worker. It does not answer his problems. He agrees with the Party and its program but he does not find this in the everyday life and work of the unit. Therefore after a few meetings many begin to stay away from unit meetings until they gradually find themselves outside of the Party.

When we take our shop nuclei, we can readily see the difference. The fluctuation in the shop nuclei is incomparably smaller than in the street nuclei. And why? Because the shop nucleus, weak as it is, and still lacking the political leadership it is supposed to give to the workers in the shop, nevertheless, out of necessity, deals with the problems of the workers in the shop and is trying to give a solution to them.

Alongside and closely connected with this is the question of leadership. The Party has in the last few years grown. The number of sections and especially the units have increased. But have we, alongside with this, developed sufficient cadres of leadership to take care properly of these new units and sections? Has there been a conscious policy pursued of promoting leadership, especially of American-born, many of whom have in the recent period joined our Party? Have we patiently worked with them to help them in becoming efficient politically and organizationally, as leaders of units and sections? Here I think we find the outstanding cause for our high fluctuation. I could name a number of cities in our district where hundreds of members have come and gone, because of our failure to consolidate a cadre of leadership that has grown in the course of the struggles, during which time our Party has been built. Therefore the problem of developing cadres of capable leadership in the units and the sections is the most burning question confronting us.

### Wrong Methods of Recruiting

And thirdly, our whole method of recruiting is largely responsible for this enormous fluctuation. As I have already indicated, there is a lack of systematic work of concentrating to recruit workers from the shops, from the unions, from the mass organizations. Secondly, the reception the new member gets when he first comes to the unit meeting. He is not introduced to the membership. The unit members do not even vote whether one should be accepted into the Party or not. It is taken for granted that when an applicant comes to a unit meeting that he is acceptable and therefore no one bothers to pay any attention to the new member. When a worker joins a union or any other organization he is officially voted in; he is greeted by the chairman or organizer, but in our Party no attention at all is paid to this question. There is no one to greet the new member on the occasion of his joining the Party, explaining to him the role of the Party, to make the new member feel solemnly that he is joining a militant, fighting organization of the working class of which he has just become a part, and thereby making him feel part and parcel of the Party.

What then is left as an inducement for the new member to remain in the Party? Is there any wonder that we lose so many members? Instead of trying to find the real causes why the new members do not attend the meetings regularly, there is a tendency to find fault with the new members, "they are not of the kind of timber that will make good Communists," is the general comment, and off the rolls they go. Only this week one section in our District reports that 40 members dropped from the Party, which is 25% of the entire membership of that section. This is done without any comment or without explanation as to the reasons why these were dropped. And while the section reports that 40 members were dropped during the entire month of October, this section has not recruited a single member.

These are some of the basic problems confronting us and to which we must find a speedy solution. The entire attention of our leading committee, district, section and unit, must be bent towards improving the life and work of the unit, to develop leading cadres politically capable of giving leadership to the units, and involve the members in mass activity. Only through such methods will we be able to raise gradually the political level of the entire membership, improve the quality of our functionaries, and thereby increase the attendance at unit meetings, raise the dues payments equal to the membership and mobilize the masses of workers for struggle, with the Party as the leader.

— J. L.

## Problems of Unit Leadership

"The center of gravity of Party work must be shifted to the development of the lower organizations, the factory nuclei, local organizations and street nuclei."  
—Open Letter.

THE basic task in the shifting of gravity of Party work to the development of the lower organizations, is the development of leadership in these organizations. The tremendous fluctuation in the Party, the insufficient recruiting, the unsystematic participation in the mass struggles, the unsatisfactory position of the Party, can be explained by the fact that: "In the Party and particularly among the leading cadres, there is a deep going lack of political understanding of the necessity for strengthening our basis among the decisive sections of the American workers"; that we do not realize fully that "we have to carry on a systematic struggle . . . for the development of political life in the lower organizations, particularly in the factory nuclei, for the development of thorough-going self-criticism, for development of initiative in the lower organizations and for improvement of its functioning in the lower organizations."—Open Letter.

This basic problem of the Party has not yet been tackled with sufficient energy. If we examine the situation in the shop and street nuclei, we will find that the leadership of these organizations do not get sufficient attention from the higher committees. The election of these leading bodies of the lower organizations is not based on the activity and ability of the comrades, but in most of the cases, it is a voluntary proposition. The units elect their leadership from among those who have "time" to fulfill the functions. Did we ever consider seriously the problem which is raised so sharply in the Open Letter, that the carrying out of the decisions of the higher committees, depends entirely upon a well functioning, able leadership in the units, upon unit bureaus that are leaders of the masses in the factory or in the territory, on comrades who have experience in the struggles that are carried on, comrades who have sufficient training in giving leadership not only to the units, but also to the masses in the factory and in the territory?

### Unit Bureau—a Political Body

We have examples in many units of the Party which show that the unit bureaus are considered not only by the membership but by the higher committees as an administrative body. We elect as unit organizer, the comrade who is able to keep records of the membership or the comrade who does not belong to any unions or other mass organizations, the comrade

—it doesn't matter whether he has been only two or three months in the Party—who is willing to take over the job. We do not consider the unit organizer as a political leader of the unit, and of the workers in the shop or territory.

We elect as agitprop director in the unit, the comrade whose English is perfect, who can compose sentences perfectly, who can use the typewriter, but we never consider that the agitprop director's task is to produce material for agitation among the workers in the shop or in the territory, who has the task of giving political education to the members in the unit, who is responsible for the development of new forces from among the Party members, and from among the non-Party members in the shop and territory.

We forget that the financial secretary's task is not only to collect dues from the members, or sell tickets for various affairs at the unit meeting. We forget that the financial secretary has a very important political function in the unit, that he is responsible for keeping the membership, for working out ways and means to insure that every member of the unit attends unit meetings, is up-to-date in his dues payment, that he, being constantly in touch with every member of the unit, must be able to give valuable information to the bureau about the activities of the members; that he, through a well planned system should find out whether the members of the unit are active in the unions or other mass organizations. It is he who must find ways and means to establish a fund for the unit through various activities, a fund which will enable the unit to extend its mass agitation among the workers in the shop or in the territory.

The Daily Worker agent in the unit should be a comrade who is not only able to mobilize the membership of the unit to sell the Daily Worker every day in the factory or in the territory, but who is able also to mobilize the sympathizers in the shop or in the territory, in the unions, in the mass organizations, and make them enthusiastic distributors of the Daily Worker.

The literature agent's activity should not be limited to the distribution of literature inside the unit, but he must be able to teach the Party members how to bring the literature into the factories, how to distribute the literature in the territory. He is the one who should be able to mobilize the sympathizers around the Party unit for distribution.

If we succeed in selecting from among the Party members the best, the most developed, the most devoted comrades for these leading forces in the units, then the situation can be changed in a very short period.

We do not want to create the impression that the new Party members shall not be drawn into the leadership, but



we have to keep in mind always that these new forces must be guided in their work by the more developed comrades in the unit.

### Too Many Changes in Leadership

There is one more very serious weakness in connection with our leadership in the lower organizations. That is the lack of stability in the leadership. It is the exceptional case when in any street unit we have a bureau for a period of six months. It is not an exception when every two or three months, new functionaries are elected to the unit bureau. We must understand that an able and stable leadership is necessary and that without this the work of the lower Party organizations will not improve.

In order to bring about this situation, the higher committees must immediately tackle this problem. They should concentrate on the most important shop nuclei and street nuclei. A member of the Section Committee should be assigned to a unit, not as a representative of the Section committee but as a member of this unit. His task is to attend the unit bureau meeting, help them to prepare the agenda for the unit meeting, discuss with them thoroughly every point on the agenda and at the unit meeting he should actively participate in the discussion.

The members of the Section Committee assigned to a given unit must participate in the mass activities of the unit. He should help the comrades in their daily work. This comrade should report about his experiences in the unit to the Section Committee so that the section leadership is continuously informed about the situation in the shop and street nuclei. Periodically it will be necessary to take up in the section the problem of a shop nucleus or an important street nucleus which is concentrating in a factory or an important territory, at a meeting to which the unit bureau concerned is invited.

As a result of this discussion a letter should be worked out by the section committee to the membership and the given unit. This letter will serve as a basis for discussion to improve the situation in the unit. The District Committee should do likewise with the section committees and important shop nuclei.

As far as possible every section committee or district bureau meeting should place one of the lower organizations on the agenda. By this method, concentrating on a small number of nuclei, we will create good examples in the section and district, and these examples, properly popularized in the other units, will help to improve the situation.

### Classes and Discussions Necessary

We have good experiences in certain districts in developing the various functionaries through regular weekly discussions. In the big cities where it is possible to bring together the unit organizers or the other functionaries of the units, it is advisable to have weekly meetings with them. In these meetings the old practice where the section organizer gives out instructions to the unit organizers on what is to be done in the unit the next week should not be followed, but instead one or two of the most important actual problems should be taken up and a political discussion on this question developed so that the unit organizers will be able to go down to the unit and present the problem properly to the membership. Besides this, at these meetings a very elementary class on organization should be conducted, taking up the functioning of the unit, the method of work, how to participate in mass work, how to mobilize the workers in the shop or in the street for a certain action, the problem of developing the new forces, the problem of building shop nuclei through the members who work in the factory but belong to a street nucleus, the method of distribution of the *Daily Worker* and literature, etc.

In this class we could very easily give a theoretical basis to these problems. The same method can be used by the District for developing Section forces. In Districts where the units are scattered all over in the territory in various towns, the problem is more difficult. Here the question of instructors from the District to the Sections, or directly to the most important nuclei must be considered. It is possible even in these districts to have functionary conferences once a month, calling in the section and unit actives for discussion.

If we have a systematic cadre policy, then the problem of developing new forces will be solved very easily. We have to keep in mind what the Open Letter says about this:

"Every Party member, and especially every Party functionary, must be a real organizer of mass struggles in his particular sphere of work. From this standpoint, the Party must judge the activity of its functionaries and must choose its leading bodies."

— J. P.

## Role of Shop Nucleus and Communist Fraction

**I**N this article I want to clarify some confusion existing among many Party members, especially members of the shop nuclei, who are at the same time members of the Communist fractions in the revolutionary unions, and in other unions. There are many of these comrades and others as well, who ask: Why shall we duplicate our work of being at one and the same time, the Communist nucleus in factory so and so, and the Communist fraction in the union, embracing the workers in total or part of the same factory?

This question shows immediately that there is no clarity about the role of the Party nucleus and the role of the fraction regardless of which union is involved, revolutionary or reformist.

To make it clear let us take an example. Let us take for granted there is a factory "A", that employs 2,000 workers. Out of the 2,000, there are 1,200 workers organized in the Industrial Union affiliated with the T.U.U.L. In the nearby factory B with 3,000 employed workers, 2,000 are organized in the A. F. of L. In both factories there is a factory nucleus. In both there is a Communist fraction. Now what is the basic task of the nuclei in the two factories, and what is the basic task of the fractions in the two different unions?

### Tasks of Nucleus

In order to make this problem clear, we must understand that the nuclei in Factory A and B are the Party in these factories, and as such their primary task is to bring forward the Party program to the workers, win the best of them to the nuclei, take the lead in the struggle of the workers and champion their grievances in the name of the Party. It is the task of the nuclei, as the Party, to show to the workers that their struggles, regardless whether of economic nature or for better sanitary conditions, etc., are class struggles in so far as these struggles are between the workers who sell to the bosses their labor power, and the bosses who are the owners of the means of production, who are exploiting them to get higher profits and at the same time, together with the other bosses, are the rulers of the country, and are using the government and its instruments to protect their profits, etc. The nuclei in factory A and B have the task of winning the best elements of the workers to the Party, to issue a shop paper that will bring the Party position before the workers, concerning the conditions in the shop, and the struggles going on, connecting this with the ultimate aim of the working

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class. The nuclei at the same time must appeal to the workers to organize, help them to organize, but while in Factory A, the nucleus will support the revolutionary union, will do its utmost to build it, in Factory B, the nucleus will bring before the workers the Party position on the A. F. of L., will urge the workers to strengthen the organization, but at the same time will lead the fraction in the building of an opposition inside the union, to fight the bureaucrats who compromise with the bosses and sell the workers out, to develop struggles over the head of the bureaucrats, will strive to have at the head of the union, a rank and file leadership that will fight the bosses, in the interests of the workers and that will transform the union from a reformist one into a militant one, based on class struggle.

### Tasks of Fraction

Now we come to the other point to be clarified. In both unions there is a Communist fraction. Physically the members of the fraction are identified with the members of the nuclei. The nature and task of the fraction, however, are different ones.

While the nuclei are the Party in factory A and B, the fraction is the group of comrades inside the revolutionary union in factory A, and the group of comrades in the reformist union in factory B. Now the task of the fraction in the revolutionary union is to give leadership to the union, to be the guardian of its problems, activate the union, give guidance in formulating demands, mobilize the union to build itself, to conduct struggles in the interest of the workers, see to it that the union participates in the various campaigns of the revolutionary movement, clarify the membership on the program of their union as an organization of class struggle, etc., so that their personal and collective example shows that they are the best and most sincere fighters of the union and in this manner, they will draw the best elements of the union into the Party, and into the fraction, thus strengthening not only the Party in the unions (fractions) but the shop nucleus also, which means the strengthening of the Party in the factory.

In the reformist union, the task of the fraction will be the organization of the best elements, who understand the role of the bureaucrats and the reformist character of the union, into an organized broad rank and file opposition with the aims of ousting the bureaucrats from the union, giving to the union a rank and file leadership able to transform the union from a reformist one to an organization of class struggle.

### Relation Between Nucleus and Fraction

We now come to another aspect of the problem--to the relation between nuclei and fractions.

In stating that the shop nuclei are the Party in factories A and B, it is evident that the nuclei must discuss all problems concerning the workers in the factories, work out the policy to be pursued by the nuclei themselves, and also by the fractions in the unions. The nuclei lead all activities of the Party members in the factories including the activities of the fractions in the unions.

This means that the nuclei must discuss the problems of the unions, discuss the policy and activities of the fractions in so far as this is one of the phases of Party work, under the direct guidance of the Party (shop nuclei in both factories).

The leading fractions in the unions in both factories composed of the Party members in the executive committees of the unions, while being in touch and co-ordinating their work with the higher fraction of the union (if the union also exists in other factories) or with the Communist fraction in the T.U.U.C., or in the case of the Union in factory B, with the leading fraction in the opposition of the respective union in the A. F. of L., will at the same time report about their activities and the activities of the fractions as a whole to the nuclei, discuss the problems pertaining to the union so that the nuclei will be able to make decisions and give guidance along the program of the Party in the factory.

Every Party member in factory A and B belongs to the fractions in their respective unions, and will meet when the fractions are called, before the general membership meetings of the union, to take up the problems of the fractions, to divide the work among the members along the program of work, previously discussed and approved by the leading fractions and by the nuclei. To these fraction meetings should be invited reliable workers who are sympathetic with and support the program of the C. P.

There are many more points that should be elucidated, as for example, the tasks of the nucleus and fractions in the event that in a nearby factory C, there should be two unions in existence, in which case the nucleus will lead the activities of both fractions which have different tasks corresponding to the character of the two unions, as we already explained in the first example.

The Party Organizer will clarify this question on the basis of concrete examples. This short article is an introduction to the subject in order to clarify the most important phase of the question and to help the comrades establish the correct relation between the shop nuclei and fractions and, guided by this line, to find in practice the solution to other phases of this problem.

— F. B.

## Developing New Cadres In Concentration Industries In Chicago

**T**HE speedy developing of cadres from among the ranks of the native American workers in the mills, mines and factories is a basic guarantee that will root us more firmly among the workers in the basic industries.

Our main obstacle in the development of cadres is the prevalent lack of faith in the ability of the workers to develop organization and struggle. There is a tendency among our organizers to substitute for the workers, instead of systematic and conscious development of new workers drawn into our movement. This, in spite of the fact that in the recent period we have gained excellent response and contact with workers who have shown capacity for leadership. We have an example of one woman comrade in the stockyards who takes the Party decisions seriously and because of some training in the District Training School, has actually developed struggles against wage-cuts and speed-up in her department. Many letters have come to us from the stockyards workers for the shop bulletin, discussing their problems and linking up these problems with the N.R.A. and the general political situation.

### Underestimation of Theory

In the steel mills our section committees were unable to find a single student to the District Training School. At the steel workers' conference held the 22nd of October, workers from the mills discussed their problems and showed capacity and readiness to take the leadership in struggle.

There are hundreds and thousands of workers waiting and ready for training and development. However, in the ranks of our Party there is still an underestimation of theory. There is an abstract approach to theoretical training, resulting in separation of theory from practice. Training is looked upon as "education" without any relation to daily needs. Especially in our concentration sections we follow the same routine of occasional disconnected classes. We have not as yet fully aroused the Party to the needs of systematic efforts and new methods to develop the workers in the basic concentration points.

In the recent period some definite steps have been taken to overcome this glaring weakness. The problems raised by the comrades are the following. The workers still in the mills work very odd shifts and therefore it is impossible to get them to attend regular weekly classes. The speed-up is so terrific that the workers will not come to spend their entire

evening at the school. These facts are true. But we cannot content ourselves with merely reciting facts. It is necessary for us to solve these problems by developing new methods and adjusting our work to accommodate the situation existing among the workers.

### Study Circles and Schools Will Train Cadres

The following steps have been taken: First, the district is now working on the establishment of two branch schools in the steel region, one in Gary and the other in South Chicago. Classes will be conducted three evenings a week. The subjects selected are based on a discussion with the comrades in the region and answer the demands of the steel workers. The proposed courses are: Trade Union and Strike Strategy, with special emphasis on shop forms of organization and experiences in big shops; Elementary Economics, and Problems of the Class Struggle Today. This last course will be a lecture and question course on the problems confronting the steel workers, connecting these problems up with the national and international situation, the program of the Party and methods of struggle. English for workers is very essential in the steel region, especially in South Chicago, where the vast majority are foreign-born workers. The study of English will be combined with "Principles". There will also be a class for Party and Y.C.L. members in Principles of Communist Organization. These courses will be so organized as to accommodate the workers who have been drawn into the S.M.W.I.U., Party members and those workers who will be recruited through our campaign. The hours will be adjusted to correspond to the shifts and special classes will be held for those unable to conform to the majority arrangement. In this way we will be able to overcome the resistance raised under the hue and cry of impossibility to get steel workers because of shifts and hours.

In the stockyard region, in addition to concentrating on getting as many workers as possible to our city school, which is located on the south side and convenient to the stockyard workers, we will have to adopt methods of study and discussion circles in the Party units, at union meetings and establishing open forums. Some small beginnings have been made.

The establishment of two branch schools as permanent educational and training centers in the steel region will lay a basis for and stimulate this activity. However, this does not exclude our original proposals for the development of study groups of sympathetic workers, of special classes by the S.M.W.I.U. itself and special classes by the Party sections to members of the shop nuclei. On the contrary, the school

will stimulate this activity. It will furnish material, and train instructors. The school will be a base from which the Party agitprop apparatus will be able to keep closer contact with the shop units and the individual members of these units.

This program of work and activity will be successful only when it becomes the work of the entire Party. The district and sections must arouse the Party from top to bottom to the urgent need for trained cadres, for a higher political level among the entire Party membership. Our struggle against the right danger as the main danger in the Party can only be successful when our Party membership and leadership in the sections are able to understand more thoroughly the line of the Party, the maneuvers of the bourgeoisie, the nature and role of social-fascism, how to combat the terrific pressure of the bourgeoisie, etc. Only with this understanding will the right danger in our mass work be overcome and enable our Party to march forward in the light and spirit of the Open Letter.

— B. S.

"A great number of examples from the history of the Parties of the Comintern show that when Parties and revolutionary trade unions without any organizations in the factories are driven underground, they immediately lose contact not only with the masses, but in many cases even with their own members . . . Under such conditions, every minute of legal or semi-legal existences of these Parties must be utilized to get them firmly rooted in the factories, and persistent work must be carried on among the workers on the basis of defense of their daily interests and the linking up of this struggle with the ultimate aims of the Communist Party. If this is done, it will not be possible in any way for the bourgeoisie to deal sharp blows at the Communist Party, nor will the bourgeoisie succeed in isolating the Party from the masses. This means, however, that at last the resolutions on transferring the center of gravity of Party and trade union work to the factories must be carried out not in words, but in deeds, and not by reports showing that we have so and so many Party nuclei and trade union groups, with the subsequent revelation that in some cases these nuclei do not even exist, or else that they function very poorly."—Piatnitsky, "It Is Time To Go Over From Adopting Resolutions to Carrying Them Out", INPRE-CORR, June 16, 1932.



control. In addition, it must be capable of enlisting the support of workers on other C.W.A. jobs and of the workers as a whole. This in turn means that it must be capable of rendering such support to others.

The basic unit of such an organization should therefore be the local composed of all who work on a given job. The leadership should be a Committee of Action chosen from among the most militant workers. This committee should take up and direct whatever action is required on every issue that affects the job. A central council or federation of all such locals should be composed by electing delegates from all locals or basic units.

We should strive to induce (not try to force) every local to have delegates also in the nearest Unemployed Council as well as the central body of the organization. Likewise we may suggest that the cards of the Unemployed Council shall be used. We must especially urge that members shall also be active in their block or neighborhood assembly district.

The importance of the latter duty should be pointed out by showing that many of the problems that face these workers such as supplemental relief, evictions, etc., will confront them and can best be solved in the neighborhood of their homes.

— H. B.

"The necessary concentration of our work on the most important factories does not, of course, in any way mean that we should allow our work among the unemployed to slacken. In carrying out this main task we should not for an instant lose sight of the fact that we represent the interests of the entire class, and that, especially under the present conditions the unemployed constitute a factor of greatest revolutionary importance. One of the chief tasks of the Party is the organizing and mobilizing of the millions of unemployed for immediate relief and unemployment insurance and the linking up of their struggles with the struggles of the workers in the big factories—full-time, as well as part time workers,—especially now, in view of the introduction of militarized forced labor for the unemployed and the increased attempts to bring them under reformist and fascist influence. But the Party cannot carry out this task successfully unless at the same time it establishes its base in the decisive big factories. Hunger marches and other activities of the unemployed must be accompanied by sympathetic actions on the part of the workers in the factories, while the actions of the workers in the factories must receive the most active support from the unemployed.—OPEN LETTER.

## Political Education—the Road to Class Consciousness

It is apparent that the new forces in the Communist Party are gaining political experience and are becoming the respected leaders of the masses in many places, because, as Communists they prove their loyalty to the working class by unbounded activity in all its struggles.

This is in keeping with the glorious traditions of the Communist League founded by Marx, whose heirs are the Communists of today. Active participation in the front ranks of all the struggles of the proletariat is the fundamental condition for the test of a good revolutionist.

This principle was laid down by Karl Marx in his memorable address before the Communist League in 1850. "The Communist League," said Marx, "has stood the test in double fashion . . . through the fact that its members everywhere had taken hold of the movement energetically, and had stood foremost in the ranks—in the publication of the press, on the barricades and on the battlefields."

Later, in his letter to Bracke in which he criticized the unity program of the Eisenachers under the leadership of Wilhelm Liebknecht and the followers of Ferdinand Lassalle, Marx wrote, "Every step of actual movement is more important than a dozen programs." Lenin carried forward the principles of Marxism. In his (Lenin's) struggles against Martov and the rest of the Mensheviks, he laid down the first and fundamental principle of membership in the revolutionary party of the working class—activity.

It is in action that the masses build up their leadership. The enemies and misleaders of the masses understand this. That is why they let no opportunity slip by. They are everywhere. These demagogues are able to wiggle into leadership precisely because our comrades, though active, are not equipped sufficiently with experience to be able to detect such scoundrels long before they gain a hold upon the masses. In many instances where our comrades do know the fakers, they lack the necessary political understanding and skill to expose and combat them effectively.

While both Marx and Lenin placed activity as the first principle of a Communist, the activity must be guided by consciousness and a revolutionary purpose. In the same letter to Bracke, wherein Marx wrote that "Every step of

actual movement is more important than a dozen programs." Marx took special care to emphasize the importance of theory.

In his classic work, "What Is To Be Done?" Lenin exposes the Economists because in quoting Marx they don't dare go further than the above sentence which is part of a complete thought. Such distortion is deliberately done in order to use Marx to justify the position of the pure and simple trade-unionist-backwardness of the Economists. "To repeat these words in the epoch of theoretical chaos," says Lenin, "is sheer mockery. Moreover, these words of Marx are taken from his letter on the Gotha Programme, in which he sharply condemns eclecticism in the formulation of principles: 'If you must combine,' Marx wrote to the party leaders, 'then enter into agreements to satisfy the practical aims of the movement, but do not haggle over principles, do not make "concessions" in theory.' This was Marx's idea, and yet there are people among us who strive—in his name!—to belittle the significance of theory."

In his Address to the Communist League, Marx also discussed the importance of theory, pointing out that the League "had further proved its worth because its comprehension of the movement . . . had proved to be the only correct one." The unity and agreement with Marx is further excellently demonstrated by Lenin where he writes: "Without revolutionary theory there can be no revolutionary movement. This cannot be insisted upon too strongly at a time when the fashionable preaching of opportunism is combined with absorption in the narrowest forms of practical activity."

Our comrades are learning, but they do so mainly through that slow and painful, yet highly necessary and important manner, namely, the every-day activity. But we are sorely in need of revolutionary theory. Why? Because the class struggle is growing sharper and wider on a million fronts. We confront every conceivable enemy and misleader of the proletariat at every step and turn. We cannot fulfill our tasks, our duties to our class by resting satisfied to learn only by practice. It is too slow and costly. There is too great a danger of opportunist theories and bourgeois influences entrenching themselves in our work. Events are moving with lightning-like speed. Every minute new developments and changed situations crop up. History is rapidly in the making.

By reading and studying we assimilate the experiences and the lessons of the struggles of the past. In the careful study of the writings of Marx, Engels, Lenin, Stalin and other great leaders of the working class, we learn in a short time much of what it took these great minds a life-time to

learn. By studying we have placed at our service their thoughts, their analyses, their experiences and the lessons of their rich store of knowledge.

Thus, we arm ourselves with sharp weapons, with revolutionary theory. Revolutionary theory is not only a weapon. It is like a powerful searchlight illuminating our path, so that we may see clearly with full vision every step in our struggles distances ahead. Thus, we can know how to plan, how to meet and adapt ourselves to every changing situation. Thus we carry out actions with greater success and less mistakes.

Revolutionary theory is our guide to action and is tested and verified in action. We must therefore, learn how to combine theory and practice. Theory without practice is bad because it makes one abstract, academic, a bookish quibbler. Practice without theory, is bad, because it makes our task more painful and difficult and we fall victim of dangerous enemy influences of the bourgeoisie for lack of a clear revolutionary understanding. There can therefore be no separation of theory and practice for a Bolshevik.

Decisions have often been made by the various bodies in our movement, from the Communist International down to the party nucleus, that every comrades must be allowed and enabled to have at least one night a week for study. Every workers' group, club, society, union, every party nucleus should and must have a study circle, a discussion group or a class. Workers Schools must be established in every city and town and in every section of each city that will furnish not only party and union members with revolutionary education, but be available to the widest masses of workers from the shops, mines, mills and offices as well as to the intellectuals who are coming closer to the revolutionary movement. We must do everything possible to propagandize and make known the existence of such schools, and invite and encourage regular attendance.

We must put down an iron fist upon any party functionary or upon any functionary of any union or other non-party organization, under our influence, who assumes the rotten opportunist attitude of "purely practical" work to the exclusion of time for study and education. "Practical" work must not be allowed to crowd out revolutionary education. We must assign comrades to go to the Workers Schools, study circles or groups. Such assignments must be treated with the same seriousness and importance as duty on the picket-line. Any functionary, who stands in the way of raising and developing the theoretical level of the workers must be dealt with as harshly as any one who stands in the way of effective strike action.

Haphazard and sloppy methods, unsystematic actions, work by fits and spasms are ineffective and merely indicate an unwillingness or inability to exert some energy for the revolution. When we become permeated with the importance of serious education of our membership, we will be able to carry out our tasks more intelligently and consolidate and hold our gains in all our work among the masses.

It is especially important, now that registration and preparations are going on in the Workers Schools in New York City, Chicago, Cleveland, Philadelphia, Boston and other cities, that the Winter term should find these schools packed with students and especially those students sent from the factories and mass organizations and unions. In the Winter term we should have the largest enrollment of Party and trade union members in the history of the Workers Schools. This can be accomplished only with the conscious, planned, and active work; the kind of work that enthusiasm and shock-brigade activity of every class conscious worker, Party, union and other functionaries and members can carry out if only the seriousness of this problem is recognized and well understood.

— S. B.

"It will be necessary to double our energies in all the spheres of struggle and agitation. It is the specific duty of the leaders to gain an ever-clearer understanding of the theoretical problems, to free themselves more and more from the influence of traditional phrases inherited from the old conception of the world, and constantly to keep in mind that Socialism, having become a science, demands the same treatment as every other science—it must be studied. The task of the leaders will be to bring understanding, thus acquired and clarified, to the working masses, to spread it with increased enthusiasm, to close the ranks of the Party organizations and of the labor unions with ever greater energy . . . If they . . . proceed in this way . . . they will stand armed for battle when other unexpected grave trials or momentous events will demand heightened courage, heightened determination, and the will to act."—Engels PEASANT WAR IN GERMANY.