

# Party Organizer



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Vol. IV

MAY, 1931

No.4

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CENTRAL COMMITTEE COMMUNIST PARTY, U. S. A

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# PARTY ORGANIZER

Vol. IV

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## An Explanation Due

THE Constitution of the Party is now completed. A special Commission of the Central Org Department has conducted a number of meetings and discussions and made a thorough study of the Constitutions of the Comintern and of the German C.P. and the C.P. of the Soviet Union.

Our old Party Constitution was considerably revised by this Commission after being examined in the light of the above documents.

Arrangements were made to have the Constitution approved by the Polburo in time for publication in the May issue of the PARTY ORGANIZER. But, due to the fact that a series of important activities and problems intervened and a number of leading comrades had to leave for the Districts, the Polburo could not consider the Constitution in time so that the plan of publication as outlined for the PARTY ORGANIZER could be realized.

*The Constitution, however, will appear in the June issue of the PARTY ORGANIZER.*

In view of the fact that we planned a double issue for May and the 10 cents for each copy has already been collected, the May issue is enlarged and in place of the Constitution we are printing a larger section of Sorin's pamphlet on *Lenin's Teachings About the Party*. This is a translation from a C.P.S.U. org pamphlet and is very valuable material for new comrades, for classes and also for every Party comrade.

Due to the unavoidable change of plans, the June issue will be a regular size issue, will contain the Constitution, and will sell for 5 cents a copy.

Incidentally the comrades will be interested to know that



the PARTY ORGANIZER is growing in circulation each month as per the following figures:

|          |       |
|----------|-------|
| February | 2,500 |
| March    | 3,500 |
| April    | 4,500 |
| May      | 6,000 |

Every single copy was sold out (cash in advance of course) and we were short about 400 each month.

C. C. ORG DEPARTMENT.

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## Central Committee Assessment

**T**HE C.C. receives the bulk of its finances from dues payments. Half of your dues is always turned over to the C.C.

With this income the C.C. finances all the expenses of the Central Office, it sends C.C. representatives to Districts, helps the new and weaker Districts and Sections by subsidies, it publishes the Party papers and magazines, etc., etc.

With the growth of our activities, mass struggles and opening of new territories, the financial drain on the Central treasury greatly increases. Practically all the new Districts must be subsidized for the period until the Party and its mass organizations are firmly established.

The weekly dues payments were originally put into effect to make it possible for the C.C. to finance its extensive activities without special assessments. However, the deep economic crisis, unemployment, part employment and wage cuts have affected our Party comrades and our sympathizers severely and cut the dues income and donations by more than half.

The number of Party members is steadily growing. The dues payments are growing in number. But the amount of dues payments is steadily declining. In the last year, for instance, the amount of money for dues payments has been cut in half.

Comrades who are unemployed receive exempt stamps and the number of these are increasing. Comrades who work half time naturally pay only half of what they paid before. Comrades whose wages are cut again pay less dues. Our sympathizers contribute less because they are as bad off as we are.

### **But Our Work Must Go on**

This very condition that cuts down our income increases the possibilities for Party work and puts greater responsibility on the Party and all its members.

The C.C. in this situation has made every possible effort to cut down all expenses without sacrificing the most vital activities. The wages of the C.C. workers were long ago cut in half. At present many of our vital activities suffer because of lack of funds.

The *Daily Worker* as well as other Party publications face suspension almost every day. The situation is becoming desperate.

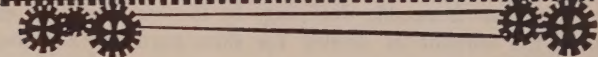
The Central Committee is determined that our work shall not suffer because of financial reasons. In face of this situation, the Central Committee is making every possible effort to raise the necessary funds.

The decision to put into effect the present assessment was made with full knowledge of the difficult situation of our Party comrades. Each Party member must recognize the extremely difficult financial situation of the Party and promptly come to the assistance of the Party by paying the assessment in full as early as possible.

The assessment should be collected in its entirety during the month of May and under no circumstances later than the first weeks of June.

The assessment will be five times the average weekly dues payment.

# PARTY STRUCTURE



## We Must Develop the Initiative of Our Units

By J. H. (*Section 10, District 2*)

THE question of overcoming the organizational weaknesses of the Party Units is the important problem before the Party. Our Unit Buros are still spending a half-hour in making up the order of business. Our Units are still spending more time in discussing technical questions than the real political problems that are before them. The functioning of the Unit depends very much on how its work is prepared by the Unit organizer and Buro.

In order to be able to overcome this, we must be clear on what the functions of every functionary in the Unit are, especially those of the Unit organizer. At the last Unit Buro meeting I attended as section representative I found the following: The Unit organizer came down to the Buro meeting unprepared. He did not read the Section letter before the meeting. He did not decide on the important problems before the Unit that were to be taken up at this meeting. He did not prepare his proposals on the different problems. The result was that it took the Buro about 20 minutes to make up the order of business. Then, after the order of business was made up, since no concrete proposals were prepared for the problems that came up, it took the Buro twice as much time to make up the decisions for the Unit.

It must be clear to every Party member and Unit organizer especially, that the Unit organizer as the most politically developed comrade of the Unit must always know what the important problems are before the Unit at this specific time, which are the weak functionaries who need more attention and guidance from the Buro, and bring up these problems before



the Buro, call these functionaries periodically to Buro meetings and on the basis of concrete, prepared proposals, discuss at the Buro how to plan and carry out the work better. The Unit organizer must read the Section organization letter before the Buro meeting. He must work out the order of business accordingly by taking into consideration the Section instructions and the specific problems of the Unit that must be taken up at the meeting.

At the same Buro meeting the Unit organizer, after working out a concrete plan, proposed the following order of business for the Unit: Minutes, Report of Buro and discussion. In place of making out an order of business for the Unit that should reflect the problems that are before the Party as well as of the workers in this city at the given moment, as May First, Election Campaign, and the building of unemployed branches around the concentration point and giving the Buros proposals how to carry on this work, the Unit organizer combines this under the "Buro report." This mechanized way of taking up work at the Unit kills the initiative of the members. The members do not see the important problems before the Party. They do not see that at this given meeting the problems are:

(1.) How better to prepare the May First demonstration by connecting it up with the specific conditions of the workers in the city.

(2.) How better to bring the election campaign of the Party before the workers, exposing the Socialist Party and capitalist politicians.

(3.) By learning from the experiences of the canvassing in building the Unemployed Branch, the canvassing of relief as well as leading the unemployed workers in their struggles for immediate relief. We must drop this mechanical way of bringing down Buro decisions to Units by putting them on the order of business as "Buro report."

We must make up the order of business for the Unit so that every Party member will see the problem of the Party before them at the given moment. This will develop the initiative of the members, draw them in to planning the work of the Unit and help to activize them in the work.

## General Structure of the Party—Chart No. 1

THE diagram on the opposite page gives a general picture of the relations of the Party Nucleus to the higher Party Committees and their relative positions. At the top we have the Central Committee with its various organs: Polburo, Orgburo and Secretariat which maintain contact with and issue instructions to the District Committees. There are 18 Districts in the Party.

The District Committee through its Buro or the Secretariat maintains contact with the Section Committees and issues instructions to the Section Committees.

The Section Committee maintains contact with and issues instructions to the Street and Shop Nuclei (units).

The Street or Shop Nucleus has a Buro which is the Party Committee of the Nucleus and plans work for the entire Nucleus and its individual members.

### SAFEGUARDING THE PARTY—III

AN essential phase of the safeguarding of the Party is the safeguarding of the Party leaders. "Every good leader enables the working class to save a mass of energy, effort and blood in the class struggle. . . . The Party must protect its leaders in the same way as the brain is protected against injury," says Comrade Sorin in his pamphlet *Lenin's Teachings about the Party*.

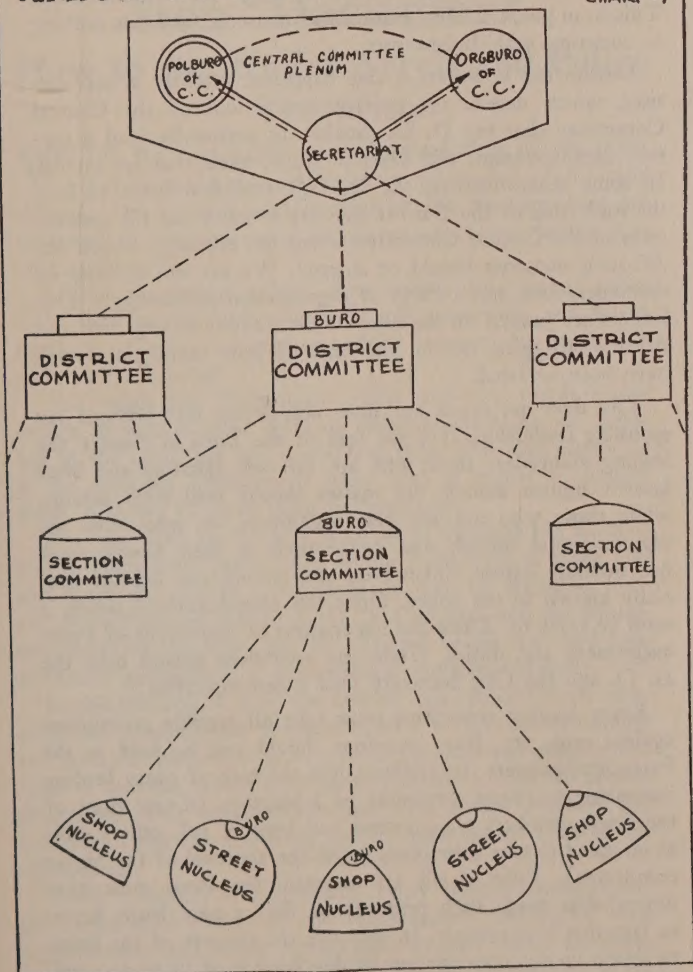
The Syndicalists, I. W. W.'s etc. on the other hand were so impressed by the treachery of the rotten leadership of the Second International (Socialists), and by the danger of developing a wide gap between the leaders and the membership that they altogether denied or minimized the role of the leadership. This was never a Bolshevik principle. Time and again, Lenin emphasized the value of Bolshevik leaders.

Many of our comrades, however, still suffer from syndicalist ideas on this question, and thus throw difficulties in the way of safeguarding the Party. Many comrades think that a demonstration cannot be called a real success unless it ends



# GENERAL STRUCTURE *of the* PARTY

CHART 1



up with at least the District Organizer in jail. If he is still free to carry on the Party work, they feel that somehow or other he has shirked his task of "leading" the demonstration. This is, to put it mildly, sentimental nonsense, and has nothing in common with Bolshevism.

Despite this however, a case happened recently in one district, where despite the explicit instructions of the Central Committee that the D. O. should not personally lead a certain demonstration, the District Buro voted that he should. In some other districts, the D. O.'s find it difficult to keep the leadership of the Buro if they try to carry out the instructions of the Central Committee about not exposing themselves. All such nonsense should be stopped. We are not a Party of demonstrations, but a Party of organization and struggle. Our leaders are judged on the basis of their ability to organize and develop struggles, not on the basis of how many times they have been arrested.

This does not mean our mass actions are left without responsible leadership. It is the task of the Buro to classify the leading comrades; those who are the best agitators and best-known figures among the masses should lead such actions, while those who are the best organizers, or who have the organizational threads and connections in their hands, must not specially expose themselves, and should not become specially known to the police. Once this classification is made, it must be stuck to. These are not matters of choice but of Party assignment and duties. Under no conditions should both the D. O. and the Org Secretary lead a demonstration.

Every leading committee must take all possible precautions against raids etc. Buro meetings should not be held in the Party headquarters. In addition, it is the task of every leading committee to insure continuity of leadership. In case most of the Buro members are arrested and kept in jail, others must be co-opted to take their place (with the approval of the higher committee). Even if all are arrested, the Buro must have nevertheless made such preparations that a new Buro begins to function immediately. In this way the attempt of the bosses to smash up our organization by depriving it of its leaders will fail and the organization will continue to function.

# Central Control Commission Document

## How to Act Under Arrest and Police Terrorism

**W**ITH the continuation and the deepening of the crisis, which is accompanied by a great sharpening of the class struggle, the fighting organizations of the working class are subjected to ever increasing vicious attacks from various government agencies.

Injunctions against strikers, mass arrests, deportations, police raids upon workers' organizations and gatherings, and brutal beatings of those arrested are daily occurrences in various parts of the country.

And while the Communist Party and the revolutionary unions, as well as other working class organizations, are fighting in the open, are not concealing their aims and tactics; it is the capitalist government itself that is trying to outlaw them, is trying to drive them underground.

Not only that, but in their attempts to terrorize the workers and to force them patiently to submit themselves to wage cuts and speed-up, and to unemployment with its attending misery, starvation and suffering, the "red squads" and the strong-arm thugs of the police pay no attention to the laws and constitutional guarantees of the capitalist government itself.

In this situation, it is of the utmost importance for all class-conscious revolutionary workers to have a clear understanding and firm determination as to certain fundamental policies and rules of conduct which they should follow in order to protect themselves, their organizations and their fellow workers and comrades from the frame-up and intimidation methods of the ruling class.

Every member, and especially every leading member, of the Communist Party, of the revolutionary unions, of shop organizations and strike committees, as well as of all other workers' organizations, must be ready and determined to do and to bear everything for the protection of the revolutionary



proletarian movement from the attacks of the capitalists and their government.

He must keep in mind and observe at all times the first basic general rule to safeguard from the police and from the agents of the bosses all important organization documents, instructions, mailing lists, leading functionaries, etc.

He must not carry around with him such papers and addresses any more than absolutely necessary.

He must not keep them in well-known and easily accessible places where raids and arrests can be expected.

When arrested and subjected to beatings and torture, he must insist upon his constitutional right to refuse to answer any questions before being brought to court, and he must insist upon his right to consult a lawyer, whom he can select himself.

He does not have to answer even such questions as to whether or not he is a member of the Communist Party or of some other working class organization.

At the same time, of course, he should realize the fact that his legal rights will not be respected by the police thugs and third-degree experts, and that the only thing by which he can defeat all their wiles and tortures will be his moral courage and stamina, and his steadfast will power not to give in.

He must refuse to give to the police any information whatever, regardless of what methods and brutalities they may employ to break down his physical and moral resistance; not to believe their claims, or yield to their promises; not to give any promises to them, even though determined not to carry them out.

No credence should be given to the claims of the police that they have obtained "confessions" from some other comrades. That is a favorite method of the police, by which they try to sow distrust among the workers, try to break down their morale, and by which the police try to get confirmation for their conjectures and guesses, or for some information, obtained from unreliable stool-pigeon sources, which even in their own eyes cannot be trusted without confirmation.

Another trap frequently employed by the police, when all

their brutalities and tortures fail to break down the refusal of the arrested comrade to give them any information right then and there, is to offer cessation of beatings and to promise immediate release against the mere promise of the arrested comrade to stop his activities in the revolutionary movement, or to leave the city, or to report to the police in the future upon the plans and activities of the movement.

This is a clever stratagem on the part of the police, because the arrested worker may yield to it, may give the promise without intention of keeping it, and with the idea that this would be a good stratagem on his part in fooling the police.

In the end, however, such promises, though given in words only, do not fool the police, but serve their purposes, and are apt to turn out very detrimental to the movement and to the worker himself.

Having obtained such promises from one worker, the police will try to get them from others also, and, if resisted, will subject them to additional brutalities.

Having succeeded in breaking down the morale of a worker once, however slightly, the police will try to break it down further the next time they lay their hands on him, and will be so much more ruthless in their efforts to do so. Not only that, but the realization of this, the constant fear of reprisals from the police is apt to have very demoralizing effect on the comrade in his future activities.

And also, the information about the "promise" is apt to become known, to be spread by the police itself or by disruptive elements, and thus destroy the confidence which a worker must have among his fellow workers in order to do effective work for the movement.

The best policy all round, the policy that has been tested and found correct in many years of experience in the revolutionary movement in old Czarist Russia and in present fascist Poland and Italy, is to refuse steadfastly to give any information whatever, any promises, or any concessions or satisfaction to the police.

Later, when a comrade may be brought to a court trial, he should *still remember* that he cannot be forced to testify against himself.

If he is known as a leading member of the Party, or, if he is known even as only a rank-and-file member of the Party, denial of such membership may be futile and harmful.

While still guarding against giving any information which the government may want for use against the Party, or against other workers' organizations, the aim should be to turn the trial into an open tribunal for the spreading and propagating of Communist ideas and aims.

In each particular case, however, the detailed plans and policies to be followed in court trials, are to be worked out by responsible Party committees.

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## Correction

**I**N the April issue of the PARTY ORGANIZER, on page 18, appeared a splendid article on the Shop Committee, written by Comrade Jack Johnstone.

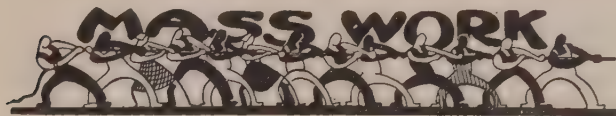
The line of this article expresses the position of the Party and the TUUL on the Shop Committee.

However, due to a typographical error a wrong formulation crept into this article. You will notice that on the last line of page 18 and continuing on top of page 19 there is a confusing sentence. This is a decisive sentence because it changes the meaning of the Shop Committee and confuses it with the Shop Branch of the Union.

The following is the corrected paragraph as approved by Comrade Johnstone:

“Thus we have the Mine Committee, the basic organization for united struggle, elected by the workers in a mine irrespective of Union membership, and we also have the basic dues-paying membership of the National Miners Union, the *Mine Local*, which with its officers, Executive Committee, Membership meetings, its program, always strives to draw every worker in the mine directly into the Union.”





## On Making Contacts

ONE Sunday night a YCL unit in Copeland Hall, D——, had a dance. At this dance there were some 5 or 6 young Ford workers. The unit was working on the organization of a sports club. Right at the dance we decided to make an appeal for all workers who wanted to learn any sport to come to a meeting on Monday, where everyone could learn and practice. All workers were to be eligible for the meets and the games.

At the meeting we found these Ford workers among the crowd and when volunteers were asked to supply some equipment, amongst those who volunteered was one of the young Ford workers. Then a few minutes were spent in discussing the standing of competition and it was the amateur and the workers' control of activities that won the greatest sympathy from those workers present. A definite precedent was set that only the majority vote of the club could decide any matters of the club.

At the first practice night these young Ford workers were amongst the learners. The only thing they knew was that they wanted to box and to play baseball. The practice nights following found these young Ford workers bringing some friends with them, all anxious to learn and compete in the games and meets. At the last practice there were about 10 young Ford workers among the 25 or 30 present and most of them joined the club.

Now that these young workers are involved and drawn into the club they naturally aim to develop it and increase its membership. This is the orientation of the entire membership. Their contacts are Ford workers because they live and work in the same neighborhood. With the leadership and co-operation of a YCL fraction they will become more class

conscious and active in getting more young Ford workers into the club.

This club may now be considered a Ford Factory sports club. The future membership is a Ford workers' membership. We must remember that a factory club is a club that has the membership predominantly from a given factory, although it need not be 100 per cent factory membership. Even the non-factory membership can be used to recruit the elements we aim to reach, if the YCL members are on the job.

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## On Fighting White Chauvinism

By W. G. B. (*Greenville, S. C.*)

**A** GREAT obstacle to organizing the workers in the South is white chauvinism. Race prejudice is so deeply rooted in many places that workers will absolutely refuse to attend meetings where Negroes are present. The majority of these whites are still full of "democratic" illusions and white supremacy stuff.

On the other hand 80 per cent of the Negro workers are apparently ready and willing to follow our leadership, when we prove to them that we mean what we preach. But very often they are skeptical; and rightly so. They will say: "If you mean what you say, where are the whites? Why don't they meet with us?" Even one Negro comrade once remarked: "I would like to meet with the whites when they meet." This shows that some of them still think we have them Jim-Crowed in the Unemployed Councils and even in the Party in spite of all our preaching about race equality. This is a very bad situation and one that must be overcome immediately.

Why does such a situation exist? Because here in the South, both the Party and the Unemployed Council (our only mass organization) are mainly composed of Negro workers. In many sections we have failed utterly to win over any appre-

cialable number of white workers, not because they don't believe in our economic program but mainly, as numerous white workers tell us, because of the "nigger" question.

Thus the breaking down of race prejudice, the fight against white chauvinism in all its hideous forms is the chief and immediate task of the Party and the revolutionary organizations, and is a prerequisite to building mass organizations of both Negro and white workers.

This is a task that cannot be accomplished by dogmatically insisting upon the Party position and flaunting a few slogans of race equality, self-determination, etc. in the face of the workers. But it must be faced concretely and by constantly educating the workers and consistently fighting chauvinism in all its forms.

This hydra-headed monster crops up in various and unexpected places, often by workers who claim to fully accept the Party's position. They refuse to openly take a stand against white chauvinism when the subject is brought up; or will even say: "Well, I don't mind the Negro myself, but I know the Southern people. They just won't organize with the Negroes. We had better go slow."

Such a tendency must be fought vigorously. But how to do this so as to win the white workers and not drive them away is very important. To simply expel a Party member is not enough. Nor is it enough to drastically criticize a rank and file worker or bitterly denounce his white chauvinist tendencies. Often this helps to drive white workers away from the movement. The problem is a deeper one: We must educate the workers to the basic reason of why race prejudice has been instilled and taught to the workers by the bosses, and show them the economic necessity for the unity of all workers upon an equal basis.

A point in question occurred recently in a National Textile Workers Union local. In this mill of 700 or 800 workers only four or five were Negro workers (firemen, janitors, etc.). Two of these wanted to join the NTWU. When the question of their application was brought up at least 50 per cent openly opposed taking the Negro workers in. Some even said they would leave the organization if Negroes were allowed to meet



with the white workers. Only two, who were Party members, openly fought for the admission of the Negro workers. The arguments of the opposition waxed warm.

What should the organizer have done? Would it have been wise to dogmatically insist that the Negroes be immediately accepted and let 50 per cent of the members leave the organization? (Such has happened in some instances).

Here's what the organizer did: He asked that the question be left open until the next meeting for further discussion. In the meantime he visited as many of the members as possible, talking to them individually, showing and pointing out to them the necessity of Negro and white workers organizing together; and explaining how the bosses keep the workers divided by means of race prejudice, etc. The result was that the next meeting there was a solid block that was prepared to argue for the admission of the Negro workers. Thus by perseverance and education in a concrete way white chauvinism was to a great extent broken down and at the same time the white workers remained in the union that otherwise would not have done so had a more crude and dogmatic method been adopted.

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## Our New Children's Magazine

THE Party must now take up seriously how best it can help build the *Pioneer* into a mass organ among the working class children. The issuing of this organ is the first step in the making of the turn in this important phase of Party work.

It is first necessary for all Party Districts to take a real hand and real control in the work of building up the *Pioneer*. Strict check-up must be made upon those youth and adult comrades engaged in the work. The fraternal, union and other mass organizations must be instructed to set up an apparatus within their organization which shall utilize their particular connections and contacts in order to distribute and build up the magazine.

We should see to it that a corps of technicians be built up around the magazine who shall write for it, and at the same time be used in the actual organizational work among the children.

An intensive drive must be worked out in each District for subscriptions, since that is the one way in which we can establish actual paid circulation and regular readers. In this the Party must take a direct hand, meeting with those responsible for the work, and giving them all assistance in mobilization.

The Party should instruct all fractions in organizations to have the magazine adopted as an official organ of the particular branch, with a resolution passed to that effect. The organization at the same time goes on record for a certain amount to be ordered each month.

Adult organizations and Party units should arrange affairs for the magazine, in which the *Pioneer* organization must assist them.

In each District an apparatus on a District scale should be set up which is to handle the magazine, taking full charge of the campaign to build it, developing lively correspondence and involving technicians who will also be used in the organizational work.

Our work among the children has long been merely a topic for discussion. It must now become a practical task. The *Pioneer* is being checked up regularly by the Central Committee, and each Party organization must consider it a vital Party organ for which they are particularly responsible.

It is not only possible to use the *Pioneer* effectively in order to win the working class child. But it can as well be used to win wide support from all sections of the working class.

# Rooting the Party in the Shops

## How We Built a Shop Nucleus

By H. G. (Birmingham)

THE following manner of building a shop unit is just one of the many ways shop units can be built. The shop is a metal plant in the South, employing about 300 men, of whom 200 are Negroes. The white workers, like in other plants, are given the best jobs with best pay, such as foremen, mechanics and helpers. White workers also have a separate place to punch their time clocks, separate drinking fountains and places to eat. The Negroes are given the jobs as laborers and shovellers, etc. Their scale of pay runs \$1.90 for ten hours' work and they mingle with the white workers while at work only.

The above unit was started by a comrade who reported he had six Negro friends who were buying the *Southern Worker*, all of whom worked at this plant and wanted to join the Party. They showed their willingness to do Party work by contributing Workers' Correspondence articles, distributing the *Southern Worker* and Party leaflets inside the plant. These workers were called to a meeting and organized into a unit and this comrade assigned as the organizer of the unit. In a period of only a few weeks' activity they had recruited four more members. The Party has started a consistent distribution of leaflets inside the plant, calling on the white workers to unite with the Negroes in the Metal Workers League, against discrimination, for equal pay for equal work, for safety conditions, etc.

Because of the fact that this southern city has prisoners at work on the chain gang, digging slag (forced labor), the vicinity of this plant is patrolled by armed guards, who among their other duties must see that the Communists create no disturbance. This requires, of course, all inside distribution of



leaflets and papers. Comrades of the unit are given the following instructions for inside distribution: (1) Distributions are never to be carried on the same day each week, but must be staggered. (2) Comrades distributing must have free access to department where they are to distribute their quota of leaflets so as not to excite suspicion by going from one department to another. (3) When distribution is once started it must be carried on quickly, no leaflets to be kept in one's pockets, clothes, etc., in case of search. Names and addresses of white workers are turned over to white comrades who call discussion meetings of these contacts, explaining in detail the reasons why the boss constantly carries on propaganda in favor of race prejudice.

After Fish made his investigation this company is becoming peeved at the ability of the Party to reach over the fence and despite all their guards and spies to have its propaganda distributed in the shops. They have appealed to the Department of Justice for help.

In the following manner new members are brought into the Party: (1) No candidate to the Party is ever brought to a meeting of the unit without his membership being proposed at a previous meeting in which his voucher reports, (1) how long he has known him; (2), is he a member of the church or any other organization (this is necessary as the preachers are used by the steel trusts as spies); (3), was he ever a scab; (4), was he a member of a union or political Party; (5), what has been the nature of his Party activity before making known that he wanted to join the Party. The unit on this basis accepts or rejects the applicant.

As was pointed out, there are many ways to build shop nuclei, but usually we overlook the fact that by instructing members to consistently sell Party papers to shop workers and systematically talking with them we can come in contact with class conscious workers and draw them into the Party and its activities.

## Building a Y.C.L. Shop Nucleus

**T**HE Y. C. L. in C—— was out to build a shop nucleus in the Premier plant. The question was how. The Premier plant is in a section called C—— where until recently the Y. C. L. had no contact. The only sympathetic organization there was a Hungarian Sick and Death Benefit Society.

It was decided that a Youth Center be built in C———and through this to build up the nucleus in the Premier plant. Through the sympathetic organization contacts were gotten with a small group of young workers. A place was found that was suitable for a Youth Center. These young workers with whom the League had gotten in touch, some of whom had joined the League, were not at all sectarian. They knew that in order to have a Youth Center they had to get clubs and sport organizations of young workers to make this center their meeting place.

They began to visit the clubs in the neighborhood. A sport club was formed that decided to meet in the Center. A club of Negro girls, who had been meeting in a Jim Crow hall, was visited and they were very much pleased with the idea of a young workers' center, run and controlled by the youth themselves. Aside from visiting the clubs in the neighborhood and getting them to make the Youth Center their headquarters, committees went from house to house telling the workers why a Youth Center was needed and asking them to support it financially and to make the Youth Center their recreation center.

C—— has 10 big factories. Most of the workers living in this section work in these factories. By getting the young workers to support the Youth Center we were able to get in touch not only with many workers in the Premier plant but in the other plants.

The Y. C. L. in C——, which started out with three members, has grown to 25. The League in this section cannot remain a street unit. By recruiting the best elements from among those young workers who come to the Youth Center, the Y.C.L. got into its ranks youths from the factories in

the neighborhood. The first shop nucleus has already been built—that in the Premier plant and there are now members in the League working in the other shops. This has been our first concrete experience with Youth Centers. Until C——, we have talked much about youth centers, but have not built them. The building of Youth Centers must become an immediate task for every District as a means of carrying out their task of building shop nuclei.

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## Some Lessons of the Mining Strike

By F. BORICH

OUR Mine Nucleus of 9 members was instrumental in calling the strike of the H—— miners against a wage cut. But the first day of the strike the Nucleus ceased to be a factor in the leadership of the strike. When the strike was 10 weeks old the Party members fought against the Party line.

What was the main reason for this?

The District Committee and our organizers, instead of working out the policy with the Nucleus, mobilizing it for the leadership of the strike, proceeded to formulate and carry out the policy without even consulting the Nucleus. The Nucleus met only 3 times during the 10 weeks of the strike. The result was: actual demoralization and liquidation of the Nucleus.

The District Committee, not seeing its own mistake of ignoring the Nucleus, began to consider to secretly organize a new Mine Nucleus in an attempt completely to eliminate the old one, because "the members were no good." But if the Nucleus was good enough, with a little help from the Party and the Union leadership, to organize the strike, it certainly was good enough, again with the help of the Party and the Union leadership, plus new forces that sprang up in course of the strike, to lead the strike.

The fault for such dangerous developments lies not so

much with the Nucleus, but with the Party and the Union leadership, which entirely neglected the Nucleus.

In the G—— A—— miners' strike, involving 25,000 miners bitterly opposed to the UMWA leadership, practically the same mistake was made. For the first 7 days of the strike the Party membership played no role in the strike. All the work has been done by 3 of us "organizers," but without actual results. The Party leadership was completely isolated not only from the striking miners but also from the Party membership.

When the strike was one week old a well attended Section Convention of the Party was held. There was a good discussion on general trade union work but no discussion on our immediate tasks in the strike. Therefore the Convention could not and did not mobilize the Party for a determined struggle to win the miners for our leadership.

After the Convention adjourned, the 3 "organizers" again began to do the work, the Party membership being excluded from the activity. Some of the comrades even went on a drunk for several days. The "organizers" were busy day and night, but again: no real progress.

Then we began to analyze the reasons for our inability to start a mass movement to fight against the betrayal of the strike. A general membership meeting of the Party was held. During the discussion it became clear that most of the comrades did not understand the Party line. Some even disagreed with the line. One comrade admitted to Lovestoneites that our line was "wrong." Since the membership was not convinced of the correctness of the line it was impossible to mobilize them to *carry out* the line.

At the membership meeting all the comrades were made clear on the line and convinced of its correctness. Mobilization immediately began. Two of the comrades were assigned to organize a rank and file meeting in the mine where we had no meetings before. In several hours of work they succeeded in getting over 50 miners to attend—the biggest organizational meeting held in the course of the strike. And what is still more important, they took care of the meeting themselves, presented correctly the line of the Party to the miners,



and mobilized them for a struggle against the betrayal of the strike. In other mines the same thing took place.

These experiences show: (1) That the Party membership must be thoroughly acquainted with the line of the Party; it must be convinced of its correctness; and must understand how to apply it; (2) that the first task of the organizers is to involve every Party member in the work, giving each one a specific task to perform every day in mobilizing the workers for our line; (3) that the Party units must meet as often as necessary to discuss new developments—and in present-day strikes there are new developments every day; (4) that only by involving the entire Party membership in struggle can we secure the leadership of the workers.



## SHALL WE ISSUE A DICTIONARY?

CONCEIVE of a worker who just joined our Party and comes to a unit meeting for the first time. Assume that he overlooks all the shortcomings of the meeting, threats of control commission, opportunism, etc., and just sits there quietly and listens and tries to understand what is going on.

Assume further that he is the average new member who doesn't know anyone in the unit, and no one in the unit, as usual, pays any attention to him. He will listen carefully and wonder what we are talking about because every third word we utter will be unintelligible to him and he will make mental notes of the following terms and abbreviations:



|                    |                    |
|--------------------|--------------------|
| Comintern          | Secretariat        |
| IWO                | Chauvinism         |
| Radicalization     | DO                 |
| Krestintern        | YCL                |
| Left Sectarianism  | LSU                |
| RILU               | Concentration      |
| Agitprop           | FSU                |
| Polburo            | Profintern         |
| Deviation          | TUUL               |
| NEC                | ILD                |
| LSNR               | Proletariat        |
| Social Fascist     | Self-determination |
| MOPR               | Inprecorr          |
| WIR                | Worcorr            |
| Control Commission | Shock Troop        |

Let us use plain, simple, proletarian language so that the workers can understand us and let us not be too lazy to say League of Struggle for Negro Rights instead of just LSNR, at least when new members are present.

## READING SUGGESTIONS

*Party Structure* problems and methods of work are closely analyzed by Comrade Williamson in the May issue of the *Communist*. He deals principally with the situation in the Chicago District, citing some valuable experiences and methods used by District No. 8 to overcome the weaknesses in Party work. District No. 8 is the best functioning District in the Party in many respects and each District has much to learn from this article.

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*Unemployment Work* of the Party is at a very low stage at the present time. All the aspects of this problem have been closely discussed in the Polburo recently. Most of the District Buros have discussed ways and means of improving this work. The average Party comrade who is called upon to actually carry out this work rarely has an opportunity to attend the meetings where these discussions take place. However, in the May issue of the *Communist* Comrade Hathaway has an excellent and simple article dealing with this problem from the standpoint of the role of the Party in mass work.

While Comrade Hathaway's article deals principally with unemployment work, he also lays down the Bolshevik interpretation of the role and tasks of mass organizations as transmission belts of the Party to the masses.

Most comrades have an idea that the *Communist* contains heavy theoretical articles; however, this is no longer the case as you will find when you read the May issue.

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*Pioneer* magazine is out and it will do you good to read it. Here is a fine Bolshevik children's magazine that children can really read and understand. Buy a few copies and hand them out to some kids that you know.

## To Our New Party Comrades

(NOTE: Hundreds of new militant workers are joining the ranks of our Party daily. Many of these new comrades have had no previous working class education or organizational experience. It is very difficult for these new comrades to understand our Party. The theory of proletarian revolution—Marxism-Leninism—is hardly understood by our old members. The terminology (difficult words), the structure, the methods of work, the duties of members, the traditions of our Party, the knowledge of all these most of us have gained after being active in the Party for years. In this section of the PARTY ORGANIZER we shall deal with many of these problems from the *standpoint of the needs of new Party comrades*. New members are urged to write to us and ask such questions and explanations as they require and every effort will be made to answer these inquiries in each issue. The older Party members are also urged to write for this section and raise the problems that arise in their activities among workers who are ready to join our Party )

### DEAR COMRADE:

We surely expect that you have been given a copy of the Central Committee letter entitled *Revolutionary Greetings*, and have carefully read it. If by any chance you have not received it, write to your District Office or write direct to the Central Committee.

By joining the Communist Party you have become a member of the most powerful world-wide revolutionary movement that the world has ever known.

One of your greatest tasks is to retain close contact with your fellow workers in your shop, neighborhood, lodge and every organization or gathering place where there are workers. The power of our Party lies in the ability to influence millions of workers with whom we have direct and personal contact.



You no doubt feel that you have entered a new world when you joined the Party. This is true when you view it politically and ideologically. But always remember that you are still a worker living in the present capitalist world, in which millions of workers live and suffer.

Your job is to win every worker whom you personally know for the Party.

Don't abandon your friends even though they still go to church every Sunday

Don't sneer at your friends just because they are slow to accept our point of view.

Don't isolate yourself from the many worker friends in the shop, in the club or whatever other workers' organization you were a member of before you joined the Communist Party.

Go slow, but make a persistent effort to win everyone you know for the Party. Every Party comrade can bring at least one new member into the Party within one month. And write to us of your experiences and difficulties.

Fraternally yours,

R. BAKER.



# Lenin's Teachings About the Party

(Excerpts from Book by V. SORIN)

## THE PARTY

**W**HAT is the Party? The briefest answer will be as follows:

"Our Party is a union of the class conscious, advanced fighters for the emancipation of the working class." (Lenin, *Socialism and Religion*, 1905.)

In greater detail the answer might be as follows: By a Party is meant a voluntary association of people with similar political convictions and fighting by similar methods for the reorganization of the life of society in accordance with their views, expressing the interests of a definite class. Once a certain number of people with common political views and a common understanding of the social life jointly decide to fight together for their convictions, they constitute themselves into a political Party, organize a political union, organization, society. Such for instance is the Party of the Bolsheviks, the Party of the Mensheviks, the Party of Socialist Revolutionists, the Cadet (Constitutional Democratic) Party, etc.

"In order that the mass of people belonging to a certain class might learn to understand their interests, their position, to pursue their policy, it is necessary immediately and at all costs to organize the advanced elements of the class, even should these elements originally constitute an insignificant fraction of the class." (Lenin, *How V. Zasulitch Is Killing Liquidationism*, 1913.)

"The organization of the advanced elements" is a Party. Here is what Lenin wrote about the Party:

"The Party is a sum of organizations connected into one. The Party is the organization of the working class divided up into a network of various local and special central and general organizations."

The Party as such is an organization created by the work-

ing class to defend its interests. The Party is divided within itself into a number of big organizations which are divided in turn into smaller ones. For instance, our Party (the political organization of the proletariat) is divided up into several dozens of provincial organizations. Each provincial organization is divided up in turn into several District or country organizations, the latter into smaller bodies (nuclei).

Approaching the question from a different angle, it may be said that our Party is the Party of the working class. The most advanced, class conscious, revolutionary workers join it. They see further ahead than the rest of the workers and understand the interests of their class better than the others. For this reason the Party represents the vanguard of the proletariat, its advanced detachments, going ahead of the class and leading the latter.

*"The Party is the class conscious, advanced section of the class, its vanguard.*

*The power of this vanguard is ten, hundred and more times as great as its numbers.*

*Is this possible? Is it possible for hundreds to excel the force of thousands?*

*It is possible and it does so when the hundreds are organized.*

*Organization strengthens the forces tenfold. . . .*

*More and more forces of the proletariat are awakening to social and political activity. It is necessary patiently to explain to them the role and importance of the Party, to prove to them the necessity of joining the Party.*

*Non-affiliation with the Party is a bourgeois idea. Affiliation with the Party is a socialist idea."* (Lenin, *The Socialist Party and the non-Party Revolutionaries*, 1905.)

The bourgeoisie train the workers in a spirit of indifference to the political struggle, in an anti-Party spirit. They try to make the workers think that they do not need any Party, they try to develop among the workers a prejudiced attitude towards the Party. The bourgeois views still influence many of the workers. We must combat these views and oppose them by our slogan: For the Party, for Party affiliation.

### The Class and the Party

It is very important that the two conceptions, that of the class and that of the Party, should not be confused. In order that there should be perfect clarity on this point, let us recall the strictly scientific definition of a class.

“By classes,” Lenin wrote, “is meant a large group of people distinguished by their place in the historically determined system of social production, by their relation (usually fixed and formulated in laws) towards the means of production by their role in the social organization of labor and therefore by the methods by which they get their share of the social wealth and by the size of this share. Classes,” Lenin adds further, “are such groups of people, one of which is capable of appropriating the labor of the others thanks to the difference of their places in the system of social economy.” (*The Great Beginning*, 1919.)

The above extract has been taken from a pamphlet written in 1919. Here is another extract on the same question, written in 1902:

“The essential distinction between classes is the place which they hold in the social production and therefore their relation towards the means of production. The appropriation of one or another share of the social means of production and their use for private industry, for industry selling its product, such is the basic distinction of one class of modern society (the bourgeois) from the proletariat, which is deprived of the means of production and sells its labor power.” (Lenin, *Vulgar Socialism and Populism Resurrected by the Social Revolutionists*, 1902.)

Between the bourgeoisie and the proletariat stand the petty bourgeoisie, who are particularly numerous in Soviet Russia (the peasantry): this is a *class* of small owners, of small commodity producers. Such are the three fundamental forces of modern society: the bourgeoisie, the petty bourgeoisie and the



proletariat. *The classes are not divided up by walls and do not represent anything absolutely homogeneous.* If a further division is to be made, say *within the peasantry*, we will find there at least three noticeable groups: (1) poor peasants with little or no land, approaching in their position the proletariat; (2) rich peasants (kulaks), the village bourgeoisie; (3) the middle peasants.

The city bourgeoisie may also be divided up into a small, middle and big bourgeoisie. The proletariat may also be "pure" and "connected with the peasantry." Hence society contains numerous social "groups" and "layers," but all of them come under the description of the three *principal forces*: the bourgeoisie, the petty bourgeoisie and the proletariat.

Among the advanced representatives of the class or group, ideas and thoughts arise giving expression to the conditions, sentiments, interests, strivings and tasks of the class or group. Thus is formed "class consciousness" or "ideology."

"It is not the consciousness of the people that determines their environment, but on the contrary, the social environment determines their consciousness." (Marx, *A Contribution to the Criticism of Political Economy*, 1859.)

People holding similar views group themselves around a certain political ideology. They form themselves into Parties expressing the interests of the given class or of a part of the class.

"Usually, or in the majority of cases, at least in the modern civilized countries, the classes are directed by political Parties." (Lenin, *Infantile Sickness of "Leftism" in Communism*, 1920.)

## **The Party as an Organization of the Minority of the Class**

The Communist Party represents the most class conscious, advanced, revolutionary section of the working class. It constitutes a minority of the proletariat, and this cannot be other-

wise in capitalist society, where the working class is oppressed; after the overthrow of the bourgeoisie much time will pass before the proletariat will become morally consolidated, will rid itself of the heritage of capitalism and will join in its majority the Party. Under capitalism only a minority of the workers are class conscious.

“In capitalist society even the advanced class, the proletariat, is incapable of creating a Party comprising the entire class.” (*The last words of the “Iskra” tactic*, 1905.)

At the second congress of the Communist International Lenin explained this idea in particular detail to the foreign comrades:

“During the epoch of capitalism, when the working masses are subjected to endless exploitation and are incapable of developing their human abilities, the most characteristic feature of the political labor parties is the fact that they embrace only a minority of their class. The really class conscious workers represent a minority of the workers in capitalist society. . . . Only this class conscious minority is capable of leading the working masses.” (*Speech at the Second Congress of the Comintern, on the role of the Communist Party*, 1920.)

Our Party too still represents a minority of the working class. But with the consolidation and development of our industry, with the growth and development of the working class this minority will be growing more numerous every year. A few more years will pass and the Party will develop to very impressive dimensions. Still later it will embrace the majority of the proletariat.

### **The Party and the Leaders**

“Political parties are governed, as a rule, by more or less stable groups of the most authoritative, influential and experienced people, elected to the most responsible

positions and known as leaders." (Lenin, *The Infantile Sickness of "Leftism" in Communism*.)

The Party as a whole, the Party as such, leads the working class; the Party is governed by leaders. If the Party is the vanguard of the working class then the leaders are the advanced post of this vanguard. The wiser, more experienced, more devoted, more farsighted the leaders, the better for the working class. The importance of the leaders manifested itself particularly in the case of Lenin, who enjoys an entirely exceptional, unparalleled prestige among the masses of workers and peasants throughout the world. Lenin's great genius left its impress not only upon the entire activity of the Russian Bolshevik Party, but also upon the entire international revolutionary movement as a whole.

Every good leader enables the working class to save a mass of energy, effort and blood in the class struggle. The more experienced, authoritative and farsighted the leaders, the more confidently does the Party move, the more quickly does it find a way out of every difficulty, the more successfully does it maneuver and change positions, issue slogans to the working class, determine the current tasks, etc.

The Party must protect its leaders in the same way as the brain is protected against injury. The German workers failed to protect Liebknecht and Luxemburg against the white guard officers and this loss very painfully affected the development of the German Communist Party. The West European Communist movement has not yet produced any very great, influential and authoritative leaders, and this circumstance makes itself very strongly felt in the development of the Communist Parties in Western Europe; they would not make one-tenth of their mistakes if they had leaders such as the Russian Bolsheviks have.

The bourgeoisie understands very well some of the things which the backward workers of Western Europe and America

fail to understand, namely, that the leaders constitute one of the most important and essential elements in the development of the revolutionary movement. The bourgeoisie, therefore, deliberately and systematically strive to deprive the working class of its leaders; the assassination "according to plan" of Karl Liebknecht, Rosa Luxemburg, Tischko-Jochiges; the search for Lenin by the Russian White Guards after the "July Days" of 1917 for the purpose of murdering him, and the attempt on his life in 1918 by the socialist revolutionary who was a political agent of the bourgeoisie; the murder by the bourgeoisie of hundreds and thousands of leaders of the labor movement in various countries during the epoch of the capitalist offensive (since 1920).

In order to weaken, demoralize and disorganize the labor movement, it is enough to smash its head, to destroy its leaders; the bourgeoisie understands this very well. If it is impossible, inconvenient or dangerous to kill the leader, then it is necessary to undermine his authority among the working masses, to defame his name, to slander him. During the July days the bourgeoisie fabricated and published false documents in an attempt to prove that Lenin was a German spy; the endless lies and calumnies published by the foreign white guard press about the leaders of the Soviet power, have the same end in view, that of demoralizing the working masses.

No serious movement ever takes place without leaders. Even a small strike is directed by some leader. Even a "spontaneous" movement, a riot, has some leaders who unexpectedly rise to the top and disappear as quickly and without leaving a trace. The bourgeoisie, too, has its leaders. It is fully aware of their importance in the class struggle. People such as Lloyd George and Poincare personify the entire experience, the entire wisdom, the entire political artfulness of their class. Great, experienced, authoritative leaders (both of the workers and of the bourgeoisie) are not born in a day. They are developed in the course of the struggle, they grow with it, they are tested by the masses in the course of many years and decades, being thus filtered and singled out from among the mass of would-be leaders.



The leaders are no "heroes" capable of miracles; the masses are not a "mob" whom the "hero can lead wherever he desires." The leaders are not the "spirit" breathing life into the "dead matter" (the masses). Anyone who imagines the relations between the leaders and the Party in this way is a mystic and superstitious man who had better go to church and sing in the choir than belong to the Communist Party. Our conception of the role of leaders contains not a drop of mysticism in it.

### Freedom of Criticism

Inner Party discussion of the various questions is impossible without a critical analysis of the different measures and their comparison with other proposals. What are the limits of criticism within the Party? To what extent is "freedom of criticism" to be allowed? It is certainly necessary to criticize the mistakes and errors of the Party policy, institutions and individual members but this criticism must conform with certain conditions, namely, *it must never depart from the basis of Bolsheviks*, it must never deal a blow at its foundations, but *must be constructive and to the point*.

If we are convinced Bolsheviks and uphold all the ideas of Leninism we not only can but must subject to ruthless criticism everything that appears as a diversion from or distortion of Leninism. But the Party cannot help fighting by all measures that "freedom of criticism" which represents a "free" advocacy within the Party of petty bourgeois views and ideals hitting at the very foundations of the Party.

Freedom of criticism is a natural rule of Party life. How can the members of the Party fail to criticize the Party bureau or committee if its work is poor, if it makes mistakes, etc.? How can they fail to criticize if they see blunders being made? Without criticism there can be no Party. There is no need of speaking of such criticism; it is necessary, it has always been allowed, and always will be. But the Party members must be warned against the special slogan of "free criticism." The history of the Party shows that this slogan has always been used as a cover by the petty bourgeois groups and currents attempting to secure the right of "freely" preaching

petty bourgeois views within the Party. This the Party cannot allow. There is a difference between criticism and criticism. There is businesslike criticism and there is criticism that forces upon the Party petty bourgeois ideas. We are in favor of the former and opposed to the latter.

At the end of the past century and beginning of the present century a tendency existed in the Marxian literature which made its slogan "freedom of criticism." This slogan was "fashionable" and very attractive. Indeed who would have the courage to declare: "I am against freedom of criticism" and thus become branded as a reactionary? Lenin quickly exposed this tendency.

"Freedom is a great word but under the banner of 'freedom of trade' the most plunderous wars have been carried on, under the banner of 'freedom of labor' the working class has been robbed. Such internal falseness is contained in the modern meaning of the word 'freedom of criticism.'

" 'Freedom of criticism' is freedom for the opportunist tendency in the social-democracy, freedom to transform the social democracy into a democratic reform Party, freedom to permeate socialism with bourgeois ideas and elements." (*What Is to Be Done?* 1902.)

In our own days the slogan "long live freedom of criticism" serves as a cover for the opportunists, as was the case, for instance, during the last discussion when the opposition attempted to revise Leninism. When the opposition was made to understand this it replied: "Yes, you are afraid of free speech. Is there to be no criticism in the Party?"

Whenever the question of criticism is raised the workers must be careful to see what sort of criticism is being proposed, whether the kind that helps the Party to strengthen its foundations or the one which leads to petty bourgeois views filtering themselves into the Party.

Let us return to Lenin. Upon exposing the petty bourgeois tendencies of those who demanded "freedom" of criticism, i.e., freedom of undermining the fundamentals of Marxism, Lenin continues:

"We are going in a close bunch along a precipitous and difficult path, firmly holding each other by the hand. We are surrounded on all sides by enemies, and we are almost constantly forced to move under their fire. We have joined together through a free choice precisely in order to fight the enemies and must be careful not to slip into the neighboring swamp, the inhabitants of which always condemned us for separating ourselves into a distinct group and choosing the path of struggle rather than that of conciliation."

In speaking of the Bolshevik attitude towards the "freedom of criticism" we cannot help citing Lenin's remarkable thoughts on this question expressed in 1905. When the Party began to go over to legal, open organization Lenin raised the question of subordinating the entire Party literature to the control of the Party, which had not always been the case in the past. Since there were grounds to expect protests on the part of some "vehement supporters of freedom" Lenin found it necessary to state the view of the Party on freedom of criticism and its limitations within the Party:

"Everybody is free to write and say whatever pleases him without the least restrictions. But every free association (including our Party) is free to drive out those members who make use of the name of the Party to preach anti-Party views. Freedom of speech and press must be unabridged. But the freedom of association must also be unabridged. I am obliged to allow full freedom of shouting, lying and writing anything in the world, in the name of freedom of speech. But you are obliged to allow me, in the name of freedom of association, the right to conclude and cancel an alliance with people saying one thing or another. The Party is a voluntary association which would inevitably collapse, first ideologically and later also physically, were it not to purge itself of those of its members who advocate anti-Party views. But to determine the distinction between Party and anti-Party views there is the Party Program, the tactical resolutions of the Party and its Constitution, and finally the

entire experience of the international social-democracy, of the free international associations of the proletariat whose Parties always contained certain elements or tendencies that were not entirely consistent, not entirely Marxian, not entirely correct, and who therefore always carried out regular 'purgings' within the Party. It will be so in our Party as well, the followers of bourgeois 'freedom of criticism' must know this; now our Party has suddenly become a mass Party, we are now experiencing a sharp change towards open organization, now the Party must be inevitably joined by inconsistent people (from a Marxian point of view), perhaps even by some Christians, possibly also by some mystics. We have strong stomachs, we are die-hard Marxians. We shall digest those inconsistent people. Freedom of thought and freedom of criticism within the Party will never make us forget the freedom of the people to group themselves into voluntary associations known as Parties." (*The Party Organisation and Party Literature*, 1905.)

There is no other place in the entire Bolshevik literature so clearly, so precisely and so consistently stating the views of the Party upon freedom of criticism. By the way, Lenin fully realized that the entire Party cannot consist of simon-pure revolutionists, without the least petty bourgeois mixture. Formally, we are all members of the Party, all equals, all Bolsheviks, all Leninists. As a matter of fact, however, the petty bourgeois rivulet makes its way within the Party. What the attitude of the Party towards the petty bourgeois element must be has been adequately shown in the above quotation from Lenin.

One more quotation on freedom of criticism. In 1920 the Italian "socialist" Nobs advocated the freedom of supporting opportunist ideas in the Communist International:

"You are 'free,' Comrade Nobs," Lenin wrote, "to defend those views which you are defending. But we are also 'free' to declare those views petty bourgeois prejudices, injurious to the cause of the proletariat and useful to capital; we are also 'free' to refuse to enter into an alliance or as-

sociation with people defending those views or a corresponding policy." (*False Talk of Freedom*, 1920.)

### **Party Unity**

In order that the working class might maintain its dictatorship in Soviet Russia the strongest unity is necessary in the Party. Were the Party to split up into several parts bitterly contesting for influence, the working class would be unable to keep power. Our power lies in the fact that the Bolshevik Party acts and fights as one man. The political enemies of the proletariat were divided up during the years of the civil war into numerous Parties. They were opposed by a single Party of the proletariat, the Bolsheviks. One of the reasons why we were able to defeat our enemies was that we succeeded in maintaining our ranks intact.

There was a great danger of a split in 1918 when a fraction of a group of Left Communists was organized. The question of the unity of the Party became highly strained in 1920-21 when the Party experienced a grave internal crisis; the Party majority (Lenin, Zinoviev, Stalin, Kamenev and others) were forced to conduct a stubborn fight upon a whole series of groups and fractions which demoralized the Party.

For the third time the Party went through a serious crisis during the last discussion (November, 1923-January, 1924) shortly before Lenin's death. The remnants of the old groupings joined hands and with Comrades Trotsky, Sapronov, Preobrazhensky and others at their head started a fight upon the main group of Bolsheviks consisting of Lenin's disciples and playing the leading role in the Party. The discussion was very bitter and revealed the presence of a petty bourgeois tendency within the Party. The labor nuclei in their overwhelming majority closed their ranks around the Central Committee of the Party, around the "Leninists," giving a firm and resolute response to all attempts to shake the unity of the Party.

Let us now pass on to a study of the resolution on Party unity adopted by the 10 Congress of the C.P.S.U. by a motion from Lenin. We shall deal with each point of this resolution separately. This resolution, which was written by Lenin, rep-



resents one of the most important documents of Leninism; it determined the Party policy for the entire epoch of the proletarian dictatorship.

By the time of the 10th Congress the Party became clearly aware of the entire danger of the discussions connected with bitter group and fractional strife.

"The solidification of the Party, the elimination of oppositions within the Party is the political conclusion to be drawn from the modern situation." (*Speech at Tenth Congress of the Party, 1921.*)

Thus Lenin defined our Party tasks.

"The Congress draws the attention of all Party members to the fact that the unity and solidarity of its ranks, the establishment of full mutual confidence among the Party members and the securing of really coordinated work and of real unanimity among the vanguard of the proletariat, is particularly necessary at the present time when a number of circumstances have combined to strengthen the wavering among the petty bourgeois population." (*Resolution of Tenth Congress on Party Unity.*)

Lenin demanded from all Party members unity and solidarity above all. Within the Party there must be absolute confidence in each other, and confidence will exist only if there is real agreement among the various members of the Party, if all of them feel themselves members of a single Party. No confidence is possible if we belong to different fractions and groupings when we inevitably regard the member of any other group as a political antagonist, an enemy, an alien. If I am really a member of the Party, a Bolshevik-Leninist, I cannot of course have any confidence in people who set up groupings within the Party and demoralize and disintegrate it.

We must have team work, Lenin maintained, personifying the unity of the Party. When the Party splits up into groups and fractions carrying on bitter discussions there can be no team work among them. During periods of group fighting all constructive work becomes impossible for the efforts

of the contesting sides are directed in securing victory for themselves.

Fractional strife (left-wing communism in 1918; the group of democratic centralism, the workers' opposition, the discussion on trade unions in 1920-21; the Trotsky-Preobrazhensky-Sapronov opposition in 1923-25) always caused enormous damage to the Party work.

The Party must have unity; did unity really exist in the spring of 1921? Lenin says:

"Yet even before the general Party discussion on the trade unions certain signs of fractionalism manifested themselves, the appearance of groups with special platforms and with tendencies to isolate themselves in a certain measure and set up their own group discipline."

Sometimes the followers of groupings within the Party say, "We are for groups but against fractions," thus creating the impression among some inexperienced comrades that groups and fractions are different things. "Why," they claim, "are we for fractions? Do we not know that fractions are harmful to the Party? We are merely for groups and this is quite a different thing." This reminds us of the Spaniard who said that the belief in God is humiliating to all intelligent people, but that the belief in God's mother is quite another thing. There is absolutely no essential difference between fractions and groups. Fractions and groups are one and the same thing. In both cases organizations are created within the Party which regard themselves as something distinct from the Party. If this distinction is not very sharp, if it has not gone too far, then we are dealing with a group; if it has, we are dealing with a fraction. But this division is entirely artificial and tentative. The "left-wing communists" for instance constituted a full-fledged fraction; they refused to comply with Party decisions, they published their own journal, they had their own buro, yet they called themselves a group.

Let lawyers engage in the "scientific" differentiation between groups and fractions, the Party is opposed to both groups and fractions. The Party is opposed to any of its members assembling separately from the rest of the Party, having their

own committees or buros, drawing up their own platforms (resolutions, programs on any of the questions) establishing their own group or fractional discipline, etc.

"It is necessary for all intelligent workers merely to realize the harmfulness and inadmissibility of any fractionalism which inevitably leads to the weakening of the team work and the strengthening of attempts of the enemies who have grafted themselves onto the governing Party to deepen the division and utilize it in the interests of the counter-revolution."

It should be pointed out that Lenin went on record not only against fully developed and organized fractions but also against "any fractionalism." The Party must see the danger and nip in the bud all attempts at fractional organization.

The following must be clearly understood. It is not at all a question of the Communists always and under all circumstances favoring unity of the labor Party, always condemning splits and fractionalism. Whenever a Communist revolutionary fraction develops within any foreign social-democratic (menshevik) Party and starts a fight against the majority, going as far as to split the Party or withdraw from it, we support such a fraction and such a breach of unity. Up to 1912 we were in one Party with the mensheviks, always fighting them and splitting with them on several occasions. Such a policy was quite lawful, for we defended Bolshevism, Leninism, against the opportunists and collaborationists and worked for the creation of a powerful united centralized Marxian Party.

At the Second Congress of the Party (1903) where the social-democrats split up into Bolsheviks and mensheviks, the latter raised the banner of a "revolt against Leninism," constituted themselves into an opposition to Leninism. Lenin wrote on that occasion:

"An uprising is a splendid thing when the advanced elements revolt against the reactionary elements. When the revolutionary wing rises against the opportunist wing, it is good. But when the opportunist wing rises against the revolutionary wing it is bad." (*One Step Ahead, Two Steps Back*, 1904.)

That is just the point. Under Lenin's leadership, the Bolsheviks created a mighty Party of the proletariat, a genuinely revolutionary Marxian Party. As long as this is so all groupings and fractions within the Party are anti-Marxian, anti-Leninist, anti-Bolshevik, petty bourgeois. And the Party cannot let them shake its foundations. For "when the opportunist wing rises against the revolutionary wing, it is bad."

All the hopes of our enemies are based upon the expectation that the Party will split some day, that a strong petty bourgeois fraction will eventually develop within it and destroy its unity. Therefore every time that a fractional struggle starts in the Party the bourgeois attempts "to deepen the division and utilize it for the object of the counter-revolution," as Lenin said. In such cases the bourgeoisie will always praise the opposition, encourage it, advise it to fight to the end, etc.

"The utilization by the enemies of the proletariat of all diversions from the strictly consistent Communist line was shown with particular clarity during the Kronstadt revolt when the bourgeois counter-revolution and the white guards in every country of the world suddenly demonstrated their readiness to adopt the slogans even of the Soviet system if only this could be instrumental to overthrowing the dictatorship of the proletariat in Russia, when the socialist revolutionists and the bourgeois counter-revolution as a whole made use of the Kronstadt slogans of revolt, ostensibly in the name of the Soviet power, against the Soviet Government in Russia."

The Kronstadt insurgents declared that they are Soviets without Communists, without the dictatorship of the proletariat. It thus appeared that they too recognized the Soviet power, only with some slight changes. The bourgeoisie immediately grasped at this "diversion from the strictly consistent Communist line" declaring itself in support of the Kronstadt insurgents and of their Soviets.

"Such facts fully show that the White Guards successfully strive to be more 'radical' than Communists if only it can weaken and undermine the bulwark of the proletarian revolution in Russia. The menshevist leaflets in

Petrograd on the eve of the Kronstadt insurrection also showed how the mensheviks took advantage of the differences within the Russian Communist Party to encourage and support the Kronstadt insurgents, the social revolutionists and the White Guards, representing themselves as opponents of insurrections and followers of the Soviet power only with some slight modifications."

Lenin then proceeds to define the tasks of our Party propaganda.

"The propaganda on this question must consist on the one hand of a comprehensive explanation of the damage and danger of fractionalism from the point of view of the unity of the Party and of the unanimity of the proletarian vanguard as the fundamental condition of the success of the dictatorship of the proletariat, and on the other hand of the explanation of the peculiar character of the latest tactical methods of the enemies of the Soviet power."

The chief danger of fractionalism lies in the fact that every fraction or group is the embryo of a new Party within the Bolshevik Party. If fractions were to be allowed all of them would contest each other for influence and control. Each fraction would strive to establish those views which it advocates. But our Party is not a mere underground organization but a governing organization, it holds in its hands the machinery of government, the trade unions, the Red Army. Were two fractions to be created in the Soviets, trade unions and army, the result would be that the Soviets, the trade unions and the army would split up into two hostile camps and in the case of the dispute being sharpened it might be solved by the force of arms. This would mean the end of the Soviet power and of the dictatorship of the proletariat in Russia. The mensheviks and Bolsheviks had also once constituted two fractions within an officially single Party, had also fought for domination among the working class, but in the end settled their historical dispute by an armed fight.

Lenin never tired of repeating that every diversion from the Party line, if not stopped in time, may lead too far.



"Every little difference may develop into a big one if it is insisted upon, if it is moved to the forefront, if every root and ramification of the dispute is sought. Every little difference may assume an immense importance if it should serve as the starting point towards certain erroneous views and if these erroneous views are combined by reason of new additional differences, with anarchistic actions leading the Party to a split." (*One Step Ahead, Two Steps Back*, 1904.)

This was written during the struggle between the Bolsheviks and mensheviks after the 2nd Congress of the Party (1903). The same idea was repeated again in 1920.

"A slight error may be developed into a monstrously great one if it is insisted upon, if it is 'led to the end.'" (*The Infantile Sickness of "Leftism" in Communism*, 1920.)

The danger of differences was again urged by Lenin with great force and clarity in 1921, shortly before the 10th Congress, during the heat of the discussion on the trade unions.

"It is well known that big disputes frequently arise out of the most insignificant of the slightest differences of opinion. It is well known that a tiny wound or even a scratch such as any one of us has had on dozens of occasions in the course of his life, may develop into a very dangerous, sometimes even mortal disease if it begins to inflame, if it develops into blood poison. The same thing occurs in every dispute, even of a personal character. It also happens in politics. Any difference of opinion, no matter how slight, may become politically dangerous if the possibility develops of its growing into a split, especially if it is a split capable of shaking and destroying the entire political edifice, of leading to a train wreck, to use Comrade Bukharin's metaphor." (*Once More About the Trade Unions*, 1921.)

The differences become particularly dangerous when they

are connected with the formation of fractions isolating themselves away from the Party. Every grouping may develop so far as to split away from the Party, for every struggle has its logic. It is therefore necessary to remember Lenin's demand for a comprehensive explanation of the injuriousness and danger of fractionalism from the point of view of Party unity.

Lenin also demanded that the "peculiarity of the latest tactical methods of the enemies of the Soviet power" should be explained. What does this new policy of the bourgeoisie consist of? Lenin explains this as follows:

"Having convinced themselves of the hopelessness of the counter-revolution under open White Guard banners these enemies are making every effort to utilize the differences within the Russian Communist Party to advance the counter-revolution one way or another by having the power transferred to the political groups which stand nearest, by appearance, to the Soviet power."

The bourgeoisie is incapable of overthrowing us in open battle. It therefore changes its policy and supports those who appear to be near to the slogans of the Soviet power, but who diverge just a little bit away from the Bolshevik line.

"The propaganda must explain the experience of the preceding revolutions when the counter-revolution supported the petty bourgeois groupings most closely approaching the extreme revolutionary Party in order to shake and overthrow the revolutionary dictatorship, thereby opening the road for the complete victory of the counter-revolution of the capitalists and landlords in the future."

During the great French Revolution the counter-revolution took advantage of the fractions formed within the victorious revolutionary (Jacobin) Party, supported the "moderate" wing against the "extreme" wing of the same Party, and thus overthrew the extremists as well as the moderates. The mod-

erates proved to be an unconscious weapon in the hands of the counter-revolution. The modern bourgeoisie would be very happy of course if a "moderate" wing were to spring up in our Party demanding the "mitigation" of the dictatorship, etc., and overthrowing the "extreme" Leninist wing. But the hopes of the bourgeoisie will remain futile. Let us go back to Lenin's directions:

"Every organization of the Party must strictly see to it that the absolutely necessary criticism of the Party defects, the analysis of the general line of the Party, the summing up of its practical experience, the verification of the errors, etc., should be directed not at a discussion in the groups developing on the basis of some "platform," etc., but at a discussion by the entire Party membership. To this end the Congress directs the regular publication of a 'Discussion Sheet' and of special books."

Lenin does not prohibit the criticism of the Party defects; on the contrary, he regards such criticism "absolutely necessary." But he says: If you have anything to say about our defects, if you have any thoughts or ideas about the Party policy, about the methods of correcting our errors, do not pick up a group which meets apart from the Party, conspires, whispers into each other's ears only to come forward sometime later with a "platform," but submit your ideas to the entire Party membership for discussion. This is the only correct way of deciding Party questions.

Defects in the Party must be criticized but at the same time:

"... anyone advancing some criticism must take into consideration the condition of the Party, surrounded as it is by enemies, and must strive to correct the errors of the Party by direct participation in the Soviet and Party work."

Lenin pointed out the limitations of criticism, stating that it must not have an irresponsible character. It must be remembered that our criticism is heard not only by our friends and supporters, by the workers and peasants, but also by our



enemies. Our criticism must be such as to help the Party to discover and remedy its faults without furnishing a weapon into the hands of the enemies. Criticism for the sake of criticism is worthless. Do not merely criticize the defects, but help to remove them by your cooperation.

Fractions and groupings represent a great danger to the Party but this danger is even enhanced when fractionalism penetrates the Central Committee of the Party, when the fraction is headed by Central Committee members who oppose themselves to the rest of the C. C. No cracks must be allowed to develop among the leading Party layer. For this reason the 10th Congress adopted, on a motion by Lenin, the following decision kept until recently in secret: The joint Session of the C. C. and the Central Control Committee has been empowered to reduce C. C. members to candidates and even to expel from the Party any C. C. member violating the Party discipline or "engaging in fractionalism," such a decision requiring two-thirds of the vote. Since during the last discussion the danger developed of fractionalism springing within the Central Committee itself the 13th Party Conference decided to make the above point of the resolution on Party unity public.

At the 11th Congress of the Party (1921)—the last Congress attended by Lenin—representatives of the former labor opposition who attempted to organize a new group just before the Congress, came out with speeches in justification of their activities. In this connection Lenin again dealt with the question of Party unity.

"There are some things with which you cannot play about; there are such things as the unity of the Party. We must not waste time playing at Party unity. We know that we are losing a good deal from this struggle within the Party. This lesson must not be forgotten!" (*Speech at Eleventh Congress, 1922.*)