

# Party Organizer



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How We Stopped a Sheriff Sale

Expand the Cadres of the Party!

Shop Paper Reviews

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Vol. V

November-December, 1932

No. 11-12

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CENTRAL COMMITTEE COMMUNIST PARTY, U S. A.

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## Build the Party and the Unions in the Factories

*"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 every day 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.

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**T**HE 14th Plenum of our Central Committee dealing with factory work formulated very sharply and clearly this problem:

"The main basis of the work and development of the lower Party organizations is the work in the factories. Up till now the Party has not found the fit methods for carrying on this work. The content of this work is not merely organizational detail routine but is the whole struggle against the capitalist offensive and against the policy of the reformists. The first essential condition for successful work in the factory is daily contact with the mass of workers in it and thorough knowledge of the position of the workers in the factory and of the concrete conditions for struggle. The Communists must firmly grasp all the countless conflicts of a minor and major character arising daily with the employers, foremen and trade union bureaucrats, spies, etc., such as disputes, incidents, demands and grievances of the workers including the women and youth, discrimination against Negroes and foreign born, with regard to wages, hours of work, working conditions, rationalization measures, infringements of workers' rights, dismissals in case of arrests of workers, etc. It is the task of the Communists to investigate very carefully the causes of any failures in their efforts to penetrate the factories and to continue the work with renewed energy on the basis of carefully considered measures to overcome the previous shortcomings."

In spite of this and other numerous resolutions the greatest weakness of our Party is the work in the factories. Instead of

investigating the real causes which have so far hampered our work and adopting measures to overcome them, instead of giving concrete assistance to individual comrades in their work in the factories, we have thus far contented ourselves with making general speeches on the passivity of the Party members and their unwillingness to work in the factories. In some districts the "turn" was made by assigning one comrade to take care of all the shop nuclei. With this formal decision the district bureau settled the problem of personal guidance to 20 or 25 shop nuclei.

### **Systematic Attention to Factory Work**

We have to begin at once with the practical organization of work in the factories.

1. The district committee should immediately call a conference of the comrades who are working in the big factories and members of the trade unions which are connected with these factories in order to investigate the situation there and work out a practical program of work. The Central Committee should send out its representative to the conferences in the concentration districts. These plans must take up particularly the method of work inside and around the factory, the questions of preparing and leading economic struggles, of trade union work, and the work of recruiting for the Party and the trade unions. The experiences gained at such conferences should be generalized and utilized for the entire Party.

2. In addition to these conferences the section committees should regularly take up, in a concrete manner, with the comrades in each shop nucleus and with each unit concentrating on an important plant, the work in the factory, the special conditions, the concrete political and economic demands brought up by the workers in these factories, and formulate them.

3. The Party committees must give concrete, day-to-day leadership to the shop nuclei by being in touch steadily with the organizers of the shop nuclei, discussing with them the daily happenings in the factory and help them to prepare the proper actions.

4. A shop nucleus should be organized if two or three comrades are working in the same factory. To strengthen the weak factory nuclei, experienced Party members should be attached to them from a nearby street nucleus. In factories where we have only one Party member, we should take up with this comrade what steps should be taken at once to recruit sympathetic workers for the Party and to form a nucleus with them. In factories where we have no Party members but where there are members of the revolutionary trade unions or other mass organizations (I.L.D., F.S.U., I.W.O., etc.) or readers of the Party press, the most revolutionary workers should be selected and be prepared for entrance into the Party and a nucleus formed.

5. The section committees should set themselves the task of insuring the regular issuing of a workers' newspaper in all factories where we have either a nucleus, individual Party members or a group of revolutionary trade union members. These newspapers must contain concrete material about the factory and must be issued by the workers in the factory or at least with their help.

### How to Adopt Conspiratorial Methods of Work

6. Simultaneously with the development of mass work in the factories, measures should be taken to defend the Party members and members of the revolutionary trade unions or revolutionary opposition against terror on the part of the employers and police, through the adoption of conspirative methods of work in the factories, through the necessary teaching of Party members in conspirative methods of work, through the development of a determined struggle against espionage and provocation. The shop nucleus should publish the names and photographs of provocateurs in the shop paper. We have to arouse the hatred of the workers against this spy system of the employers and mobilize them for a movement for the defense of the revolutionary elements, for firing the spies from the shop.

When discussing these problems with the Party members, the Party committees should make it definitely understood *"that conspiracy must by no means cut the nucleus away from the masses of workers in the factory. While taking precautionary methods against being detected by the police and their agents, the Party nuclei in the factories must constantly let the workers know of their existence; they must publish leaflets, factory newspapers, organize meetings, etc. The most important duty of factory nuclei is to make the factory workers realize that the factory nucleus reacts immediately to every event in the factory and country. . . . While taking the necessary precautionary methods so as not to attract to themselves the attention of the police agents, the Party members must not only carry on persistent daily work in order to bring new sections into the Party ranks and into the sphere of Party influence, but they must also whenever the situation demands (for instance excitement among the workers in connection with a mine explosion or immediate strike situation) instruct active members of the nucleus to appear in their true colors before the workers even at the risk of arrest and dismissal."*

The main basis of the work is in the factory. Build the Party and the unions in the factory.

*Not a moment to be lost in intensifying our Bolshevik mass work!*

## Experiences in Shop Work

### The Work of the Warren Trumbull Steel Nucleus Before, During and After the Strike

THE outstanding fact about the Trumbull unit is that it, alone of all Party units in steel, built itself a mass union which led a strike of 1500 steel workers, at least temporarily defeating a wage cut handed down under the agreement of the American Federation of Labor union with the company. The experiences of this unit is, therefore, of tremendous importance to the entire Party.

About five years ago, composed almost entirely of Finnish comrades, the unit organized a Trade Union Educational League group which grew to 25—and then it died. Following the 1929 convention of the Trade Union Unity League, the Metal Workers Industrial League group was built up to about 75-100, where it remained almost stationary for over two years.

From its birth up to the time of the strike, however, the membership of the unit was limited almost entirely to the hot mill, as was also the union, and did not sufficiently see the importance of spreading out into the other departments.

#### Unit Develops Personal Contact

What were the good points of the unit? (a) Its perseverance; in spite of slow progress and periods of stagnation, it plugged away at the job of building the union. (b) Time and time again it flooded its part of the mill with leaflets, etc. (c) Although made up almost entirely of foreign born workers, it tried to recruit Americans into the union, and through concentrating on *personal contacts it succeeded* in this task, paving the way to mass recruiting and the strike. (d) At least two unit members were recognized as real leaders by the non-Party workers in the union.

The weaknesses of the unit were many. But almost all of these can be attributed to the lack of proper direction from the leading Party committees.

#### Fails to Forsee Impending Strike

The unit did not see the rapidly approaching strike. Although it met together with a representative from the district the week before the strike, that meeting did not discuss the question of immediate struggle. Its ears were not to the ground. It did not react to the growing demand of the workers for action.

But when we consider the composition of the unit buro, we un-

derstand some of the reasons for this. The unit buro *should be* the political leadership of the unit. We had two Party members who were leaders in the union, but *neither was on the unit buro*. Theirs was "union, not Party work". The most active Communist in the unit only rarely attended unit meetings. Harrassed by the demand from the non-Party workers that they do more work in the union, and the demand from the Party to attend Party meetings and do more Party work, they didn't know just what to do. So the unit buro contained no leading union members.

There was no live connection between the Party and the leading committee of the union. The unit organizer, a splendid comrade, was Finnish fraction secretary, and too busy with this work to do much union work. The unit financial secretary was inactive in the union and had few or no contacts with non-Finnish workers. The third buro member, *had been out of the mill for two years*, had few connections inside the mill, and almost none with American workers. Could this buro give proper leadership? Of course not!

However, it would be wrong to blame only the unit for this. With proper explanation by the district or section committees they would have corrected this.

### The Need for Developing Partial Struggles

A second great weakness of the unit's work was a political one—an underestimation of the need to develop partial struggles around the smallest grievances in the mill. For example, an active union member (since the strike he was drawn into the Party) reports that when the company took all chairs out of the mill restaurant and installed high tables which forced the workers to eat standing up, there was great indignation. He and five other non-Party workers even picketed the restaurant for a while. But when he demanded at the union meeting that a fight against this be launched, the Party members joined with the other members in ridiculing him. Obviously our Party comrades did not see that their job, as Communists, was to convince the non-Party workers of the necessity for just such struggles as these, in the course of which workers in the A. F. of L. union and unorganized workers together with the members of the revolutionary union and Party workers could be united under our leadership.

Doubtless, leading comrades from the district committee had made speeches on the need for developing partial struggles. But, they did not sit down with the unit and discuss the conditions in the mill, patiently drawing out the comrades as to every detail of the working conditions, asking questions which would reveal grievances around which a struggle could be developed. Neither did the leading union organizers, who were sent to Warren, help the local comrades on such questions as these—despite a National Executive Board decision, made six weeks before the

strike, instructing them to find out the issues on which partial struggles could be developed and give guidance on how to organize these struggles.

The result of these weaknesses and mistakes was the separation of the unit from the union, its failure to work as a real Bolshevik fraction, and the separation of the union from the masses of the workers through its failure to react sharply to their grievances and their moods. All this resulted in a failure to foresee the impending strike, a failure to establish the united front bodies in preparation for the strike and to properly prepare the strike apparatus: defense and relief committees, picket lines, etc.

In the last minute preparations, leading comrades from the section and district of the Party came to Warren. Perhaps, it was not possible to call a unit meeting. But certainly, a leading fraction meeting could and should have been called. This was not done. *The unit did not meet until after the strike was over. A representative of the section buro has yet to meet with the unit and not until two months after the strike did a representative from the district buro meet with the shop unit.*

Prior to and during the strike, the face of the Party was not brought forward. Nor was any recruiting carried on for the Party. While the unit members can be partly blamed for this, it was the task of the leading committees to work out with the unit methods of properly carrying out these tasks.

#### Unit Learns from Mistakes

After the strike the mistakes and lessons were discussed at a unit meeting. It was decided to call an open meeting of the unit to discuss the role of the Party with selected active union members. As a result of this open meeting five active members—all Americans—were recruited into the Party. But then the recruitment stopped. Only when Comrade Ford spoke on November 1 were more workers recruited for the Party.

Since the strike the work of the unit has improved, although insufficiently. The "concentration school" helped. The unit buro has been reorganized. An American comrade has been added to the buro, where he is developing splendidly. But the organizer, despite the district buro decision, is still Finnish fraction secretary, and the most active experienced member in the union has been made sub-district secretary of the Finnish Federation, without the knowledge or consent of the unit, section or district committee. As a result, his services are practically lost to the important work of building the Party and union inside the mill. This general weakness of taking out the most active members of the unit for language work should be overcome by utilizing other valuable comrades for this phase of activity.

The shop bulletin, neglected for months preceding the strike, appeared a week before the elections, and a new issue will come

out prior to the Hunger March. The unit, now almost entirely blacklisted, is leading (although still too slowly) in the rebuilding of the union inside the mill. It participates in the work of the soup kitchen for blacklisted workers, maintained through local collections, and it is participating in the building of the unemployed movement where a few small neighborhood struggles are laying the basis for a mass movement. A city buro of the Party has been organized to co-ordinate the work of the existing units and a study circle is starting. Many connections with the mill have been re-established, but the tempo of actual reorganizations must be speeded up. — J. D.

## How We Prepared for the Trenton Doll Strike

**T**HE successful conclusion of the strike of 850 workers, eighty-five per cent youth, in the Regal Doll factory in Trenton is of tremendous significance to the entire Party and Y.C.L. Not only did the workers gain an increase in wages, shorter hours, the recognition of their union and the shop committee, but this strike fully confirms the Fourteenth Plenum Resolution of our Party that *"The first essential condition for successful work in the factory is daily contact with the mass of workers in it and thorough knowledge of the position of the workers in the factory and of the concrete conditions for struggle."*

### How We Made the First Contacts

When we first started concentration on this factory we had no connections with any of the workers. The Regal Doll factory was known to the Trenton workers as "The Hell Hole". The average hours in the plant ranged anywhere from 60 to 75 a week, with an average weekly wage of \$8 to \$10. Cases of girls receiving \$2 and \$3 a week, and of men working 91 hours a week, were numerous. We began by going around to the poolrooms, to the neighborhoods where these workers live, in front of the factory, particularly during lunch-hour, to get contact with the workers. Finally we succeeded in getting contact with some young fellows in one of the poolrooms. Through these we got information on conditions in the plant and further contacts.

On the basis of this we issued the first shop paper, the *Fighting Doll*. This paper dealt concretely with the conditions in the shop, it picked up the jokes that were cracked by the workers themselves and used them, it exposed one of the foremen by name. When it was distributed there was a favorable response in the shop. In the meantime we began to call meetings of the contacts we had. For a long time we made little headway. This led to some discouragement, even to conceptions that it was impossible to organize the plant. But we stuck to our work, continuing the personal visiting of workers.

### **Boss Attempts to Smash Demonstration Utilized to Build Organization**

It was not, however, until after the International Youth Day demonstration that we broke through the ice. For this demonstration we issued a leaflet to the Regal Doll workers. The bosses feared that at this demonstration we would discuss the preparation of and organization for a strike. They demanded from the police that the demonstration should be smashed, but despite their attempts it was carried through.

On the basis of this action of the bosses', a mass trial was organized in the neighborhood of the factory placing the bosses on trial and exposing the conditions of the workers. Seven hundred workers attended, among whom were many from the factory. The sentiment for struggle was great—and unemployed workers who attended the trial pledged to give every support to the workers when they should decide to take action. This mass trial aroused much talk in the vicinity of the shop and among the workers and helped us in preparing the ground for the coming struggle.

### **Methods in Building the Shop Organization**

We followed up the contacts made at this trial. We visited them personally. In order not to lose time, a car was used to go from one worker's home to another. These workers were asked to bring a few workers together to small meetings. On the basis of this activity we saw the necessity of concentrating on the shop in real earnest for a few weeks, mobilizing every force available in order to actually get definite results.

We spent every night of the week—and particularly Sunday—visiting workers. Finally we decided to call a large meeting of all the workers we had contact with. *In this we adopted conspiratorial methods to protect the workers, and to gain their confidence. We told the workers to be at their homes at a certain hour, wherever possible a group of workers at one place. We went to these homes in cars and drove them to the meeting place. At the central meeting place a League member or a young shop worker was stationed at the door and allowed no one to enter unless escorted by another trusted worker or a League member.* On the basis of this meeting which was well attended, we decided to call separate department meetings, to prepare the workers for struggle, and at the end of the week to call a mass meeting to take a strike vote.

During this time, the shop paper continued to be issued. Some of the workers took them right into the shops and spread them everywhere in many of the departments. The workers read them right at the bench.

We then started the work of the department meetings. Every night another meeting was held and during the week we had met

with 85 workers. However, here we had some difficulty in getting the girls to attend—only 8 or 10 came and we feared that they would be a factor to impede the strike. (However, in the strike itself, the girls were the most militant and fearless.) At these meetings the demands were discussed—and all the demands put forward in the *Fighting Doll* were accepted by the workers.

### Defeat Attempts to Split Workers

In the meantime the boss smelled a rat and tried to split up the workers' ranks. *He began to negotiate with the pressers, the key section of the workers, promising them higher wages. We heard about it immediately. We knew that we must get word to these pressers at once—otherwise they might weaken. We devised a scheme. One of the boys was sent up to them with a bag of lunch. He told them to wait with the negotiations and arranged for a meeting immediately after work. The pressers remained solidly with the rest of the workers and turned down the proposals of the boss.*

The Toy and Doll Workers Union in New York, controlled by the Socialists, tried to frustrate our work. They sent down an organizer but he could do nothing. Hearing about our plans for a mass meeting to take a strike vote, they immediately sent instructions to a Socialist who has a printing shop, telling him to print a leaflet calling for a meeting on Sunday, one hour before our meeting, in the same hall, signed, "The Committee". We found out about it, and immediately prepared the ground to prevent that meeting from taking place. Every worker in the shop organization was informed about it. We exposed the Socialists and the A. F. of L. and told them to spread the word to the other workers. At the same time we organized a group of the pressers to prevent the Socialists from distributing the leaflet at the shop. We thus succeeded in frightening them away.

### Initiative of Workers

At the Sunday meeting, despite a pouring rain, 150 workers came. A strike vote was taken and a strike committee elected. It was decided to begin picketing in the morning. During the first day mass picketing was carried out four times and we succeeded in pulling out every worker. In the evening 5,000 workers, young and old, supported the strikers in a militant demonstration. A truck with scabs tried to break through the demonstration, and a battle ensued. The workers broke up the sidewalks, smashed the windows of the factory, smashed the cars, beat up the scabs, broke through the police ranks and forced the bosses to lock the doors of the factory. During the battle the bosses and the police called upon the fire department for aid. The workers learned about it and immediately rang the fire alarms at different sec-

tions, thus defeating this last desperate attempt of the bosses to break the strike.

Negotiations began with the second day of the strike. But throughout the negotiations the strikers themselves fought the maneuvers of the bosses to divide the ranks, and they won a tremendous victory. Increases of 15, 20 and 25 per cent were won for the workers as well as a reduction in hours in some cases from 75 to 50, the establishment of the \$7 and \$8 minimum which increased the wages of some girls 100 to 200 per cent, and the recognition of the union. The shop is now a closed union shop—and the workers through their shop committee, take up the daily grievances as they arise.

— A Y.C.L'er.

*NOTE: It is significant to point out here also that the Regal Doll workers have decided to go out on an one hour strike when the Hunger Marchers pass through Trenton; not only to greet them, but to pledge their solidarity in the struggle for unemployment insurance.*

### Concentration Brings Results

**A**BOUT three years ago 2,500 workers were employed in this wire factory, last year 1,000, and at present about 400. The conditions in the shop are very unsatisfactory. The buildings are old, the roofs are leaking, there are no safety devices. Three years ago the open furnace produced 50 tons of metal in 18 to 24 hours, employing four workmen and two gashouse men. At present they are producing 200 tons of metal in 24 hours with one gashouse man and two furnace men. In the wire department three years ago 75 men drew 100 tons of wire in 24 hours and the men averaged \$10 per day. Today, 22 men produce 250 tons of metal in ten hours with an average wage of \$6.50. The men working by the hour have received two cuts—10 per cent and 15 per cent. There are all indications that a new cut will be put into effect shortly.

#### We Take the First Steps

We began systematic work in this plant about two and a half months ago. At that time two Party members were working in the shop. A meeting was held with these comrades and a unit was established. Immediately a survey was made of the language mass organizations in the territory. We found three more workers that could be drawn into the Party. We assigned the comrades to bring these contacts to the next meeting. Two of these workers were brought into the Party at the following meeting. This made four workers and myself to begin the work.

At the first meeting we had a thorough discussion on the work of a Party shop unit, placing emphasis on the organization of

the workers in the plant on the basis of the concrete grievances. At the same time the call for the Convention of the Steel & Metal Workers Industrial Union was received. We took this up and decided to send two delegates from the shop.

### **We Send Delegates to the Union Convention**

On this basis, we compiled a list of contacts for the building of the union. In the visiting of these contacts, a serious mistake was committed, which we have since corrected. I undertook to visit all the contacts. This prevented the members of the unit from carrying on active work. Furthermore, when the contacts were visited by me, many of the workers refused to have anything to do with me. We immediately called a meeting of the unit to correct this mistake. At first the comrades in the unit refused to visit any of the contacts. But finally, after a careful discussion, they saw the necessity of participating in this work. When a comrade from the shop went out with me, we received a better response. And at the meeting to elect the delegates to the Metal Trades Convention, 11 workers, two of whom were Negroes, attended.

We immediately got down to the work of collecting funds in the shop to send off the delegation. Many of the workers contributed quarters and dimes for the delegation. However, here, too, we made a mistake. *We did not utilize these workers who contributed towards the expense of the delegation as permanent contacts for the building of the union.*

On the return of the delegation a unit meeting was called to discuss the building of the union and to arrange a meeting to hear the report of the delegates. By this time we had seven members of the shop in the unit—one of the delegates on the way to the convention joined the Party and two additional members were brought in by the comrades.

At the meeting to hear the report 14 workers were present. After listening to the report they joined the union. We elected a committee of three of whom one is a Party member. But the basic shortcoming was that all with the exception of one, were working in the same department.

### **How We Applied the United Front Tactic**

We discussed how to bring in workers from the other departments. In this discussion was revealed our entire sectarian approach in the building of the union. When we discussed the various contacts in other departments, our comrades immediately raised such issues—these belong to a church, others to social fascist organizations, etc., and we can have nothing to do with them. But the comrades were soon convinced of the incorrectness of this position. One of our best Negro comrades who

joined the union due to the fact that we have constantly pointed out that our union is going to be built on the basis of organizing all workers who are willing to struggle against grievances and for better conditions in the shop, feared at first that if he joins the union he would be prevented from going to church or voting for the Republican Party for which he has voted for many years. The correctness of the Party line in this connection is proven in this same instance. This Negro worker now states that the Communist Party is the only Party that fights for the workers and he will vote Communist.

As yet the committee elected by the union group did not meet, with the result that the union did not take up the specific grievances it faces in the shop. Many comrades were of the opinion that no grievances could be raised now since the shop is expected to close down soon, and because the workers do not work regularly making it hard to get in touch with them. But when we raised the question of leaky roofs, lifting 280 pounds of wire without a crane, the comrades agreed that these would be good issues to begin to rally the workers for struggle.

### Flexibility In Solving Problems

One of the main complications in our work was how to get the Negroes and the whites—who live about six or seven miles apart—to meet together. We have taken it up at the unit meeting and we practically had no solution for the problem. At the last meeting we had a thorough discussion with the Negro and white comrades and decided that the Negroes (and if there are any whites in the territory) should meet in the territory where they live and also the white comrades meet in their territory. At each meeting, however, in the Negro territory a white comrade from the shop committee should report and vice versa. This plan is just beginning to be applied.

As to the perspectives in our work. It is clear from the response of the workers, Negroes and whites, that grievances can be brought forth and there are many of them. It is only a question at this time of convincing our comrades of the necessity of raising these issues. We must also immediately begin to pay attention to the Americans who now constitute 30 per cent of the shop. Here, too, the comrades are very hesitant. They have no faith in the American workers in the shop. They claim that it is useless to take up any problems with them, since they can't be trusted, etc. At every unit and union meeting this question has been discussed and little by little we are breaking down this prejudice. In this respect the Negro workers were of great help. They saw the need of getting the native elements much faster than our few Party members who are foreign born.

— M. R.

## Steel Plant Nucleus Check-up on Plan of Work

THE following plan of work was first adopted September 25th at the Section Committee together with members of the shop nucleus. The check-up took place on October 23rd.

### *Plan Adopted and Action Taken*

Central Committee to send representative once a month.

*Not accomplished.*

Unit organizer to be called to district buro meetings.

*Fulfilled.*

Section organizer to attend nucleus meeting.

*Is being done.*

Section Secretariat to meet with steel workers every month.

*Not accomplished.*

Street unit in steel area to be reorganized and activized on the basis of unemployed work among steel workers. Secretariat to act on this in one week's time.

*Not completely fulfilled but proper steps taken in the right direction to accomplish this.*

Y. C. L. section committee to be responsible for organization of Y.C.L. unit to work together with the Party.

*Have unit of 8 members, many contacts very promising.*

Basketball team to be organized in this territory.

*Meeting was held, plans made.*

Special Y.C.L. section committee to take up question of factory.

*Meeting to be held on November 5.*

Secretariat to get leading comrades of various nationalities to carry on work among their respective nationalities.

*Not fulfilled. No plan of work yet made on this point.*

Unit organizer to live in steel workers' neighborhood.

*Not yet fulfilled.*

Unit in this territory and two additional street units to concentrate especially on the Negro steel workers.

*Unit buros of respective units haven't made any steps in this direction.*

Shock brigades or Red Sunday groups from the Party to carry on drive in steel mill workers' neighborhoods.

*This has not yet been carried out.*

A tightening up on the method of work to be adopted in the nucleus. Each member to concentrate on one or two workers in the mill and give full details of his progress for the current week.

*At two unit meetings this was done. First meetings revealed this was not carried out with the exception of one new comrade. Second meeting, considerable improvement.*

Union groups to be reorganized on department basis.

*Was carried out with good results.*

Section to work out special tasks for steel nucleus in relation to Party campaigns.

*Was not fulfilled as yet.*

Secretariat to make weekly check-up on this plan.

*Was not fulfilled.*

Section committee meeting to be held on October 23 to check up on on this plan.

*Was fulfilled.*

NOTE: While this plan and the check-up has many excellent points, it has an outstanding weakness. There is no perspective for struggle, it is primarily of an inner character, makes no provision for mass agitation (shop leaflets, shop papers, literature, meetings, etc.)

The section committee must be criticized for not carrying out or delaying some of the decisions made. An individual comrade of the section committee should be made responsible for this work.

### A Department Group Discusses Its Problems

RECENTLY a department group was established in this steel mill. The group consists of some union members, a few Party members and a few workers who are completely unorganized. All the workers understand that to further develop and build up the group in the department, their approach to the workers must be strictly on the question of the conditions in the mill.

On this basis the first meeting was called where the following agenda was thoroughly dealt with:

1. Discuss all contacts (old and prospective) and activities.
2. Grievances in the department.
3. National Hunger March.

We had a very lively discussion on the first point. Many workers, especially the native elements, related experiences on how they make friends in the shop. Other workers turned over lists of connections in the mill. A committee of three was elected to check over all contacts, old and new, and to get in touch with these workers and try to win them back for the organization in the shop.

### Workers Have Many Grievances

It is particularly necessary to bring to light all the grievances in the department so that the members of the group can utilize them as a means of agitation and establishing contacts with workers. In the discussion these grievances were brought out:

1. Since the last wage cut, the bosses are instituting a most vicious speed-up—demanding extra tonnage, working cold iron, double work on heaters, etc.

2. The pair heaters are in for a bad deal. They have to keep the dampers closed and the furnace is always filled with smoke. Working in dark furnaces, they must become fishermen to fish out the pack in the furnace.

3. They used to have a water trough for their tongs, but now must work with "dry tongs". *This means that the tongs are always hot.* Result—burned fingers and hands.

4. The workers expect some dirt to be pulled off after the election. They expect a wage-cut and also a lay-off of about 300 men on the mill.

5. The question of lockers looms up again. Changing clothes in the place of the old lockers will mean colds, pneumonia and other ailments for the workers. The need is great for a big locker and wash room as well as a rest room in the tin mill.

6. Very often a fellow has to work all night with a bad pair of tongs or borrowed tongs, which handicaps the work.

7. Men and children sifting out burned coal for salvaging pieces of coke.

8. Single boys (name of workers performing a certain operation) make \$1.50 for an 8 hour turn. They are working level hand, which means two men are working one operation and they have to divide their day's pay or tonnage.

After the discussion on the grievances it was decided that no leaflet shall be issued for the present on any of these specific grievances. These should be utilized now as a means of approach to win individual workers for the department group. Our task is to make our members conscious of the fact that a worker is *ready* to join a group that deals concretely with the questions of the mill while for the present this same worker may not yet be willing to become a signed up dues paying member of our union.

### A Steel Delegation for the Hunger March

Simultaneously with the winning of the steel workers in the mill for the department groups, and for our union, it is necessary also to fight for the demands of the unemployed workers and organize them. This is an important task which will tremendously increase the influence of our union. The workers at the department group meeting immediately saw the need for unity between the employed and unemployed workers. Steps were taken to call a special meeting of actives of unemployed from the various language organizations, union groups, and other unemployed workers to take up the problem of immediate relief in this particular steel section.

During the coming week everyone will bring in names and addresses of all unemployed contacts—and these contacts will be visited. In this way we will prepare for the National Hunger March, hoping to have the steel mill workers taking a big part in the line-up for Washington.

—C. B.

## To the Study and Application of the United Front Policy

SOON we will find ourselves in the midst of the fourth and worst winter of the crisis. The workers pressed down by the growing offensive of the bosses are rising to struggle. In the face of the present situation which "*is pregnant with unexpected outbreaks and sharp turns of events*" (Twelfth Plenum of the E.C.C.I.), why is it that our Party is still "isolated from the decisive sections of the American proletariat"? Why is it that struggles take place without our leadership? How come that the social fascists not only lead struggles to behead them, but outmaneuver us and lead the workers to defeats? (Lawrence, So. Illinois, Seattle unemployed, etc.) Most important of all, we, the Party, must assume full responsibility for the fact that in the face of the growing radicalization of the masses, in the face of the crushing burden of offensive and terror on the part of the ruling class, there are not more and sharper battles. We must with the greatest Bolshevik earnestness ask ourselves, why the social fascists in many cases succeed with the aid of their demagoguery to hinder the development of struggles, to create among the workers suspicion and skepticism of our leadership?

The Fourteenth Plenum resolution of our C. C. which was drafted with the aid of the Communist International, gives us a clear answer to the above questions. The Fourteenth Plenum resolution shows the way of overcoming the present situation of the Party. The Fourteenth Plenum resolution must not become a forgotten resolution. Only to the extent that we apply and carry out the line of the Fourteenth Plenum resolution will the Party succeed in establishing itself among the masses. The Fourteenth and Fifteenth Plenum resolutions of our Central Committee must be studied in connection with the thesis of the Twelfth Plenum of the Executive Committee of the Communist International\* held recently.

What is the chief obstacle "which stands in the way of carrying out a correct mass policy and in the further development of the Party"? is the implied question of the Fourteenth Plenum resolution. And the resolution clearly answers: "*The strong sectarian tendencies in the entire work of the Party, as well as in the mass organizations—tendencies which are based on deep-rooted formalism.*" If we examine our shop work, unemployed struggles, any mass action planned and developed, the basic cause for our failure to develop mass work is our sectarianism, our

\* See the pamphlet, *Capitalist Stabilization Has Ended: Thesis and Resolutions of the Twelfth Plenum of the Executive Committee of the Communist International*. Workers Library Publishers, 10 cents.

failure to "establish, extend and strengthen *permanent and intimate contacts* with the *majority* of the workers, wherever workers may be found". (Thesis of the Twelfth Plenum of the E. C. C. I.)

What is the bridge with which we will reach the workers? How can we close the gap between ourselves and the suffering, struggling masses? Through what policy can we overcome and deal body blows to the curse of sectarianism? This can be effected through the mass policy of the *united front from below*. In a nutshell, what do we mean by the united front from below?

It means to set in motion *non-Communist* workers, who are under the influence of social-fascist and bourgeois ideology, to fight for the improvement of their conditions. Therefore, our first approach and consideration is not whether the worker is a Communist or not, but the need for an understanding of his grievances and conditions, and on this basis jointly with him, formulate the demands for joint struggle. Only on such a basis will we win the confidence of the workers. Only then will they consider us as *their natural leaders*, and not as people who command and attempt impose their will upon them.

If we take our experiences in organizing various groups in the shops, what do we find? The tendency is to consider workers who still attend church, or are members of bourgeois parties, as immune to organization. We can cite many such examples. In Buffalo for instance, a Negro worker in a steel mill was willing to join the shop group in the plant, stating that he agrees with the demands formulated and the purpose of the organization, but that he is still anxious to attend his church and retain membership in the Republican Party. However, he agreed to join the shop group when he was convinced that his membership in the organization does not depend upon his leaving the church and his party but on fighting only with the other non-Communist and Communist workers for the demands formulated on the basis of the existing grievances and conditions in the shop.

Fear and distrust exist either openly expressed or in hidden forms, that every non-Communist worker is "so backward that you cannot depend on his initiative, elect him to committees, etc." Such expressions were heard more than once at various meetings when the question of developing work in a particular shop was taken up. The test of Communist leadership in a shop depends precisely on the ability, through the proper united front tactic, to draw into active work and leadership such "backward workers".

Our experiences in unemployed work particularly emphasize the need for breaking away from the sectarian habits of confining our unemployed activities to small groups, not consulting the workers in formulating demands, failure to build block committees, failure to draw the unemployed workers in sufficient

numbers into active leadership, etc. As a result of our sectarian methods, the social fascists and some bourgeois demagogues, have succeeded in establishing unemployed organizations for the purpose of undermining the growing influence of the Unemployed Councils and in face of growing cuts in relief and growth of unemployment, to divert into peaceful channels the rising resentment and struggles of the unemployed.

Especially in our fight against the social fascists, must the united front be applied. The experiences of the Chicago comrades in the struggle against the social fascists must be studied by the entire Party. The experiences of the Chicago district in this case also bring forward the fight against sectarianism and the right danger as the main danger. We will not deal with these experiences in the article as they have been taken up in detail in the article of Comrade Gebert in the *Daily Worker* of November 17th, in the article of Comrade Williamson in the December issue of *The Communist* and in the editorial which appears also in the December issue of *The Communist*.

In our fight against the social fascists we must take special pains to remember that: *"Only by strict differentiation between social-democratic leaders and workers will the Communists be able, by means of the united front from below, to break down the wall which often separates them from the social-democratic workers."* (Thesis of the Twelfth Plenum of the E.C.C.I.) In New York for instance, the Socialist Party organized a number of unemployed branches. In some cases, the attitude was taken that these are social-fascist organizations comprised of social-fascist workers, and therefore we must develop frontal attacks on these organizations and come to a head-on-collision with the workers who were called social fascists. Instead of applying the proper united front tactic, as was done in Chicago, by raising demands, etc., there was a failure to *"differentiate between social-democratic leaders and the workers."*

The closest and most detailed study must be given the Fourteenth Plenum resolution of our C. C. and the Twelfth Plenum thesis of the E.C.C.I. These are invaluable aids for acquiring the correct understanding of the united front policy. Every action of the Party should be developed on the basis of the united front policy. Every experience in mass work should be taken up in the light of the two above-mentioned resolutions.

Our sectarianism with its manifold habits and practices can best be cured in struggles. Let no one argue that because of the sectarian habits, because of the weaknesses existing in the Party, we must shrink and "be careful" about undertaking important mass actions. Such an attitude is the typical expression of sectarianism.

*No surrender to sectarianism! Into mass battles!*

— S. D.

## Unity of Negro and White Toilers

**"THE** biggest thing since the Civil War", was the remark of one white worker and the echo of many more about the demonstration on November 7 for winter relief in Birmingham. It was the greatest single action of the working class of this industrial center of the South, and the statement serves to reflect the spirit of workers we reached for the first time. The fact that out of the 5,000 workers present there were more than 1,500 whites makes the demonstration an historic step in the growth of the iron unity between Negro and white which will be a decisive factor in the revolutionary movement in the South, and especially in the Black Belt.

After the successful election rally of October 9, the district bureau planned four weeks of intensive preparatory work for November 7 as a continuation of the fight for free speech, for the right to the streets, for immediate relief. The concrete steps in the preparation were as follows:

1. The work of the block committees was increased. New block committees were built, and the old ones strengthened. Local struggles were developed against the Red Cross, demands for relief, etc. In a few cases results were gotten in the form of food, clothing, turning on of water, stopping of evictions.

2. On the basis of this increased activity the demands were formulated. The two major demands were: (a) \$3 in cash and \$5 in groceries each week for every unemployed family; (b) the right to vote without payment of poll tax, property or other qualifications, with no discrimination against the Negroes. These were the demands of the workers themselves and they were ready to fight for them.

3. A meeting of all block committee captains and actives in unemployed work was called for October 29. A city Unemployed Council was elected. This meeting was a success in that it achieved the first real differentiation between the Unemployed Council and the Party.

4. A united front conference was held on November 6. There were over 100 workers present, of whom many were delegates from churches and other organizations. This was an important step. The workers voted in support of the demands and pledged the support of their organizations and friends for the program of the Unemployed Council, and especially for the demonstration the following day.

5. There were 35,000 leaflets issued in all. The work in the neighborhoods made it possible to issue most of the leaflets on a neighborhood scale, presenting the concrete problems of the unemployed of that locality. The workers could clearly understand these local leaflets, and the city-wide leaflets served to supplement them, and to bring the workers into the streets.

6. The Communist Party had meanwhile continued with the

election campaign, and the I.L.D. with the campaign for the right to vote and for free speech. Leaflets were issued for these campaigns, linked up closely with the struggle for winter relief.

The results of this preparation we already know; the largest single outpouring of Negro and white workers, united for struggle, ever seen in this city. The lessons may be briefly put as follows:

1. Penetration of the neighborhoods, activities in the blocks, knowledge of the burning daily needs of the masses, demands on these needs—these are the things which will rally the masses for struggle.

2. The development of the initiative of the masses into the planning of these actions, and the broadening of the base of the leadership of these actions by bringing the widest masses into motion on the basis of the untied front will ensure the support of the masses in these struggles.

3. The unity of Negro and white can be forged not by economic struggle alone, but by the political struggle as well. This is shown by the splendid response of the workers to the demand for the right to vote.

4. The Party did not bow to spontaneity. The Party carefully prepared this struggle, concentrated its best forces at the key points, giving conscious, determined leadership to the struggle.

In the face of open police terror and the threat of the Ku Klux Klan, the carrying through of this struggle was of tremendous significance. At the same time, however, certain shortcomings were evident:

1. Underestimation of the willingness of the masses to struggle and their response to our program. The demonstration was called for 3:30 but the workers began to assemble at 1 o'clock, giving the police two hours to partially separate the Negroes and whites and to arrest the speakers, without sufficient resistance from the masses. The leadership did not foresee this situation and was not prepared for it.

2. Failure to give sufficient attention to the building of the Party and the Unemployed Council during the period of preparation and around the demonstration in general. The activity should have brought many new cadres into our organization.

3. The failure to connect the part-time factory workers with this struggle.

We are now faced with many tasks arising from this struggle. These are:

1. To intensify the work of building and activizing the block committees on the basis of the daily needs of the unemployed.

2. To elect our delegates for the National Hunger March on the basis of the widest possible united front, and to draw the broadest masses into the preparation of the Hunger March, getting food, funds, transportation, etc.

3. In connection with this activity to prepare a greeting for the Hunger Marchers on November 28 in the form of a demonstration at the Old Court House, the same place as the November 7 demonstration.

4. Continuation of the free speech struggle by holding the demonstration at the same place, by demanding the right to use the streets, and by openly mobilizing workers in support of the National Hunger March, as well as for the right to meet and assemble.

5. To systematically recruit members all during this struggle for the Party and for the building of the Unemployed Councils.

—S. B.

### In Struggle Workers Recognize Their Leaders

THE People's Council in Whatcom County represents another form of rising radicalization of the workers and also the turning of the small shopkeeper and home owner towards the revolutionary movement. The People's Council was planned and organized by a non-Party worker who attempted to set up an organization modeled after the Soviets, applied to local conditions. He received his greatest assistance from an expelled member of the Party. This expelled member of the Party was used as the face of the new organization and it grew from its inception.

From the outset the name "People's Council" appealed to the workers and farmers here, more so than the Unemployed Council. The hostility of the expelled member to the Party deepened the suspicion among the Party members that the People's Council was an organization in the hands of the capitalist class. A policy of isolation ensued. With the rapid development of this organization to 3,000 members, it was decided that this policy of ignoring the organization was incorrect. The comrades joined the organization and began to carry on work in the various councils.

As a result of systematic work, the August First demonstration was endorsed by the organization. Because the leaders directly participated in the demonstration, some reactionary elements waged a struggle against the leaders and called a special meeting to expel them from the organization. But the membership defeated these attempts, and the leadership was upheld by the majority of the organization.

The People's Council occupies a unique position here inasmuch as it is a mass organization of struggle. It has entered into the election campaign on an independent ticket, running workers on the basis of a revolutionary program chiefly embracing the demands of the unemployed. The platform includes all the points

of the program of struggle contained in the new draft manual of the Unemployed Councils.

The leadership in the People's Council now welcomes the work of the Party within the organization. This is a case, where a mass organization, on a very broad basis, has been formed independent of the Party direction, but which recognizes, however, that the ideas originally came from the Party, applied by non-Party workers. It has involved almost all of the militant workers and farmers in this county. Much of the success of this organization is due to the foundation laid down by the propaganda work of the Party for the past few years. Its approach is based on the daily needs and struggles of the workers and it uses both the program of the Unemployed Councils and that of the United Farmers League.

In the face of this, it is necessary to point out that there still remains a huge amount of reformist ideology within the ranks of the People's Council, which will require tireless, well directed efforts to overcome. Some of the tendencies which must be eradicated are: chauvinism, opportunism of all shades, the fatal error of "exceptionalism", etc. This was reflected in the election campaign in the attitude of some of the members to fall into the error of voting for the "lesser evil".

All this means that the Party must work with more energy and determination than before. In this work it must carry on a wide campaign of education and training utilizing the best Party literature available.

—V. H.

### How We Stopped a Sheriff Sale at Monhaga, Minn.

ONE of the most pressing needs of the poor farmers is immediate relief from the payment of interest and principal on mortgages and taxes. This relief they don't get, and therefore sheriff sales have been taking place everywhere. The farmers are embittered against these forced sales. It is our duty to show them the way to deal with them. Our slogan of "No sheriff sales and no foreclosures" will not be put into action by the authorities until the farmers begin to actually resist such sales and stop them. The experience we had in stopping one sheriff sale may help other parts of the country.

We heard about the coming sale. We started talking about this to all our neighbors. I personally talked to many people and found out who could be depended on. Many pledged that they would show up at the farm where the sale would take place. News of this kind travels fast in the country; every one was urged to bring some more friends with him.

The result was that on the day of the sale a large crowd came, the majority, most likely, to see what was going to happen.

There are very few cash buyers in such a poverty stricken country as this.

When the sheriff appeared and started reading his papers, I got up and started to talk to the farmers. I told them the actual facts, pointing out that this farmer was having his living taken away from him, how that would increase the burden on the rest of the farmers in the county, and how hard this farmer worked to get together his property—the same as the rest of the farmers present. I pointed out that the farmer asked an extension on the mortgage until he could sell his turkeys, but was refused. The total mortgage was \$220.60 for which the mortgage holder was out to take away 12 cows, 2 horses, and all the farm machinery.

After pointing this out—facts and not hot-air—I asked the crowd whether we should allow the sale to go through, and took a vote on it. Almost everybody present voted to stop the sale. We announced the decision to the banker and sheriff. The banker and sheriff talked it over and announced that the sale would be postponed for two weeks. I immediately asked the crowd whether they are willing to accept this postponement and whether they would come around again. Their answer was militant, yelling that they will have no sale. The mortgage holder, sheriff and a few more went into the farmer's home and drew up a new paper extending the mortgage for a full year. The sheriff did not even get his usual sales fee.

We then continued the meeting and elected a permanent Township Committee of Action of seven farmers. At this committee meeting we decided to extend this beginning into other townships. Now we have four such committees in four townships. At all meetings we endorsed the Farmers' National Relief Conference and are sending delegates to Washington. Most of the active members on these committees are new elements who have never been close to our movement. Our task now is to broaden out and find more work for our Committees.

A few words of advice. We must get the real facts about each sale: how much is the mortgage, when due, how much back interest, is the farmer trying to pay it, what is his offer, how large is the family, what do the neighbors think about them and the case? This is very important in order to plan our action. Also we must find out who is holding the mortgage: is it a local bank, the Rural Credits Buro, Federal Land Bank, an insurance company, or just an individual. All this must be told to the farmers so they may know. And each case may require different action. An individual mortgage holder may agree to postpone for a certain time and we agree; a company may insist to go through and we have to organize actual resistance.

And above all we must follow up each such struggle by organization.

—JIM FLOWER.

## Successful United Action Created Among the Farmers

**B**Y utilizing the favorable situation and spontaneous awakening among the exploited ruined farmers, our Party has been instrumental in helping and leading these farmers in numerous local struggles—marketing strikes and many successful struggles against the eviction and sheriff sales, also in the fight against tax burdens and in the struggle for immediate relief.

As a result of our participation in these struggles the activity of our Party among the farmers has broadened out tremendously. It is not only through the United Farmers League in two or three northwestern states that we have influence among the toiling farmers as was the case formerly, but during the course of the last few months, at the initiative of our Party, we have already organized many Farmers' Action Committees, a temporary united front of farmers throughout the New England, East Atlantic and Middle Western states, around the big industrial districts.

At the same time we have extended our influence for the first time, into the reformist organizations, like the Farmers Holiday Association, and Farmers' Union local and state organizations. In the course of the recent struggles the United Farmers League has been able to extend its influence and broaden its organization among the wide masses of toiling farmers.

Our Party has supported and helped the farmers in broadening the various local struggles and local demands into the national united front action in the form of the Farmers' National Relief Conference, which is to be held in Washington on December 7th-10th. This conference will in a great measure consolidate the fighting movement of the awakened farm masses by uniting them into the common struggle for the national demands of the toiling farmers.

While our Party fully supports the elementary demands of the Farmers' National Relief Conference on the question of a moratorium on debts, rents, taxes, mortgages, on the question of stopping foreclosures and evictions, on the question of better prices for farm products, and for the immediate relief for all poor farmers by the government, we must urge farmers to sharpen their demand on moratorium towards the cancellation of mortgages and taxes, and to popularize the agrarian demands of our Party. It is necessary at the same time to expose the attitude of capitalist parties towards the farmers' demands and to show up the strike-breaking activities of the leaders of rich farmers' organizations (Milo Reno and others).

It is also the task of the Party to bring about close solidarity between the working class and the movement of exploited farmers. This can be done by urging trade unions and unemployed

workers to give their support to the farmers' struggle for better prices and against sheriff sales, and mobilizing workers to give actual assistance in these struggles. A joint hunger march of poor farmers and unemployed should also be organized. On the basis of these joint struggles, it is possible to create a united movement of poor and middle farmers, together with the workers, against the alliance of bankers, corporations and rich farmers, directing this movement also against the government as the tool of the banks, trust and the railroad companies, and thus politicalizing the movement.

It must be understood that if we are able to create an understanding among the farmers towards the workers' movement, they will greatly help the workers' struggles, giving their support during strikes and helping unemployed with food, etc., as they have already done on many occasions.

After the Washington Conference it is our task to extend our activities to every possible farming locality. Through the election campaign many contacts were made with farmers whose responses to the Party program was very good. Our Party organizations must not lose these contacts but on the contrary, send special groups of comrades from every nearby Party unit to develop systematic work among the farmers. Many unemployed Party comrades can be advantageously utilized in this work. They must be made acquainted with agrarian work and sent to the farming communities. This requires very little money because farmers are only too glad to support our comrades, as experience shows.

One of the many weaknesses in our agrarian work is that very few comrades in our district or section committees have any knowledge of how to work among the farmers. This is understandable in relation to the past, because this field was new to our Party. But now there is no excuse for not understanding the work. The Central Committee, in the form of special documents and in the form of articles in our Party press, has given clear guidance on agrarian work. By reading and discussing the contents of these instructions, a fairly good idea can be acquired as to how to start work among the farmers. And experience will teach more. Short courses to prepare our agrarian organizers can also be organized in the districts.

Our agrarian work has already become so broad that it is impossible to guide it from the Party center alone. The Center will continue to help the districts but the district and section committees must assume responsibility for giving directions to the Party units and fractions, assign comrades in various localities to do this work, and provide them with the necessary knowledge on the work among the farmers.

We must now not only greatly extend the United Farmers League, but must organize Farmers' Action Committees all over,

and around the local struggles, and begin to work on a much larger scale, inside the reformist farm organizations.

And side by side with the organization of mass movements among the exploited farmers must go the building of the Party in the countryside by recruiting agricultural workers, share croppers and poor farmers into the Party.

— H. PURO.

### What Is the United Front?

**T**HE situation in America, together with the left maneuvers and increased activities of the reformists in leading economic struggles, imperatively demands that we place in the center of our the task of carrying through a correct united front policy. The basic methods to expose the left maneuvers of the reformists must be to propose openly to the masses in the local reformist organizations immediate concrete actions for carrying through in practice their promises and propose a united front basis for these concrete actions.

"The formation of the united front is, therefore, not the setting up of a new mass organization with its own individual membership. The basic organizational form is the committee of action elected from below by all the workers engaged in a particular struggle, either from their existing organizations where these support the struggle, or from militant groups within these organizations, and from unorganized workers. All these organizational forms of the united front must be suited to the special concrete conditions of each individual struggle and locality. Any attempt to force the united front within the strait-jacket of pre-conceived 'perfect' plans is certain to defeat its purpose. The essential feature of the united front is that it unites hitherto separated groups of workers for a joint struggle which would otherwise be more difficult or impossible. Within such united front activities, the efforts of the Communist Party must not under any circumstances be that of trying to secure a mechanical monopoly of leadership, but on strengthening and developing the honest, militant, non-Party leading workers and the development of the broadest possible non-Party leading cadres. The failure to carry through in practice these basic concepts of the united front tactic is the basic cause for the scandalously inadequate development of broad mass united front movements around the Communist Party in the present election campaign and the multitude of weaknesses and failures in the various separate struggles in which the Party has participated."

—Resolution of the Fifteenth Plenum of the Central Committee.

## Expand the Cadres of the Party!

*"Revolutionary epochs are to the social democrats\* the same as war time to the army. We must expand the cadres of our army, from peace contingents, the reserve forces must be mobilized, the men on furlough must be called to the colors, new auxiliary corps, detachments and services must be set up. One must not forget that in war time it is inevitable and necessary to replenish one's ranks by raw recruits, frequently replace officers by rank and file soldiers, accelerate and simplify the promotion of soldiers to officers' rank." (Lenin.)*

**T**HE Twelfth Plenum of the Executive Committee of the Communist International discussing the problems of our Party emphasized that one of the most important tasks confronting us is the development of new forces, especially for the lower organizations (districts, sections, nuclei, and locals of the revolutionary unions). This is not a new task. Already the Fifth Plenum of the E.C.C.I. stated:

*"One of the foremost tasks of every Communist Party should consist in selecting very carefully the leading cadres among the more advanced workers distinguished by their energy, capability, knowledge and devotion to the Party . . . these workers must be systematically helped to become real organizers of the masses, Party and trade union leaders. . . . Working class leaders should be treated with patience and care and encouraged to work for their own improvement, given opportunities to prove their worth by the allocation of more important and increasingly responsible work."*

Our Party has many basic weaknesses in connection with the training and developing of cadres. Particularly today are these weaknesses appearing in a sharp and pronounced form. The rapidly developing mass movement requires not only greater initiative, decisiveness and effectiveness from our leading cadres from top to bottom, but also an extensive broadening of the leadership to include ever wider sections of comrades who have close contact with the masses. We will deal here only with a few of the most important weaknesses:

### Criminal Negligence of Party Forces

1. During the struggles in the last year or year and a half (Pennsylvania miners' strike, textile strikes, veterans' march,

*\* When Lenin wrote this the Bolsheviks were members of the Russian Social-Democratic Labor Party. In using the term "social democrats", he meant members of the only revolutionary working class Party at that time. Today of course, this means the Communists.*

Warren steel strike, unemployed struggles) splendid elements came forward. We did not succeed, however, to draw them sufficiently into leadership and further develop them by careful and systematic attention and guidance. As a result many of these very good forces were lost.

2. The selection of students for the various training schools was carried through in a very haphazard way. Instead of carefully choosing those Party members who were participating in mass struggles, who were active in the nuclei, working in big factories or in the revolutionary unions, we sent to school in many instances those comrades whom we could "spare" most readily. We did not have in mind the character of the work they will do when the course is ended. We completely forgot that our main problem today is to get new cadres for the most important sections of our front—concentration factories, concentration unions, Unemployed Councils. Instead, the selection of students was influenced in many cases by the erroneous conception that the aim of the school is to train only functionaries for the district and section. We viewed an organizer, Party worker, professional revolutionist as a comrade who is taken out of the factory and works full time in a Party or trade union office. This misconception permeated our Party committees from the top to the bottom. Because of this false conception we took a comrade who came from a factory or town where he knew the situation, was already known to the workers, had gained their confidence and was looked upon as their leader, and we assigned him as full-time functionary to another city, in a strange environment, new people, new problems with which he was not familiar.

### A Correct Cadre Policy

What is the Leninist conception of an organizer? *"The Communist organizer, Party worker, must not be similar to a social-democratic 'responsible' functionary and official. The Communist organizer must lead and work among the masses in the factory, in the shop, in the mine."* (Fifth Plenum of the E.C.C.I.) And, we could add, work among the unemployed.

We should have the policy of selecting our cadres for further development from the factories, from the mines, from the revolutionary unions, from the Unemployed Councils and send them back to the same place where the theoretical training they get can crystallize into immediate practical application. Only in exceptional cases, should we assign a comrade to a different place, and even then we should keep in mind his or her past experience. We must develop miners as organizers among the miners, textile workers for the textile industry, and so on. This should not be construed to mean, however, that a good Bolshevik cannot organize any kind of workers. But, we must have a cadre policy. This is the only way to enable our Party to keep in close touch

with the broadest sections of the non-Party masses.

3. In the last two years, hundreds of Party members went through the various national, regional, district and section training schools, but only a small number are today in the leading cadres. Some of these comrades have even left the Party. This is due to a failure to systematically follow up these comrades after they have been assigned. After a comrade is sent out to work, where he faces many difficulties, the district considers its job finished and does not give close personal supervision and aid to the comrade in his new undertaking. In addition to the political problems, he faces financial difficulties. Again, no help from the higher committees. Result—a complete demoralization and breakdown, physically, and in many cases, politically. Many old forces were lost because of this criminal neglect by the higher committees.

Systematic selection of the best militant elements from the factories, mines, from the struggles of the employed and unemployed; proper training; correct policy in the assignment of work; systematic follow-up and constant help and guidance of these forces will forge the necessary strong Party cadres.

The school is only one of the means of developing new forces. The leading committees of the districts, sections, units, and the fractions in the mass organizations should steadily watch, in the course of practical work, the new elements who distinguish themselves by their militancy, energy, ability, knowledge and devotion to the Party, and pay special attention to them (individual help, encouraging self-study, and help in the selection of literature, conferences, etc.)

4. In addition to the training of new forces we face the problem of further developing our old cadres. These cadres are overburdened with tasks, are busy day and night and have no time to read and study. The leading committees must find ways and means to solve this question. Study circles should be established for the various categories of Party workers. We must supply them with literature. And what is more important, systematize and organize the work so as to enable these comrades to spend a certain amount of each day for self-study as a part of their Party task.

5. In connection with the shifting of forces we find another serious shortcoming. In many cases comrades are shifted to other work when they have fallen down on one job. This is correct in many cases. A change of scenery, or a change in the assignment, will improve the character of the work of the comrade. But in most cases the solution is the removal of the comrade and sending him back to a factory.

#### **Know the Party Forces**

6. The thorough knowledge of our cadres is an important prerequisite for the proper distribution and utilization of our forces. We must know each individual comrade in all leading committees

of the Party and mass organizations. We must know their strong and weak points, what work they are best fitted for. This is essential, Lenin pointed out, to enable the Party leadership "not only to advise, as this has hitherto been done, but really conduct the orchestra, one must know exactly who is playing first or second fiddle and where; what instrument he was taught, where and how; where and why he plays out of tune (when the music begins to be trying to the ear); and what changes should be made in the orchestra so as to remedy the dissonance." Each Party committee shall examine all its forces, not only their abilities but their background, their connections with the masses, etc., and work out a systematic policy for the use of the comrades.

The Twelfth Plenum of the E.C.C.I. states: "The end of relative capitalist stabilization has come. . . . What is taking place at the present moment is the *transition* to a new round of big clashes between classes and between states, a new round of wars and revolutions." In this situation, our Party needs forces more than ever. These forces are here, springing up and coming forward in the struggle. Our task is to develop them. Simultaneously we must eradicate the constant cries of our comrades in the units, sections and districts that we have no forces. Such comrades should read and study the following words of Lenin, "*The organizer who in such situation complains about the lack of forces does not see the forest for the trees; he admits that the happenings make him blind . . . it is better if such an organizer goes on pension and makes place for the young forces whose energy very often will make up for their lack of experience.*"

—J. P.

### For a Proper Utilization of Party Forces

**A**MONG the many organizational shortcomings that have held back the Pittsburgh District—and that are now being corrected—was the wrong organizational conception of how to build the Party apparatus, especially on a section scale. During the time of the big miners' strike, the Party membership rose to some 1,200 members and tens of mine nuclei were built. In order to be able to guide them, new sections were established.

Was the line of organizing new sections correct? Certainly. On account of the big territory of the district, the difficulties of communication and the past experiences, it was obviously impossible for the District Committee to reach all the lower units of the Party and guide them in the development of local struggle. This was not a mistake.

The mistake was in importing too many full-time functionaries. Here we can give a concrete example which will be a valuable experience to all our districts:

In the small section of Library, not far from the center of the district, where a few mine nuclei of the Party and a few locals of the National Miners Union were built, for a long period we had the following full-time functionaries: a section organizer of the Party, a section organizer of the Young Communist League, a sub-district organizer of the National Miners Union, an organizer of the unemployed movement, an organizer of the women's auxiliary, a Negro work director and perhaps some others—practically six or seven full-time functionaries for a movement embracing a few hundred workers in the Party, unions and auxiliaries.

Was it possible for the few organized forces to maintain such a staff of functionaries? Especially, if we take into consideration that the majority of the organized workers after the strike were blacklisted, starving miners; that hundreds of miners were thrown out of the company towns and forced to build barracks and tents in the outskirts—of course it was impossible. The result was that when the so-called full-time functionaries were quartered with big families of starving and demoralized workers, friction arose between these leading comrades.

The presence of such a large staff of functionaries did not develop the initiative of the nuclei, the initiative of the rank and file, the initiative of the locals of the N.M.U. On the contrary, it choked this initiative insofar as the Party members and the members of the N.M.U. expected everything to be done by this staff of functionaries. Naturally under these conditions no local leadership could be developed.

Functionaries were shifted from one section to another as stop-gaps. The result was that these functionaries were demoralized and no local struggles were developed in spite of the splendid opportunities.

It is true that in order to develop new cadres, schools were established by the district. But if today we look for the workers that attended these schools, we will need a searchlight to find them. Most of them disappeared. Why? For the reason that the district leadership treated these new forces as if they were already professional revolutionists. They were shipped from one place to another without taking into considering their personal economic and family situation. They were shifted around, instead of sending them back to work in their own localities. Sent back to their own towns and cities, where they are known to the workers, they could have been developed into genuine local leaders.

One of the organizational problems before the Pittsburgh district at this moment is the cutting down of the staff of so-called full-time functionaries, to see that these comrades go back to their original localities and at the same time reorganize the sections in such a manner that full-time section organizers are not needed. In this way it will be possible to develop local initiative

and local leadership. In this way it will be possible to develop the initiative of the section committees which must be strengthened politically and organizationally through continuous guidance from the district center, not through circular letters but through personal contact. The org. secretary and members of the buro must become real instructors, who remain in each section for one or two weeks at a time and work closely with the section committee.

F. BROWN.

### Stalin on Party Cadres

"It is necessary to strengthen the struggle for forging truly revolutionary Party cadres and for selecting truly revolutionary leaders in the Party, people capable of marching to battle and leading the proletariat with them, people who will not be daunted by any storm, and will not be panic-stricken, but will defy the storm. But in order to fulfill these tasks it is necessary, without losing a single moment, for time does not wait, to take up the purging of the Communist Parties of the right and conciliationist elements. . . . And this cleansing must be done, not at the ordinary tempo but at an accelerated tempo, for, I repeat, time does not wait and we cannot allow the events to catch us unawares." (*Stalin in the American Commission, 1932.*)

### Some Questions For Your Unit

THINK over the following questions—and then discuss them at your next unit meeting:

1. Did your unit participate in any struggle recently—shop strikes, rent strike, relief struggle, etc.?
2. How many new members did your unit recruit during these struggles? If none, why?
3. Did your unit collect signatures and agitate among the workers in its territory during the election campaign?
4. How many members did the unit recruit during this campaign? If none, why?
5. Are you a member of a mass organization (union, I.W.O., I.L.D., Unemployed Council, Language organization, etc.)? How many members did you recruit from the organization for the Party? If none, why?
6. Are you working in a shop? How many members did you recruit from the shop? If none, why?
7. What is the turnover in your unit—how many recruited, how many lost?
8. Why did your unit lose these members?
9. What steps did the unit take to again reach these workers?
10. What steps did your unit take to keep the new members?

## Self-Criticism Without Correction

*The Practice of Bolshevik Self-Criticism: How the American Communist Party Carries Out Self-Criticism and Controls Fulfillment of Decisions.* By S. Tsirul.\*

THE failure of our Party to make appreciable gains in organizing the American working class, despite the extensive use of self-criticism, has been baffling many a Party member for a long time.

In various resolutions of the Central Committee Plenums, etc., we set down that we were sectarian, formalistic and bureaucratic in our methods of work, that we must turn our face to the factories, that we must penetrate the shops, that we must develop cadres from among the wide masses, that we must apply the tactic of the united front from below, that our work must center around the struggle for the immediate, burning demands of the masses, that we must do our work on the basis of solid personal contact, etc., etc., etc.

Many of us have often wondered why after merciless exposure of our shortcomings, we do not advance, but go on making the same mistakes as before. This pamphlet, *The Practice of Bolshevik Self-Criticism*, explains this to us. The whole thing can be summed up in this one sentence from page 5:

"... while the method of self-criticism has been fully adopted by the Communist Party of the U.S.A., it has not yet given thought to the serious organization of control of execution of decisions. Therein lies the weakness of the Party."

In revealing the "discrepancy between extensive self-criticism and the complete absence of any control of the fulfillment of decisions," Comrade Tsirul takes up three questions of organizational work, the field in which the discrepancy referred to looms largest. These, are first, the condition and work of the Party units and the work of the Party in the factories generally; second, the growth of the Party and the fluctuation of its membership; and third, the work of the Party apparatus and the struggle against bureaucracy.

While the pamphlet criticizes the higher Party committees and the work of the Party as a whole, it is necessary for the lower functionaries and the whole Party membership, if we are to benefit from the pamphlet, to carefully study it on the basis of the work of their own particular sections and units.

For instance, let us take my own unit. The section committee, following out the line of the Fourteenth Plenum Resolution,

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\*Price 2 cents. Published by Workers Library Publishers.  
P. O. Box 148, Sta. D, N.Y.C.

made the decision that the main work of the section shall be shop work. My unit is a street unit, and it decided to take up unemployed work. After a few months of "doing unemployed work" in a certain neighborhood, the work was pronounced a failure. The unit decides to look about for another "suitable" place to begin unemployed work.

Does the unit make any move to carry out the decision of the section in regard to factory work? No, despite the fact that in the immediate territory of the unit there is a large gas works, despite the fact that in our section a huge railroad yard and countless metal factories are located.

This is but one instance of failure to carry out the resolution of the Central Committee and the decision of the section committee. It can be multiplied many times, not only for this unit, but for almost every unit in the Party.

*What can we do to put a stop to this failure to correct shortcomings which are SPOKEN about in resolutions and decisions?*

First, when a decision is made there must be a thorough discussion by the unit members thrashing out the shortcomings criticized in the decision and clearly outlining the tasks set forth. Without a real understanding on the part of the rank and file Party members, it is useless to expect that any decision can be carried out.

Second, the responsibility for checking the fulfillment of decisions must rest with the section committees and unit bureaus.

Third, the section committee and unit bureau should keep a record of each decision made, and should refer to it at regular periods, say every two weeks. The time will vary for different decisions, according to the nature of the work the decision takes up. Regular reports should be made on whether or not the decision is being carried out and if it is, to what degree and at what tempo. The section committee and unit bureau should suggest methods for increasing the tempo with which the decision is being fulfilled and shortcomings in the work eliminated.

*The Practice of Bolshevik Self-Criticism* is a priceless pamphlet. It is a measuring-rod by which we can gauge the results of our work not only today and tomorrow and next week, but next year and indeed for as long as our Party will be in existence. It is a manual to be referred to constantly. If studied carefully by the Party members in groups or in unit meetings—and applied concretely to the work of the lower Party committees and units,—it can well become one of our most powerful instruments for guiding, correcting, and checking up on our work. With this pamphlet we can begin to control the execution of decisions, and thus carry self-criticism to its logical conclusion: the correction of shortcomings and the fulfillment of decisions.

— A. L.

## New Membership Books

**M**OST of the Party membership books will expire at the end of 1932. The exchange of the old books for new ones will give us a good opportunity—

1. to mobilize the whole membership;
2. to bring back those members who for one reason or another dropped out of the Party in the last period;
3. to account for all members, and in this way have a clear picture of our membership;
4. to establish a system which will enable the Party to eliminate the continuous registration and re-registration of the membership.

We carried through a very extensive Party registration a year ago. We succeeded in reaching about 75 per cent of our membership. But here we stopped. Instead, the correct step would have been to continue registering each new recruit of the Party to enable us to know at all times the status of the membership in any district, section or unit.

After the registration in 1931, thousands of new workers joined the Party, changing considerably the composition of the Party. During the same period, thousands of members dropped out. Since we did not keep an up-to-date registration, we cannot know today the exact status of our Party membership, and we have no record of why Party members left the Party, who they are, whether they belong to any of the fraternal or mass organizations, and in which way they are still connected with the revolutionary movement.

Since January 1930, when the new dues system and book was introduced, we issued more than 50,000 membership books. Today, the average dues payment is 14,000. What has happened to the 36,000 workers for whom books were issued? We know, of course, that a large number of these never received their books, but the majority did. Do we have a record of these members? Perhaps in one or two districts such records have been kept, but even here they have not been used—and in practically all districts no such records can be found. An up-to-date registration, if properly used, will help the Party to establish continuity in its work.

For these reasons the Central Committee decided to exchange all the membership books at the end of this year, and at the same time to register the entire membership. We have five weeks to carry out this important task. The district, section and unit buros should immediately put on the agenda this question and work out the necessary steps.

The following points should be considered by the leading Party committees:

1. Every member of the unit should be notified through letter

or personally through the group captains that membership books must be exchanged at the end of 1932.

2. Visit *all* members who did not attend unit meetings for a long period and whom we consider as "dropped out".

3. The dues must be paid up to the end of 1932 before the new membership book is issued.

4. The new book will cost five cents.

5. The unit buro is to fill out one registration card for each member—and turn all cards over to the Section Committee, at the same time keeping a record of the information on these cards.

6. These cards will give all the necessary information for the issuance of the new books, and it is essential that each point is carefully filled out.

7. The old books must be collected by the unit organizer, the last week in December, and delivered through the section to the District where they will be destroyed. *No new membership book should be issued unless the district receives the registration card and old book.*

8. The district should copy all registration cards while the new books are filled out, arrange them by units and sections and keep them in a safe place. If a comrade is transferred to another unit, section, or district, the date of transfer should be marked on his card. If a new member is taken in, the membership book is issued only if a registration card is attached to the application card. *The principle is that the district buro must have at all times a complete record of all its members and all those who go through the Party (transfer, dropping out, in jail, death, etc.) in order to have a continuous check-up on the membership.*

9. An absolutely reliable member of the Party shall be made responsible for keeping these records up to date. The district org. secretary should check this work at least once a month.

10. Each member must sign his name on the membership book when it is given to him.

11. The new membership books will be issued in the districts and only in exceptional cases in the sections.

12. The district committee should compile all the facts from the registration cards and send in monthly reports to the center. (A form for this will be sent to the districts).

13. The units should place on the agenda and prepare a discussion the last week in December or the first week in January on the problems of keeping old members and the recruiting of new members. The material will be sent out from the center for these discussions.

The drive for registration, payment of dues, and renewing the books, should be started immediately. With the proper preparation and organizational measures, we will be able, not only to mobilize the membership for intensified activity, but to win back many old members who have dropped out of the Party.

## Agit-Prop Work

### How Individual and Group Agitation Is to Be Conducted

*NOTE: The following is an abridged form of the article "Bolshevik Agitation Among the Masses" by L. Perchik, issued in the Soviet Union. It should be utilized not only by Party agitators, but carefully studied by every Party member.*

\* \* \* \*

**W**HAT must be the mode of work of an individual and a group agitator? On what issues must light be thrown by a basic agitator, and in what manner? Must he give preference to factory and local issues, or should he turn his attention mainly to questions concerned with the general policy of the Party? And what is to be the mode of his agitation?

*Agitation among industrial workers and workers in general must be based on local material, and current affairs must be its starting point. But it would certainly be a serious political mistake on the part of an agitator to confine himself to this local material and these questions of the day. A Bolshevik agitator commences with practical up-to-date questions, in order to build upon these the political lesson for the masses. From all that is practical, concrete, individual, matter of fact and up-to-date, the agitation must raise the masses to general political and class conclusions, tasks, slogans of the proletariat and of its Party.*

Among the practical issues which the agitator must select as his starting point, there are also such as might cause temporary discontent in some backward groups of workers. In such cases young Party members become sometimes discouraged, just when firm Bolshevik agitation is most necessary. This shows that Communists of this kind are not sufficiently tempered in Party work, and also that they do not know how to link current questions with the general life of the Party in a manner to make the correctness of our policy accessible and intelligible to every rank and file workman. And it is precisely in this that the art of Bolshevik agitation consists. *To attain to such art in agitation, every individual and group agitator, as well as agitators in general, must approach agitation conscientiously, they must lend an attentive ear to the moods of the masses and to the least vacillations and changes in these moods, they must always be well up in everything connected with the political situation, they must be familiar with the standpoint of the Party with regard to important political question, and must acquire the art of Bolshevik agitation by experience.*

"The art of every propagandist and every agitator," said Lenin in the article "On Slogans", "consists in influencing the audience, in making for it a certain truth as convincing, intelligible and as easy of assimilation as possible."

The agitator must bring his work into harmony with the character and the political and cultural level of the given groups of workers, and the individual agitator—with the character and level of the given industrial or other workers.

*First of all the agitator must be well acquainted with his audience.* If this is not the case, the agitator is unable to achieve his aim. To show ability in leadership, one must know first of all whom one intends to lead. The agitator must firmly bear in mind that he is not just agitating into space addressing some abstract masses, but is trying to convince human beings who have definite peculiarities which make them differ from other people of the given class. This definite group, in the framework of its class, has its definite needs and requirements which arise out of the peculiarities of its industrial, political, cultural and social position.

If the agitator has to do with a more advanced worker with certain experience and knowledge, as well as interest for political questions, the given question must be explained on broader lines, with a larger number of facts, examples and figures, with more insistence on the general class policy of the Party, and on the historical perspectives of that policy in the given question. If the worker is backward and not well developed politically, he must not be overburdened with a great amount of figures and examples. In his case one must take facts familiar to him, and in the agitation among these workers maximum attention must be paid to correctly linking up of everything that is familiar, individual and up-to-date with convincing proof of the correctness of the policy of the Party in the given domain.

But while adapting himself to the lowest standard of the most backward worker, the agitator must on no account resort to extreme simplification, and thereby, vulgarization of the question.

Another enemy of our agitation is conceit and a too high opinion of one's knowledge and well-informedness. There is a type of agitator who imagines that it is better to evade the question altogether or answer it with commonplaces, so as to bemuse the bewildered questioner, instead of honestly confessing that the given problem is not quite clear to himself.

*There is no harm in not knowing everything. Say that you will answer the question another time, and begin immediately to study it. On no account pretend to be a person of universal knowledge; it is not fit for a Bolshevik agitator.*

To ensure the success of an informal talk, one must carefully prepare for it and carefully select the points to be raised. Even

the best agitators and speakers, with great political training and experience in agitation, never speak without proper preparation and plan.

Every agitational speech or informal talk, and consequently also the plan of the speech, must contain three main parts: the introduction, the argumentation and the conclusion. The introductory part of the speech has to bring clearly before the audience the question to be dealt with and must arouse interest in it; it explains why a correct interpretation of the given question is absolutely necessary in the given period for the given audience. The argumentative part of the speech is the main part. On it most of the attention must be concentrated. This part of the speech has to explain, prove, develop and give reasons for the standpoint of the Party in the given question, and must make the audience arrive at conclusions which coincide with the slogans of the Party. The concluding part of the speech consists in inferences from it, appeals and slogans of the Party. This part already mobilizes the masses for action, and therefore it must be, on the one hand, entirely justified by the whole preceding part of the speech, and, on the other hand, a very terse and effective expression of the main inferences of the speech.

*The whole agitation must be imbued, on one hand, with Bolshevik principle and purposefulness, and on the other, there must be connection with the masses, consideration of their needs, demands and interests.*

The language used in agitation must be very simple and accessible to the masses.

### Hints for Organizing Forums

ONE of the most important means of reaching the workers with Communist education is the open forum. It is important because with a little effort many workers can be counted upon to come regularly. A well planned series of lectures, the questions asked by the workers, the discussions and the summarizing and clearing up of points raised serve as a school for educating and winning the workers.

Forums should be organized in workers' neighborhoods in every city and town possible and not merely in the chief city of the district. Forums serve also as a means of recruiting members. If the following general ideas are carried out, with some modification here or there, forums should be successful.

#### Planning

Forums should be planned in every detail at least one month in advance. Speakers, topics, chairmen, program, ushers, literature, advertising, etc., should be organized and ready one month ahead of time. The forum program should be arranged for an

## PARTY ORGANIZER

entire month or six weeks. When the program is arranged, every means must be used to popularize the program among the masses. Special concentration should be made on shops, railroad terminals, docks, etc.

A bright colored throw-away card the size of a postcard is a handy size upon which to print the forum advertisement, the time, the place, etc. On such a card the entire four or six lectures, including dates, speakers and subjects can be printed. At the bottom of the card it is well to state: Admission, Questions, Discussion, and a few words asking the workers to come and bring their friends.

### The Hall

We must get the best hall available at the least expense, but located within convenient reach of the workers. We must make every effort to keep the hall as clean, bright, airy and inviting as possible.

### Admission

The admission price should be as low as possible, but not lower than 10 cents. Unemployed should be admitted free. In some places, it is well to have free admission, but a collection should be made before the question period. The comrades should use their judgment in each case. Instead of being a financial burden, as some fear, the forums can and should be a source of income, if properly organized, either on the basis of sale of tickets or a well organized collection.

### Lectures

The topics should be on live, current problems and should be discussed analytically and critically on the basis of Communist theory, concretely interwoven with local questions.

### Speakers

Local speakers should be used, since it is not possible to have nationally known speakers at all times. Local comrades who are assigned to speak on a topic should take the assignment seriously. The comrade should gather material pertaining to the topic assigned to him, should study and familiarize himself with the Communist theory, and the angle from which our enemies view the questions in order better to analyze and draw comparisons and conclusions supported by Communist theory and practice, as well as various facts of current or historical data.

### Time

Forums should open at 8 P. M. on regular weekly nights, usually Sunday nights. Forums should never open later than 8:15, and should never last longer than 10:30 P. M. Two and a half hours is all the time necessary for a forum meeting. Time should be divided as follows: chairman, 5 to 10 minutes; speaker, three-quarters to one hour, but never longer than one and one-quarter hours; ten to fifteen minutes for questions and an-

nouncements; one half-hour for discussion from floor (three minutes each person)—and remainder of time for speaker to answer questions raised which are written down by one asking question, or by the speaker who also concludes the evening with a summing up on the topic, questions and discussion.

### Literature

If the sale of literature is well organized, the value of the lectures are enhanced by study on the part of the workers.

There should always be an attractive display of literature. A large table with a variety of literature should occupy a strategic place just inside the entrance with a live-wire comrade in charge, who can aid, suggest, and sell literature. Before the meeting is opened by the chairman, literature sellers should cover the aisles with several different pieces of literature, including the *Daily Worker* and periodicals. But as soon as the chairman opens the meeting, all selling must stop.

The chairman should be brief and to the point. He should make no more than one or two announcements at the opening of the forum. All other announcements should be reserved for the period before questions are asked.

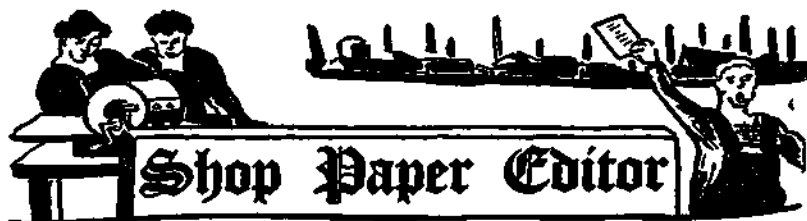
### Literature Drive

A literature drive or selling campaign should be a regular and thoroughly planned part of every forum. This is best done as part of the chairman's introduction of the subject. Special pamphlets, books, or periodicals, either singly or in combination at reduced prices, should be on hand in quantities sufficient to cover the requirements. This literature must be on the topic or related to the subject under discussion.

### Recruiting

Recruiting should be carefully planned and very skillfully carried out. Drives should be made only on certain occasions, in order not to make it boring to those who come. Systematic recruiting should be carried out by various means—indirectly through reference by the chairman, speaker, or by special literature—but drives should be made only occasionally if recruiting is to be effective.

—SIDNEY BLOOMFIELD.



### Shop Paper Reviews

*Illinois Steel Worker*, October, 1932, Illinois Steel Unit of the C. P., District 8.

One of the best features of the *Illinois Steel Worker* is the concrete manner in which the conditions and issues of the various departments are dealt with as well as the demands flowing from them. This section deals with such small grievances of the workers as working before official starting time, not getting paid for extra time put in, the need for drinking fountains, etc. The concrete demands formulated on the basis of these department grievances are excellent. However, the comrades fail to formulate the demand around a very important issue in the factory, namely, the struggle against the indirect cutting of wages through the introduction of the six hour day. This issue is raised in the item on Department 14. In this case we must demand the same pay the workers received when working eight hours.

While correctly placing emphasis on the building of the united front organs of struggle—the grievance committees—the paper practically does not deal with the building of the Steel and Metal Workers Industrial Union.

The articles on the 15th Anniversary of the Russian Revolution and those on the Election Campaign are not linked up with the actual conditions of the steel workers in the plant and fail to contrast these conditions with those gained by the steel workers of the Soviet Union. For instance the construction of the steel giants, the increase in the wages, no unemployment among steel workers in the Soviet Union, etc., should have been touched upon in relation to the conditions of the workers in the plant. It is only on such a basis that we can bring home clearly to the steel workers the achievements of the workers in the Soviet Union.

In the article on the National Hunger March not a word is stated on how the struggles of the unemployed workers in Chicago have defeated the attempts of the employers and the government to cut down relief. Furthermore, it should have dealt more intimately with the unemployed steel workers' need for relief, and how the employed steel workers must support not only

the National Hunger March but also the *daily struggles* for unemployment relief and insurance.

What about the Warren steel strike? Have the lessons of this strike been brought forward to the workers employed here.

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*Harvester Worker*, November, 1932—International Harvester Unit of the C. P., District 8.

All the districts can learn a great deal from the method used by the *Harvester Worker* to show the degree to which the conditions of the workers have been forced down during the crisis and the bourgeois offensive. Practically every article on shop conditions brings forth the relations of the present wages of the workers to those in 1929 or 1930; the intensification of the speed-up in relation to the past and how it affects the wages of the workers, etc. This is a convincing approach to the workers.

This same line is also followed in the article on the Soviet Union which compares definite conditions in the factory with similar conditions in the Soviet Union.

However, the paper fails to follow up this excellent exposure of conditions with a thorough explanation of just how the workers should organize in the plant. We must guard against the habit of merely repeating "build department committees"—"build shop committees". We should explain, in relation to the issues that arise, just how we must organize, just how such attacks can be defeated, utilizing experiences from other sections of the country.

\* \* \*

*The Crane Worker*, October, 1932—Crane Unit of the C. P., District 8.

*The Crane Worker* has taken up a struggle against the stool-pigeons, concretely exposing them by name. In our task to isolate the stool pigeons and discredit them before the workers, it is necessary to arouse the indignation of the workers, to create hatred for these rats. On the basis of this, organize this sentiment of the workers to develop a struggle not only to isolate the stool pigeons from the rest of the workers but to oust them from the shop. This latter task the *Crane Worker* does not bring sharply forward.

The article on the Hunger March to the City Hall, while dealing in an effective manner with the conditions of the workers and their need for relief, does not sufficiently deal with the relations of the Crane workers to the struggle for unemployment insurance, the insecurity of their jobs, the struggle against part-time work. It is not enough to merely bring forward our general demands in speaking to a definite section of workers, but to formulate demands around issues that directly affect them.

The manner in which social insurance in the Soviet Union is contrasted with the compensation for the Crane workers

maimed at the factory, is good and such material should be printed in every issue of the shop paper, taking specific issues as they arise and comparing them to similar issues in the Soviet Union.

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*The Armour Worker*, November, 1932—Armour Unit of the C. P., District 8.

While *The Armour Worker* carries a good deal of shop news in the form of correspondence from the workers, it fails to tell the workers how to combat their bad conditions. Taking up issues arising in the shop, the paper must tell the workers how to fight against these conditions, what forms of organization they should set up, how to take the first steps in building such organizations, etc. For instance the shop paper deals with a problem which embraces all the workers in the plant—the share-the-work system. It formulates the demand, but says nothing on how the workers should fight for this demand and defeat the program of the bosses.

Similarly, the united front organs of struggle, the building of the grievance committees and department committees, are not raised in this light. Particularly, because this is the second issue of the paper it is essential that these questions be dealt with thoroughly, at the same time bringing out the relation of the Party to these united front organs of struggle and to the revolutionary unions. Furthermore, although the A. F. of L. plays some role in the stockyards, not a single word on the A. F. of L. convention was written to prepare the workers for the decisions and actions at the present A. F. of L. Convention.

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*Stewart-Warner Worker*—District 8.

We have on hand two issues of the *Stewart-Warner Worker*—September and November. If this is the character of shop papers issued in this factory, then we cannot expect to gain the confidence of the Stewart-Warner workers for our Party and for the Steel and Metal Workers Industrial Union. While in appearance these issues are attractive, in content, not a single word can be found in both issues on the conditions in the plant.

Something should be done about this by the Chicago District Committee.



## New York Quadruples Literature Distribution

ONE thing the Communist Party did not inherit from the Socialist Party at the time of the split was the consciousness of the necessity of the spreading of literature to enlighten the workers as to exactly the position of the Party. The resistance of the average Party member to work on the distribution of literature, whether as an individual among his comrades or as a worker in the shop, or even in his unit territory is very great and is only beginning to be overcome. Literature has been considered in the Party as a sort of Jimmy Higgins work and something to be pushed on one individual comrade in a unit and let it go at that.

In the month of March, 18,792 pieces of literature were sold in the district. Since April there has been a conscious effort by the Party leadership, realizing the importance of literature as an organizer, to agitate the membership as a whole as to not only the necessity, but the importance of how well literature can draw workers into our ranks. We can lay the increase in the number of pieces of literature sold since April partly to the aroused consciousness and understanding among the Party members to its value.

For the months of May, June, July, August and September we averaged close to 45,000 pieces of literature sold per month while in the month of October the sales jumped to over 98,000 pieces. During the period of the election campaign there were 325,530 pieces of literature sold in the New York District of which 233,753 were election campaign pamphlets.

The significance of this distribution is not so much that we distributed almost a quarter of a million of election campaign pamphlets, but that for approximately every two of the penny pamphlets distributed there was one theoretical pamphlet also sold. In other words, with the increase of mass popular literature, came a corresponding increase in the so-called heavy, theoretical literature, showing that in order to distribute our propaganda and theoretical literature among the workers, we must do it also in co-ordination with mass popular agitational cheap pamphlets.

Because of the organizational work put in by the District Org. Department and also because of the force of the campaign, there was built in the district an apparatus for wide distribution of literature. Individual Party members in the units are somehow becoming accustomed to the idea of selling pamphlets to the workers. At the present time we have this conscious apparatus which we must continue to feed with popular literature. The consciousness carried over from the election campaign can be easily seen in the very quick distribution of the *Why We March* pamphlet in connection with the National Hunger March.

We still have very many major difficulties in the way of the proper growth of literature distribution in New York, among which are the following: 1) With the exception of Sections 2 and 5, there are no Section Literature Committees functioning. 2) In all sections there is no proper alignment of the Section Literature Department with the Section Org. and Agitprop Departments, thus causing a barrier between the Literature Department and the individual members, and unless this barrier, which is very stubborn in its resistance to being broken down, is eliminated, there will always be a check in the smooth flowing of literature from the district to the sections, to the unit membership and to the workers on the outside of the Party.

There is also a tendency in the sections shown by the attitude of the organizers in Sections 7, 8, 4 and 6, to give to the section literature director other work which makes it impossible to carry out both the work assigned to them and the section literature work, making both suffer. Another difficulty which stops the proper flow of literature is the improper approach of some of the sections to the question of linking up the literature with the campaigns as they occur. This, of course, can only be overcome with the help of the agitprop directors from the district down to the sections and into the units.

Another shortcoming in the District Literature Department is the fact that there is so much detail work to be done because of the improvement in the District Literature Department, that it is impossible for the District Literature Director to efficiently handle everything himself. This leads to the very many small errors and is also the cause of having very much work left undone, much of which is organizational and stops the growth of the District Literature Department and will have to be rectified in some manner or another.

Summing up conditions of the District Literature Department, we can truthfully say that the District Org. Department has given good co-operation in the building of the district literature apparatus and that great headway has been made in comparison to what the conditions were before May 1; but in comparison to the field that the Party has in this line, we have barely made a scratch on the surface, and we cannot sit back and say that we

have done a good job, but this should be the beginning of real organizational work throughout the sections and the units for a monthly total of no less than 100,000 pieces of literature for the next year or so.

Before October 1 there was a slackening on the part of the sections on the question of literature distribution in the campaign. Many of the comrades becoming weak and figuring that "Oh, well, it is only a few weeks, we will only get stuck with literature, so we ought to go easy", instead of making a more determined drive to finish up the campaign with an increased tempo. The District Literature Department itself instituted a contest from October 1 to November 9, the conditions being that those sections selling and paying for the most literature per member were to receive a set of Lenin's works. The results of this contest were many. First there was over 98,000 pieces of literature distributed in that period. Many units were drawn into unit work on the basis of this competition that heretofore had not done anything. Some of the sections that had been just lingering along, came to life. But this contest showed that in those sections in Brooklyn where the section committee had little, if anything, to do with the Section Literature Committee, that a very, very poor showing was made. Those Sections as 1, 5 and 15, in which the Section Committee really took this work seriously, a three and four fold gain was made.

Because of the closeness of the contest between Sections 5 and 15 and because of the good organizational work that was done, it was found to be advisable to give both sections a set of Lenin's works.

ROBERT FRANKLIN,  
District Literature Director, Dist. 2.

### Practical Suggestions

All handbills, circulars, and dodgers advertising our meetings of any sort, should carry a line or two giving the address where literature may be obtained.

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Also all literature sold must be rubber-stamped with the same address so workers may know where to get more of it.

\* \* \* \*

We agreed that our comrades should make persistent demands in all public library branches in our neighborhoods, and that when reading a book, they leave same conspicuously on the tables for other workers to see.

\* \* \* \*

Sections: Are you seeing to it that all American Federation of Labor and other meeting halls in your section are covered?

That one or two units are assigned to a particular hall, to be responsible for it, regularly?

\* \* \* \*

And by way of *check-up* in the unit—how about this suggestion: Once a month get an individual report, as to just how much, what kind of literature and how he sells and distributes it and where. This would take only some ten minute's time from the unit meeting, but would make up for the ten minutes by creating and stimulating the interest in literature, since thus the comrades could learn of new methods which they themselves can use to further their own sales and distribution.

\* \* \* \*

Units: Are you asking every comrade working in a shop what can be done there for the distribution and sale of our literature? Are you giving this shop worker our campaign and propaganda literature to sell there? Are you insisting that our comrades in mass organizations bring our literature to their various branches? Are you trying to get unemployed comrades to sell literature? Do you plan the sales for the street meetings? Have you set yourself a certain goal? These items are not new and not difficult to carry out. All it needs is a little *planned work*.

### Our Unemployed Comrades

OUR records show that over forty per cent of our Party members are unemployed. This means that they cannot provide themselves with the theoretical guidance our literature can give them, because of lack of money. Why should this be so? This is an extremely important point and units should give it careful thought. One unit in Section 1, District 2 uses the Literature Fund profits and, wherever feasible, a collection from the unit meeting, to pay for and give these unemployed comrades the latest literature. Another unit, and this should be done by each unit of the District, has a circulating library. This not only gives the unemployed comrades a chance to read all the literature, but will develop in all comrades the desire to read and study. This, of course, with the necessary little push on the part of the Agitprop. Again we repeat — just because a comrade is unemployed is no reason why he should not be able to read literature and it is a unit responsibility to make it possible for him to do so.

R. F.

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