

How the Districts Are Carrying Out the Decisions of the XI Plenum of the ECCL

THE various districts have for three months been carrying out their planned work in the light of the resolutions of the XI Plenum of ECCL. Now there is going on a review and summing up of this period. The recent Plenum of the District Committee of Dist. 8 (Chicago), approaching its tasks and shortcomings in the spirit of Bolshevik self-criticism, intolerant of all deviations and shortcomings, adopted the resolution printed herewith for the information of the entire Party, and as an example to other districts—not only to follow, but to excel.

Resolution on Three Months Plan of Work and Immediate Tasks.

Adopted by the Plenum of the District Committee, Dist. 8, C. P., July 19-20, 1931.

1. Despite certain successes of the Party in the last period such as:

- (a) Hunger marches in three states.
- (b) The May First campaigns and demonstrations in 26 cities, with larger response than previously.
- (c) The Scottsboro campaign with the involving of large numbers of new organizations (primarily in Chicago) and holding of many demonstrations.
- (d) Slight increase in Party membership and organizing of four shop nuclei.
- (e) Slight increase of membership in the trade unions in Chicago.

The activity of the district was not only lagging behind the development of the struggles of the workers, but in the carrying through of the Plan of Work since the last District Committee (May 15) there has been a decline in the tempo of the Party work in comparison with the activity in the first half of the Plan of Work.

2. The Plenum calls this sharply to the attention of the membership and gives directives to the District Bureau to mobilize all the Party forces to overcome this existing situation. The main reason for this slowing down of the tempo is the fact that the Party organization was too much involved in apparatus work at the cost of mass work, and the participation and organizing of mass struggles of the workers. This weakness (while dangerous in itself) becomes especially dangerous in this period of developing class struggles, strikes and unemployment.

3. In the Southern Illinois section the general weaknesses of the Party were accompanied by opportunist practices which in view of the importance of the tasks of the Party in this field, lead to especially bad results. While the District Bureau has made generally correct decisions on work in the mining field, some leading comrades in the field revealed underestimation of the readiness of the miners to struggle and the necessity of organizing and developing these struggles on the basis of local demands as well as the utilizing of the Pa.-Ohio, W. Va. strike as an example of the correct methods of strike strategy and the role of the N.M.U. This pessimistic attitude was combined with incorrect estimation of Edmonson and the opinion that it is premature to expose him openly before the masses of miners while they still are having confidence in him due primarily to his use of social demagoguery. This opportunism was also accompanied with ultra leftist mistakes in attempting to spread the Orient strike on the basis of general slogans (6 hour day, 5 day week) without formulating concrete local demands. As a result of these serious errors, linked with insufficient activities in the Orient strike, there was:

- (a) Failure to mobilize the Illinois miners to struggle and spread the Orient strike.
- (b) Decline of our influence in the Orient strike.
- (c) Dissolution of the four locals of the N. M. U.
- (d) Dissolution of five units of the Party.
- (e) General weakening of our position in the Illinois fields, reaching to such impermissible passivity as failure to utilize the majority vote at the Belleville Convention, favorable to the representative of the Pa.-Ohio strikers, organizing solidarity relief and complete collapse in sending of the delegates to the July 15th Pittsburgh Conference.

It is not sufficient that the district bureau had a general correct line, but it did not see that this line was executed in the fields, and did not immediately take steps to correct these mistakes and therefore shares in responsibility for this situation.

4. In the field of unemployment there has been certain definite success, especially with reference to the Hunger Marches. The Illinois Hunger March which found greater response out of Chicago expressed the readiness of the masses to respond and struggle to the call of the Communist Party. The Party did not succeed in utilizing and following the experiences of the Hunger Marches in other districts, particularly in preparing and organizing the marches and as a result we have not gained sufficient organizational results. In the city of Chicago there were certain successes on neighborhood scale—in Sections 1 and 4. But the Party failed to utilize to spread this movement beyond these territories, unifying it on a city and county scale.

In the other sections of the District there is an even more unsatisfactory situation in regards to unemployment activities, especially in Milwaukee, St. Louis and Section 5 in Chicago.

Where branches of Unemployed Councils have developed struggles around local demands (for immediate relief, against evictions, high rents, etc.) the branch has grown and thrived.

In Southern Illinois coal fields the Hunger March revealed mass support and in some cases support from locals of the U. M. W. of A. and enabled us to organize three branches of the unemployed. One of the hindrances for further development and the uniting of the struggles of the employed and unemployed is the non-understanding of the revolutionary role of unemployed, and even the opinion (Frankfeld) that the unemployed miners in Saline County are declassed and lumpen proletariat elements.

5. The small organizational gains by the TUUL were not in the basic industries. There were no gains in large factories in basic industries and there is no proper concentration on large factories. The fractions in the leagues and unions of the TUUL are not mobilized for mass work and trade union work is not put to the forefront in the Party and many members eligible for membership in the unions are not members or only formally. There are elements of passivity on the part of the Party membership in the trade union field. Non-Party workers are not drawn into the leadership and work in the unions. The whole work of the TUUL yet is not put on the basis of organizing workers in the factories for struggles on the basis of local grievances as means of organizing and

developing mass campaigns and struggles in which the leagues and unions of the TUUL can be built into mass organizations. One of the obstacles in the work of the TUUL is that our leagues and unions do not have trade union character in their approach to the workers. The TUUL is more narrow than the Party.

6. Although the last plenum of the District placed the central task as the concentration in the factories with all our campaigns, and particularly in trade union work the organizing of grievance committees in the factories on the

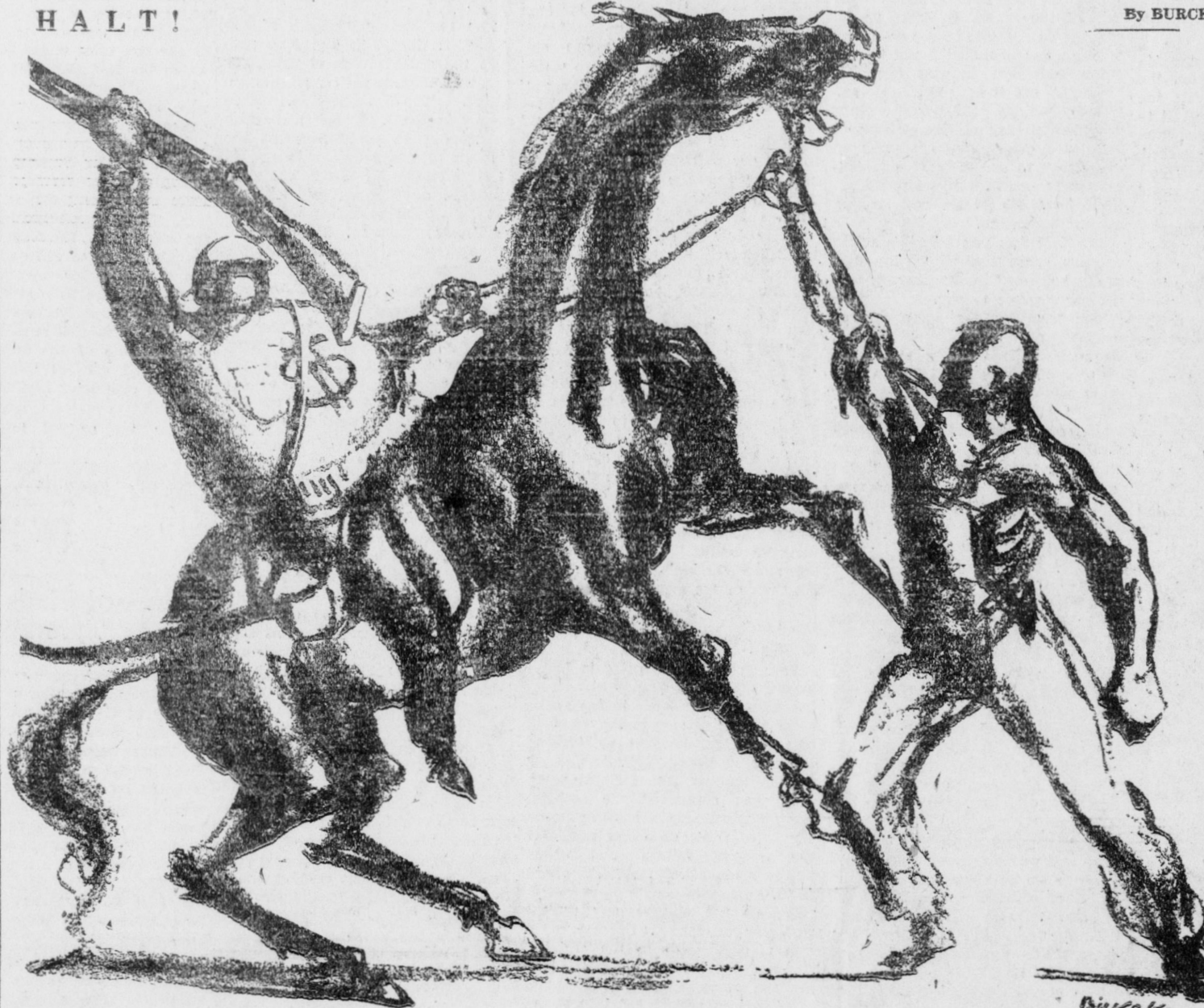
guage field by the respective buros and not limiting ourselves to the organizations already sympathetic and to utilize these organizations to build grievance committees in the shops, the Party, TUUL and U. C.

10. In struggle against social fascism and fascism we cannot record progress and without this struggle there can be no development of mass movement under the Party leadership. There is an underestimation of the concrete struggles against social fascism and fascism. It manifested itself in not carrying the struggle

purpose of strengthening the leadership in Southern Illinois section and send additional forces for work, paying specific attention, guiding the Section Committee, developing the mass relief campaign for the Pa., Ohio Strike. In the development of this movement the Party is to be built and strengthened to become the leader in this movement, as without the Party a successful movement and the struggles can not be developed.

B. The second point of concentration is to be the metal industry, especially in the Calu-

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basis of struggles for partial demands and simultaneously the organizing of shop units. In the three months period only 4 shop nuclei were organized (Section 2, Chicago, 1 stockyards, 1 dairy; St. Louis, 1 railroad, 1 needle). The existing shop units did not recruit any members. No grievance committees were organized and the existing groups in the large factories did not enlarge in members and did not develop activities among the factory workers. This revealed lack of activity on the part of the Party in the shops and impermissible underestimation of trade union and shop work. The examination by the District Bureau of the work of the sections in carrying out the three months plan of work shows that the section leadership is not aware of the importance of shop nuclei.

7. Work among the Negro masses has been to a certain extent successful in connection with the Scottsboro campaign. The response of the membership in Chicago Party for securing many new organizations, particularly Negro, to the United Front Conference and through this meeting, joint demonstrations, as well as the establishment, although not stabilized, of seven new branches of the LSNR in Chicago. The main weaknesses in the campaign were:

- (a) Failure to actively involve the United Front conference and affiliated organizations in work and activity.
- (b) Insufficient organizational consolidation of mass response into block committees and drawing in new white working class organizations and workers in defense of Negro rights and increase of permanent circulation of the Liberator.
- (c) Limiting the campaign primarily to slogans for the release of the Scottsboro boys without the Party bringing forward its own slogans that were formulated with the Scottsboro case.
- (d) No substantial recruiting for the Party.

8. There is underestimation of the importance of the YCL by the Party, especially in the sections and lower units. The YCL is isolated from the young workers with no initiation or organization of the struggles. Especially is there lack of youthful character of the YCL and the failure to develop specific youth features on the Party campaigns or issue youth demands of economic and political character to rouse working class youth. The positive achievements of the YCL in this period was National Youth Day in Milwaukee, and which the Party helped with the exception of Milwaukee. The composition of the YCL is not reflecting the composition of the working class and up to the District Convention in the leadership of the YCL were pessimistic and opportunistic elements (Sotir, Andras, etc.) who developed factionalism among the YCL members against the League and the Party.

The Party did not give sufficient political and organizational guidance to the League in the past, without which the League will not be able to overcome its weaknesses.

9. Some slight progress is made in the language field, particularly important being the recent conference of the Polish Workers. By successfully destroying the right wingers (Strazda, Pruseika) in the Lithuanian field, we still find the crassest examples of opportunism in the language field. There is the failure to understand the necessity to penetrate into the greater number of organizations in each lan-

guage field by the respective buros and not limiting ourselves to the organizations already sympathetic and to utilize these organizations to build grievance committees in the shops, the Party, TUUL and U. C.

11. The weaknesses of the Party in the sphere of mass activities show that the inner Party life is insufficient and weak. The approach to inner Party work has been too much of an apparatus approach instead of full understanding that the improvements of the inner life and work of the Party must necessarily find its reflection in the organizing and developing and leading of mass struggles. The resolution of the last plenum of the District Committee already placed this question sharply before the Party:

"We must be aware and smash any tendency which thinks that first we must improve the inner life of the Party and then we will do mass work. The basis of improving the inner Party organization is definitely connected with the developing and leading of mass struggles, and cannot be separated."

But these directives are not yet carried out.

12. "Only by self-critical examination of our work, separating the good from the bad, effective from the non-effective, learning from the masses and measuring our work by response of the masses, strengthening those policies, methods of work and tactics, which entrench us deeper among the masses and build up our organizations, combating and eliminating all those factors which hold us back and separate us from the masses which weakens our organizations. Self criticism is that particular method of work by which we improve all our methods of work; it is that policy by which we check up on all our policies."

Starting with the district Plenum, self criticism must be applied to all Party organizations and correct improving of our work, eliminating all elements of opportunism, indifference, inactivity. The Party must have faith in the masses for struggle.

The District Plenum outlines the tasks for the immediate future as follows:

A. Concentration on Southern Illinois as the Central task of the Party in District 8 to organize struggles, developing mass movement, building the National Miners' Union and rank and file committees of action—developing the work inside the UMW of A.

With 50 per cent of the miners unemployed, the unemployed struggle must receive particular attention as one of the means of guaranteeing the successful development of the struggle on the part of the unemployed miners—that is a guarantee of the unity of action between the unemployed and employed.

To carry these tasks the struggle against Edmonson and all the other social fascists must be put into the forefront exposing concretely as the agents of the UMW of A machine, the coal operators and their government. The District Bureau to take organizational steps for the

met section, concentrating on selected factories where we already have some contacts and groups—establishing shop units and factory branches of the Metal Workers Industrial League grievance committees to take up the immediate grievances of the workers on the basis of immediate demands to organize mass movements and struggles.

C. In the railroad industry we shall concentrate on St. Louis, Milwaukee, Indianapolis and Chicago, especially utilizing the preparations for the National Railroad United Front Conference on August 15-16th to establish groups of railroad workers and to develop the campaign among the railroad workers on the basis of their demands and grievances, building the Railroad Workers Industrial League.

D. In the city of Chicago the main points of concentration in addition to metal, must be the Stockyards where we have already established a shop unit.

Having these points of concentration, drastic measures and personal attention must be given on the part of the leading comrades to the organization of shop nuclei, the proper distribution of Party forces and definite assignments to trade union work has to be checked up by the Party.

Development of new forces on all committees and generally in the departments of various committees. To each shop unit a leading comrade is to be drawn in work, even at the expense of some other activity. The responsibility for this lies with the Section and the District Buros. The same thing must be done by the Leagues and unions of the TUUL by assigning Party and non-Party members to factory work, specializing in it.

E. The Pa.-Ohio strike to be popularized among the broadest masses of workers, reaching the locals of the AFL and others and influence them by means of organizing mass relief for the strikers. This work must be undertaken in every section and in every city, not confined only to the cities where we have already Party organizations.

F. In the field of the unemployed the immediate tasks are to organize neighborhood, city and county conferences on unemployment which is to unite the unemployed and employed workers and organizations and utilize them to organize County and City Hunger Marches in struggle for unemployed relief and for social insurance. In Illinois organize a mass endorsement by workers and organizations for the social insurance bill and the demands presented to the State Legislature to be undertaken. All these campaigns must be developed around the concrete issues and demands and gain organizational results.

G. The fractions inside of the local unions of the A. F. of L. and the leagues and unions of the TUUL, U. C., I. L. D., I. W. O., F. S. U., the language organizations and other organizations must be put on a functioning basis, and work to be developed inside of these organizations raising the slogans, demands and program of the Party to mobilizing the workers of these organizations for the Party campaigns. In all mass organizations the drawing in of non-Party workers into the leadership must be considered, an immediate task. The fractions inside of the mass organizations must always consider that recruiting to the Party is one of their main duties and tasks.

H. The building of the YCL and recruiting of young workers must be considered as one of the tasks of the Party. Especially must we undertake this task of building the units of the League in the cities and factories where there is a Party organization and where there is no League organization. (At the present the Party has organization in 37 cities and the League only in 8.) The Party must give full political guidance to the League on the district, section and unit scale. One of the immediate tasks of the Party is to mobilize the young workers for International Youth Day, September 8th. Special attention must be paid by the fractions inside of the trade unions to develop the youth sections and winning the young workers for our unions.

I. We must organize the activities inside the locals of the A. F. of L., especially in Chicago and Milwaukee and undertake campaigns against social fascists, S. P. and Musteltes, with particular attention to the Illinois coal fields, Wisconsin and the Chicago Federation of Labor. On the basis of issues in the Trade and industry in each union, and through such issues as the Pa.-Ohio strike and the call for solidarity developing a broad movement, united front from below, inside the A. F. of L. union, with the objective of bringing this movement under the leadership of the TUUL. The TUUL must particularly organize a sharp struggle against the American Federation of Labor, which still has influence among a certain strata of the working class.

J. The Party must organize its agitation more thoroughly and must speak to the masses daily on the general developments as well as specific manifestations in each given situation. It is not enough to issue leaflets for campaigns, but also on political events. The Party as such must issue leaflets to the masses of workers who are particularly close to us explaining each new development. The special Chicago page of the Daily Worker can also be a factor in this, and the sections and units and workers, generally, must be better organized to participate in the preparations of this page.

The Party must organize its work to insure a mass sale and distribution of the Daily Worker. In this general political activity, we must place the struggle against the war danger in the forefront, and not merely limit it to a campaign such as August First, and the struggle against imperialist war must be linked up concretely with and the masses be made to see the link in connection between the preparations for war and the attacks on their living conditions, and the attacks of a general political character against the working class. One of the greatest expression of opportunism is the under estimation of the war danger and this must be combated. We must also record the work on the part of the Friends of the Soviet Union in not involving broader masses and being built up into the broadest type of mass organizations.

The whole Agit-Prop work must correspond to the tasks and concentration points of the Party and to be felt in all Party campaigns and struggles and help to develop these from the agitational and propaganda angle. The work of the Agit-Prop and propaganda must extend to the mass organizations and to the shops. The issuing of shop papers and leaflets must be given special attention and guidance and systematic holding of shop and street meetings. To help carry on this mass agitation work, it is necessary to issue regularly and as the situation demands, special outlines for speakers. In the Party a system of educational work to be developed through discussion on the tasks of the Party and the establishment of study groups.

K. In the struggle for Negro rights, we must raise much more to the forefront among the broadest masses of workers the slogan for the rights of Negroes and the general slogans of the Party. Utilizing the Scottsboro campaign we must organize local struggles for Negro rights to build the LSNR Block Committees and the mass distribution of the Liberator and developing the campaigns by the TUUL, U. C., I. L. D., F. S. U., I. W. O., etc. to recruit Negro workers and bring them into the leadership in these organizations. Likewise the recruitment of Negro workers into the Party must be given special attention and the bringing of Negro comrades into active leadership in the units, sections and district.

L. Among the weaknesses of the District, there is one that is outstanding—that is the absolute lack of work among the women. Whatever work has been carried on has been only among housewives. The main emphasis must be placed upon reaching the working women in the factories, and the Plenum places sharply the question that work among women is a problem for the mass organizations, particularly for the trade unions, and gives them the task of carrying this through. The Women's department of the District Committee must undertake the organizing of this work on a broad and effective scale. The immediate task in this respect is the organization of Women's auxiliaries in the coal fields and the stockyards in Chicago, organizing delegates women meetings, etc.

M. The greatest importance has to be placed on the work in the language field and among the mass language organizations, and the orientation of the attacks of the State against the foreign born workers, to reach new strata of workers still isolated from us on the issue of the attacks on the foreign born, and in this way win them away from the clerical, fascist and social fascist forces. The main task in the language field must be the penetration into the broad masses of language speaking workers in each field—breaking down sectarianism, which is existing at the present time and reach masses of workers with our slogans, demands and organizations. While not limiting the organizing of the IWO only to foreign born workers, the building of the IWO must penetrate much more rapidly into all language speaking organizations, clubs and masses. This can be utilized as an effective supporting weapon in the development of mass struggles in the building of the revolutionary unions.

Party must give special and particular attention to reaching and winning the Polish, Italian and German workers with particular attention to organizing Mexican workers, a field which is completely neglected at the present time.

N. In connection with the workers' delegation for the November Celebration in the USSR we must immediately orientate and lay down the necessary preparations to select a proper delegation of workers from the heavy industries, Negroes, farmers and women. In selecting the delegates we must have the objective in view of selecting such workers who have mass contact in mass organizations and with masses generally and not confining as was the practice in the