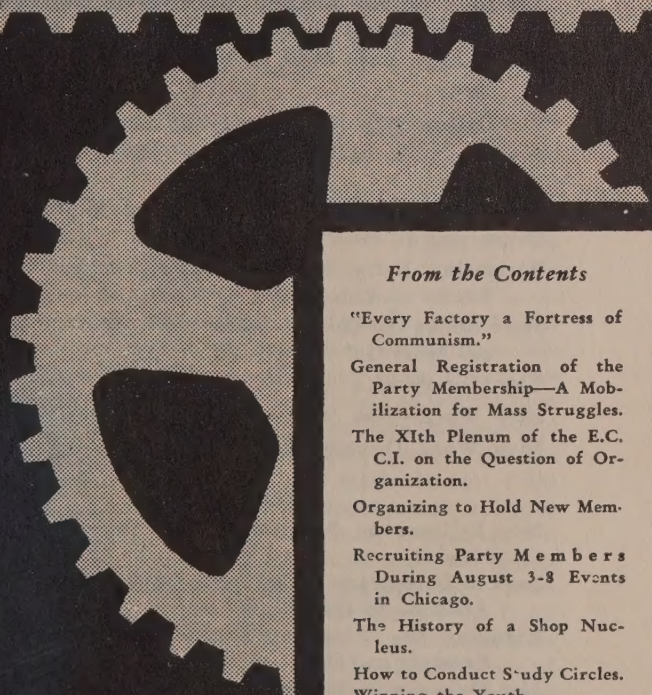


Party Organizer



From the Contents

"Every Factory a Fortress of Communism."

General Registration of the Party Membership—A Mobilization for Mass Struggles.

The XIth Plenum of the E.C. C.I. on the Question of Organization.

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Recruiting Party Members During August 3-8 Events in Chicago.

The History of a Shop Nucleus.

How to Conduct Study Circles. Winning the Youth.

Vol. IV

SEPTEMBER-OCTOBER, 1931

No. 8-9

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PARTY ORGANIZER

Vol. IV.

September-October, 1931

No. 8-9

"Every Factory a Fortress of Communism"

I

What Were the Decisions of the 13th Plenum

THE slogan "Every factory a fortress of Communism" characterized the political line and the decisions that were made at the 13th Plenum of our Central Committee at the end of August. The importance of this Plenum for the whole Party and beyond it for the American working class lies in the clear recognition of our Party center of the necessity of concentrating the whole work of the Party on the line of firmly rooting itself in the most important industries and large factories of the country. The Party center is conscious of the fact that the main task of the Party is to win the most important sections of the working class (the miners, steel and metal workers, railroad and transport workers, automobile, textile and chemical workers) to the leadership of the Party on the basis of mobilizing them for economic struggles, linking these struggles with political actions, in order to win the majority of the American working class under our leadership. This is the strategic line which was laid down by the 13th Plenum in conformity with the decisions of the Comintern. It is a conscious continuation of the policy which the Party has been pursuing, especially since its 12th Plenum, of mobilizing the workers by means of partial demands, and through the economic struggles, to win the workers for Communism.

This line at the same time furnishes the only possibility of putting the working class, and especially its most decisive section working in the war industries, into motion against the policies of the capitalists, of their agents, and against the capitalist government, and thus to carry on an active struggle against the imperialist war danger and for the defense of the Soviet Union.

Successes and Weaknesses of the Party

During the last several months, which includes the period between the 12th and 13th Plenum, the Party has achieved a number of successes in mobilizing and winning certain masses of workers in the country. The Party set into motion large masses of unemployed, it led a number of economic struggles, the most important of which was the big struggle of the 40,000 miners, which greatly raised the prestige and the authority of our Party and of the revolutionary union. It carried through a wide protest movement around the Scottsboro case and aroused wide masses of Negroes into action. The mass influence of our Party is large, but one of the main weaknesses of the Party is that we have not understood how to organize this mass influence. Another weakness lies in the fact that we have not sufficiently concentrated our work on the most decisive territories in order to thus build up for ourselves strategic points of power for the further struggle. Our work was not planful and concentrated enough. The strategic line of policy, of securing a foothold among the industrial workers of heavy industry which would enable us to beat back the enemy step by step has not been systematically carried into effect.

Here a turn must absolutely be made. We must be conscious that we cannot be satisfied with the successes we have thus far had. We must not any longer measure with the yardstick of the past but must bring our work up to the level of the big tasks which stand before us in order to really be the decisive revolutionary factor in the coming big class battles. The sharpening of the class contradictions, the growing struggles of the workers and the growing imperialist war danger demand special efforts from the Party membership, especially when we consider the leading role of American capitalism in capitalist world politics.

II

What Do the Statistical Facts About Our Party Organization Show

A. The organizational basis of the Party is not in the shops. The statistical facts submitted by the districts in the recent period show that the street nucleus, that is the residential unit,

is the basic organizational unit of our Party. Excluding the recent growth in the Pittsburgh district, we have about 652 street nuclei and Party groups, but only 75 shop nuclei and these few shop nuclei comprise only 4% of our total membership. This proves that these few shop nuclei are extremely weak and that all our leading committees have done very little to root the Party in the shops. We have a large number of giant factories in which there are no shop nuclei, though Party members and a large number of sympathizing workers are engaged there. These figures also show that the successes we have had in mass mobilization were mainly based on our agitational work by means of effective utilization of the great spontaneity and activity of the American working class. It shows that we have done comparatively little in preparing and organizing the struggles and that lacking or failing to build organization in the course of the struggle has excluded us from maintaining many of the gains we have made.

B. The social composition of our membership is not good because we are not rooted in the big factories. The insufficient Bolshevik organizational policy and practise of the Party is reflected in the social composition of the membership. If we check up even our most important Party organizations we find that we have mainly only workers of the lesser important industries who are subject to strong petty bourgeois influences. In addition we have often only the workers of small shops in the Party. This expresses itself in the New York district, where we do not have the workers of the large metal plants, the harbor and transportation workers, the workers on the subways, street cars and elevateds. It shows itself in the Pittsburgh district, where we had only a weak base among the miners until recently, but where we have very few steel workers. Our Pittsburgh city organization consists mostly of unemployed members. We have had only five steel workers in our Party organization in Pittsburgh. We can review the other districts and generally find the same picture. This situation calls for a radical turn. The situation is extremely favorable for the Party. *A wage-cutting offensive on the steel, mining, textile, rubber, automobile and other workers is under way. The workers are resisting and searching for leadership.* The Party and our revolutionary unions must utilize the discontent among these strata of workers to prepare the struggles

in these industries, to work out concrete demands, to mobilize and lead these masses of workers into struggle against the exploiters. In the big mine strike we were able to organize many thousands of miners into the revolutionary miners' union and to draw about 1,000 miners into the Party in the Pittsburgh district. We must maintain these gains and we must organizationally penetrate into the workers of other important industrial groups and organize them for the Party and for the revolutionary unions. We must on the basis of planned mobilization and by means of the formation of unemployed committees win the most militant unemployed workers for the Party and for our revolutionary unions.

C. The weakness of our leading committees, the great dearth of active Party cadres. It is clear that it is very difficult to get the necessary cadres for the mobilization of the Party masses and for the mobilization and organization of workers in heavy industries and the large factories, if the social composition of our membership is not changed. The strengthening of our social composition would enhance the results of our mass work many-fold. How can we build active leading committees and a good Party cadre in such an important district of heavy industry as Pittsburgh if we do not undertake at once to change the social composition of our Party membership especially in the headquarters city in the district, Pittsburgh itself. The resolution adopted at the New York District Plenum states that "there exists a far-reaching bureaucratization of the Party apparatus." This is manifested especially in the Paterson silk-workers strike. A similar resolution was adopted at the beginning of August by the Chicago Party organization which stated that our Party apparatus showed complete failure in the mobilization of the miners in Illinois and in the struggle against social fascism. These are serious warning signals. To this is added the further fact, that in consequence of the extremely big dearth of cadres we are very often not able to build up the leading committees and their departments and that we have not enough leading forces in our lower Party committees and nuclei. The consequence of this is not only bureaucracy, passivity in mass work of a considerable section of the membership, but also a strong fluctuation within the mass of our members. In the Party as a whole we have a fluctuation of over 77%. During the first

half of this year more than 4,000 workers paid initiation dues to the Party. According to the dues-accounting of the individual districts, only 900 members, however, were really retained in the Party. The other 3,000 newly-won members were lost.

IV

What Is to Be Done?

This question is unequivocally answered by the 13th plenum of the Party. The Plenum put before the Party the task of organizing the most important strata of the workers of the war and heavy industries, of setting them into motion for their economic demands, to fight against wage-cuts and speed-up and to thus mobilize them for political actions; to set into motion the million-fold masses of unemployed in the struggle for immediate relief and unemployment insurance and to provide an organizational basis for this struggle. At the present time we have in the entire Party only about 173 unemployed committees in 85 cities. The Plenum called for the unity of the employed and unemployed in a common fight against wage-cuts and part-time employment, for unemployment insurance and for relief against hunger and starvation. In this systematic mass mobilization we must defend the interests of the most oppressed strata—the Negroes, the women workers and the young workers—in order to attract them to our Party and to the revolutionary unions.

The Party center therefore decided to carry on in connection with the preparation of these economic mass struggles the most intense recruiting to build the Party in preparation and as a whole part of the mass struggles. The Party Central Committee has decided upon a systematic recruiting of workers from the large factories for the Party and for the revolutionary unions. We must, therefore, during the next four months aim to double our membership by the winning of these workers. This is entirely possible with the big mass influence of our Party and the favorable situation. This work must be commenced already in connection with the mining and steel campaigns and must be carried out on the basis of concentration upon the most important industries and districts. Only then will we have the possibility of improving the composition of our Party, of building up the organizational con-

nections with the important strata of workers, to make organizational advances in the most important industries and large-scale factories, to build up active shop nuclei and trade union groups, to rejuvenate the old cadres with these new proletarian elements, by drawing these workers into our leading committees and into the Party apparatus, to improve our old cadres and to resolutely replace those who show themselves unable to organize and lead in the mass struggles. On the basis of the mass struggles, we must root ourselves in the factories and thus raise the political activity of the Party, and strengthen the drawing power of the Party among the broad masses of the workers.

Thus the 13th Plenum of the Party decided to raise the entire level of organizational work, to activate the membership and Party units in the mass work on the basis of the factories and towards this end to *carry through a Party registration and control*, to carry on a concentrated fire against the formal and bureaucratic methods of work which stand in the way of mass development and to change our methods of work to correspond with the possibilities of the organization of huge masses of workers and successfully solve the big tasks ahead of us.

RECRUIT MEMBERS FROM THE BIG FACTORIES

in the

November 7th Campaign!

BUILD SHOP NUCLEI!

General Registration of the Party Membership

A Mobilization for Mass Struggle

October 12 — November 16

THE 13th Plenum of the Central Committee issued the directive to the entire Party to organize the broadest masses of workers particularly in the basic industries (steel, coal, marine, transportation, chemical, etc.) and in the big factories for resistance to the hunger offensive of the capitalist class and its government.

To make the turn for the fulfillment of this task, the first beginnings of which have been carried through in the recent period, it is necessary in the ranks of the Party to carry through a general mobilization of the membership. Our Party is faced with the task of giving leadership to the working class. It is therefore necessary to know to what degree our Party members are active in preparing, organizing and leading the struggles of the workers in the shops, in the mines and in the countryside. For the carrying through of the political tasks of the Party it is not enough to place these tasks before the membership. It is necessary to know our strength and weaknesses, *to organize our forces* for the realization of the tasks, to strengthen the leading Party cadres, to establish firm contacts with the workers in the factories and the unemployed, above all to recruit members for the Party among the workers in the shops. That is why the Central Committee has now decided upon a general registration of the Party membership. It is self-evident that we can best prepare and lead the strike struggles of the workers against wage-cuts and speed-up, against the sharpening offensive which is now under way, if our comrades are organized in factory nuclei so that they can concretely unite the masses for revolutionary mass work.

Today the Party stands in the midst of mass struggles, but the Party membership too largely confine their activities (not to the factories, to the unemployed councils, to the trade unions), but to the agitation and routine work of the street

nuclei. Through the registration, all leading organs of the Party and the entire Party membership must be impelled to concentrate their energy and attention to the organization of shop work, particularly in the big factories.

The recent big struggles in which the Party scored a number of successes (miners' and textile strikes, the hunger marches, etc.), all lead to the same conclusion: the Party does not have sufficient strength and utilize the possibilities in the factories, in the trade unions, in the language and other mass organizations in order to organize the masses to the utmost, in order to wrest the masses from the influence of the bourgeoisie and social fascists by means of active and functioning factory nuclei and Party fractions. The crassest example is in the unemployed movement. Many comrades are unemployed, probably more than 25 per cent of our membership, yet we have very few well organized unemployed councils. On the other hand the strike of the miners, the mobilization for strikes which is going on among the steel workers, show that we have at the present time tremendous possibilities for overcoming our weak position in the factories, trade union organizations and unemployed. The broad masses of workers are everywhere showing the greatest sympathy for the Party and revolutionary trade union movement. But this is not widely realized nor utilized by all Party comrades, nor all the leading organs of the Party.

Have we not won in the mine strike many thousands of workers for the revolutionary unions, and are we not at this moment witnessing a rising tide among the steel workers, which is moving in our direction so that it is possible to organize thousands of workers into a revolutionary union of steel workers? Have we not won over 1,000 members in the Pittsburgh areas for the Party and established 60 new mine nuclei?

The Party is on the march. But we must more *planfully organize our forces*. We must strengthen our position in the factories and mass organizations if we are to utilize the possibilities for tearing loose the working class from the bourgeoisie and their agents, win them for Communism.

How Shall the Party Registration Be Carried Through

The Party membership registration must be prepared po-

litically and organizationally. *It must not be a mere technical procedure, a mere filling out of a questionnaire.* In order to effectively carry through the registration in the shortest possible time and with the utmost smoothness, it is necessary that the District and Section Committees hold functionaries meetings at which the political significance of the registration be explained on the basis of concrete example from the life and situation of our Party organizations. It is necessary that the registration be combined with the task of mass work, of the fight against wage-cuts and speed-up, with the struggle for the organization of the workers into revolutionary unions and the building of oppositions in the reactionary unions, with the task of mobilizing the unemployed masses, of organizing the most oppressed sections—Negro, working women and youth—in a struggle against the hunger offensive of the capitalists.

The questionnaire which every member is to fill out contains many questions, but all Party comrades must realize that this information is vital, if we are to know the activities and situation of the Party units and members. The responsibility for the proper fulfillment of the registration, assistance to the Party comrades in understanding and filling out the material, rests upon the leaders of the units, who must be guided by the section and district committees.

Special meetings of the Party units, for which special letters must be sent out, must be held for the registration. If special meetings are to be called, at which the registration *in connection with the main tasks* is taken up, the political significance of the registration as a mobilization of the membership for mass work, will be lost and the effectiveness of the registration lessened. For members who do not attend these special meetings an extra effort must be made by the Party units to register them, either by setting aside a further date at which comrades can register or by the establishment of special committees of the unit that will visit these comrades at their homes, have them register and determine their reasons for non-attendance in the unit meetings. Thus the registration will be a means of activizing passive members of the Party.

The registration will require intense efforts on the part of all leading organs, but this will bring results in the intensification of the mass work and in the strengthening of the inner organization of the Party.

The XIth Plenum of the E.C.C.I. on the Question of Organization

From the Main Report of Comrade Manuilsky

FINALLY, the fourth form of backwardness is the organizational lagging behind of the Communist Parties compared with their political influence. This is an old and deeply rooted ailment of the Sections of the E.C.C.I. and it is hard to deal with, in spite of the enormous number of decisions on this question.

The Comintern has succeeded in liquidating the relics of social democracy in the political sphere, but it has not been able to liquidate it in the organizational sphere. This contradiction between "politics" and "organization" is explained by the transition period through which capitalist society is passing from the bourgeois dictatorship in the form of democracy to the bourgeois dictatorship in the form of fascism.

At the present time, they drag in and wish to preserve in the Communist Parties the organization forms of a hostile class. What can the proletariat put up in opposition to the power of finance capital with its trusts, its cartels and its fighting fascist gangs? Only organization in the factories. The struggle for the factories will be the most dramatic page in the history of the struggle between Communism on the one hand and the bourgeois dictatorship with its parties of fascism and social democracy, on the other. The further sharpening of the class struggle, the imminent threat of imperialist war and military intervention against the U.S.S.R. raise and will continue to raise before the Communist Parties the question of the best organizational form which can guarantee both successful defense and also the victorious attack of the working class. *The best and most flexible form is the reorganization of the C.P.s on the basis of the factories.* The difficulties in the way are very great. The fact that in view of unemployment, only 25-30% of the members of the C.P.s remain in the factories is a difficulty of no small importance. But this Plenum must declare war on organizational opportunism just as mercilessly as the C.P.s have frequently carried on war against political opportunism.

From the Remarks of Comrade Piatnitsky

What should be done to reduce fluctuations of membership?

1. Improve the work of the nuclei, district committees, city committees and provincial committees.

2. Set practical work for the new members.

3. Form circles and short courses for the new members.

4. Instruct the C.C.s of the C.P.s to study the causes of fluctuations and to remove all causes which make it impossible for Party members to remain in it.

5. Reconstruct the system of statistics of Party members in such a way that it will be seen how many members are in the Party, how many pay membership dues, and chiefly, *how many have been drawn into active Party work*. The greater the proportion drawn into Party work, the smaller will be the proportion of those who leave the Communist Party. We can and must keep such statistics.

The general conclusions from all that I have said today are as follows:

(a) The bad work of the Party organizations increases fluctuation and prevents us from bringing in the militant revolutionary workers.

(b) The absence of a great change in the matter of transferring the center of activity of Party and trade union work to the factories does not really make it possible for the C. P.s, the red trade unions and the trade union opposition to fight against the influence of the social democrats and reformists in the factories, to enlarge their membership by an inflow of workers from the factories to know the feelings of the workers, to organize the struggle against the attack of the capitalists. When the active elements of the C.P., the red trade unions and the trade union opposition are removed by the bourgeoisie during the time of war, the only possibility for successful work in the industrial centers, in the factories, will be on condition that there are well functioning nuclei (the revolutionary delegates in Berlin during the world war of 1914-18 carried on a tremendous amount of work, and they showed how necessary it is to have revolutionary organizations in the factories.)

(c) The absence of strong and energetic committees and councils of the unemployed and of systematic work among them—abstract slogans and abstract agitation among the un-

employed, the prevalence of demonstrations while other forms and methods of concrete work are not adopted—does not make it possible to organize the broad masses of workers for the struggle, to recruit them into the red trade unions, the trade union opposition and other mass organizations and into the Party.

(d) In view of the weakening of the work in the reformist and other trade union organizations, the absence of the systematic publication of factory papers and the wide distribution of the Party press which, unfortunately, does not increase but decreases, we have not been able organizationally to seize on the growing political influence of the Party among the masses.

Unemployed Work Must Be Built On a Broad United Front

THE question arises with the relation of the unemployed committees with the unions. Can we say that our unions exercise too much leadership in the work of the unemployed? We can not. However, we raise the question that the unemployed *branches must be organized on the broadest united front basis and not merely by affiliating themselves formally to the T.U.U.L. unions.* That does not mean that the T.U.U.L. any more than the Party will not have the task of leading these unemployed organizations—not through formal affiliation but by convincing every worker who does not yet believe in the T.U.U.L. nor want to belong to a red union, members of the A. F. of L. unions, every unorganized worker, workers who belong to the Catholic church, convincing them that this unemployed organization is a broad united front body in which every worker, irrespective of his political party, irrespective of his union or nationality, has a place, that this organization will fight and defend his interests. In this way it will be possible to broaden out considerably the work of our organization.

From the Report of Comrade Stachel at the 13th Plenum.

From the Practical Work For the Practical Work

In this Section of the PARTY ORGANIZER the comrades of the shop nuclei, fractions and street nuclei speak. Send in your experiences in all fields of Party work to the PARTY ORGANIZER, P. O. Box 87, Station D, New York City.

Rooting the Party in the Shops

Organizing to Hold New Members

IN THE strike of the coal miners, the Party in the Pittsburgh District gained 1,000 new members. A new Party exists in the Pittsburgh District, and therefore the training of new members and the consolidation of the Party organization is of first importance. The big task consists in holding the new members that have been won for the Party. There are 90 units now in the Pittsburgh District, most of them new, and most of them shop nuclei with at least 75% of the membership having joined the Party in the last three months.

The establishment of Section Committees as the leader of all phases of the work in the Section must now come forward. The role of the Section Committee as the leader of all campaigns and in the coordination of all the work is not yet fully understood by the Party membership. Section committees have to be strengthened by putting on the strongest elements as members by having all organizers—youth, union, defense, etc., work through the Party Section Committees when in the field.

The Section Committees are responsible for the political and organizational leadership of the work in the Section and are responsible for the building of the fractions and the guidance and functioning of the units.

To train the new membership, new methods are required.

(1). Long letters to units must be entirely eliminated.

Regularly weekly directions are sent to the Section Committees instructing them on the current campaigns and the handling of the units. Communications from the District to the unit will be sent at longer intervals. These letters will be one-page letters giving brief and simple directions covering one or two important points.

(2) Agit-prop work in the units has been organized on the basis of establishing in each Section a weekly "class" at which all unit functionaries and Section Committee members are to attend. The subject of these "classes" is based on the campaigns of the Party and each unit functionary is supplied with an outline of the discussion which he takes back to his next unit meeting and conducts a similar discussion in the unit meeting. The first three discussions will be on the election campaign.

(3) All meetings of the Section Committees are being attended by members of the District Bureau.

(4) The Org. Department will pick out the most important shop and mine nuclei in each Section, and give direct guidance to these key units from the District. The other units will be guided by the District Bureau through the Section Committees. The Section "classes" are in reality section functionaries' conferences held weekly, which make a closer connection between the District Bureau and the units, and raise the ideological level of the Party membership, as well as taking up the important organizational problems with the units.

5. The District School which has just begun, and which will run one month full time, with 25 students, will train Section Committee members, Section Organizers of the union and Party, Unit Organizers, etc. Too many times, the question of training new forces is put in a general way. These new forces as well as many others must be further developed through the method of collective leadership, that is, Section Committees and District Committees must consciously draw in to their committees, the most promising new elements and assign them concrete tasks which are simple enough for the new members to perform, for example, the collection of data for shop-papers, making of signs for demonstrations, the sale of pamphlets, etc.

6. Just as the Org. letters as previously sent out must be

discontinued, so the methods of agit-prop work must be changed. Long agit-prop outlines are useless in District Five. Agit-prop discussions must be very simple and based on the practical tasks of the District.

7. The organizational work of the District will of course have to be closely connected with the mass work. The important campaigns: (a) the struggle for the demands of the miners and the building of the N.M.U.; (b) the steel campaign; (c) the defense campaign; (d) the election campaign; (e) the children's campaign, etc., must carry with them organizational consolidation, for example, election campaign—setting up of election campaign committees; unemployment campaign—setting up of unemployed councils and Party fractions them, and developing of functioning mine units.

8. The recruiting drive of the Party has to date continued successfully. However, not enough of the miners who went back to work during the strike have been recruited into the Party, and not a large enough proportion of women and Negroes—and the emphasis in the recruiting campaign must be shifted to these elements.

9. The consolidation of the Party necessitates now great emphasis on the organizational structure in the Party, union I.L.D., etc. The dues stamp system of the Party requires immediate attention. When we consider that approximately 75 per cent of the Party membership consists of black-listed and unemployed, the importance of this problem is readily seen.

In those Sections (Cannonsburg) where the Party was unable to immediately throw the Section into mass work and mass campaigns, the entire Party apparatus became weakest organizationally and began to disintegrate. It is in these mining towns and Sections where the Party was not quickly enough thrown into mass work, that right errors were more numerous, the units stopped functioning, the Socialist party gained strength, and the comrades began to quarrel among themselves over relief, etc., (Cannonsburg, Washington Section). In those Sections where the mass campaigns were vigorously continued, the recruiting drive of the Party was most successful and the organization of the Party became the strongest (Allegheny Valley). By mass work and direct guidance which trains the unit functionaries and draws in the members are we expected to hold the new members. C. P.

Recruiting Party Members During Aug. 3-8th Events in Chicago

Neglect of the Chicago Stockyards

THE events of August 3-8 in Chicago has added further proof that, particularly in the present period, the smallest struggles if based on the burning demands of the workers and properly organized can quickly arouse the largest masses.

We must first establish the absolute inadequacy of the recruiting, either for Party or the mass organizations. In the period while the bodies of our murdered comrades lay in state, there were special committees in a side hall on the job all day and night, signing up applications. Some 3,000 names and addresses were secured for the Unemployed Councils—500 for the Party and nearly 200 for the Young Communist League.

Because of these methods of recruiting, which brought in applications, to a large extent, of workers never before seen or reached with our agitational material and, more particularly, through personal contact we have been confronted with many problems, such as:

- (a) when visited or reached, some workers state they signed in a moment of enthusiasm and would rather wait a while.
- (b) addresses were not legible, which shows that even such recruitment could be improved by the comrades themselves writing the name and address of applicant.
- (c) too slow a tempo in reaching the applicants. A full week elapsed before the first steps were taken and our apparatus moved very clumsily. Not all were visited personally, but most received letters which are far less effective.
- (d) there was no concerted effort to reach white workers on the south side, therefore the majority of applications were Negro, raising sharply the problem that in some territories the unit is practically all Negro comrades, which could be misunderstood.

The outstanding political and organizational shortcoming was the failure to penetrate the factories, particularly the stockyards. The August 3-8th events shook not only the unemployed but also the employed and proper attention could have resulted in building both the T.U.U.L. and Communist Party inside the shops.

The most burning problem is the absorbing and keeping of all the new members. The greatest danger is the slow tempo. Instead of calling the new members immediately to the units, they were called in groups to a preliminary meeting according to territory. At the first meeting out of 177 letters sent, 27 responded, but interesting was the fact that these 27 applicants brought 43 more new workers with them. After seriously explaining the role and activities of the Communist Party at this first meeting 52 actually signed Party application cards. Approximately the same experience was had in the other meetings. Names of all those who did not respond were then given over to the nuclei to systematically visit. The new members when accepted, were either assigned to existing nuclei or to some of the new nuclei which it became necessary to organize.

A burning problem which we have been confronted with, and which will be solved shortly, *is the petrified state of some of our old street nuclei*, which are actually territorial units and in which members, belong rather through custom, friendship or tradition, rather than actual residential or work in shop. This occurs because of insignificant mass work, particularly shop, and also poor check-up. It will be necessary and possible now to organize street nuclei in every fourth block. This will also facilitate concentration in the shops and Unemployed Councils of the territory.

In order to develop a better understanding of the Party, classes are being conducted each week. The main problem of keeping the new members, is linked up with the experiences of Chicago and other districts previously related in the *Party Organizer* of namely, improved inner life of unit—conducting proper class work, individual attention without overloading new members, engaging in mass work from beginning, and most basic of all, better methods of recruiting which will guarantee better and more stable elements. J. W.

More About the Chicago Stockyards

Formal Methods Must Go!

THE events of August 3 in Chicago aroused the mass indignation of the Negro and white workers. But as yet *the Party was not able to take full organizational advantage of these events* and utilize them to penetrate into the shops and especially in the stock yards.

In the early part of July, a small shop nucleus was established in the stock yards, around which a small shop group of the T.U.U.L. was established, but during all these events no organized steps were made toward organizing the workers in the stock yards and undertaking any campaign in that direction.

In the stock yards a large number of Negro and foreign-born workers are employed. Recently a wage cut of 5 cents an hour took place among some of the workers. A meeting of stock yard workers was called by distributing a few hundred leaflets in the morning calling upon workers to come to a meeting in the evening. About 60 workers responded, including more than 30 stock yards workers. Six of these signed applications for the Food and Packing Workers Industrial League. All others were very sympathetic towards the building of the organization.

This alone indicates that the workers in the stock yards feel the need of organization through which they will be able to undertake struggle against wage cuts, speed up, stagger system which, as applied in the stock yards generally among the majority of the workers, working from 1 to 4 days a week, means starvation wages.

At a group meeting of stock yard workers, at which 12 were present, a representative of the T.U.U.L. in a typical bureaucratic manner, informed the group that they could not organize into a Packing House Workers Industrial League until they would recruit 25 members. Needless to say that no steps toward the direction of recruiting these 25, and that the demand that 25 members are to be recruited first before a local is set up, is also wrong, which resulted in some of

the workers feeling discouraged and they did not come to the next meeting of the group.

At one of the meetings of the group we took up the problem of how we are able to carry on organization work inside the stock yards, namely, setting up grievances committees in the departments as the first step. After a short discussion it was clear that one of the steps to be made is to hold meetings in the houses of the workers, in the neighborhood in which they live, personally inviting workers who are working in the stock yards. Secondly, that dances are to be arranged on a small scale, inviting workers from the stock yards, in order to get acquainted with them, get their names and addresses, and utilize these as the first steps toward the organizational drive.

These steps outlined are being carried on now. There is no question that the carrying out of these tasks will enable us to reach some workers. But this is only part of the task. Workers in the stock yards belong to many fraternal organizations, and through our fractions inside of these organizations, we will be able to reach these workers. Workers from the stock yards, in discussing with us, very clearly stated that the safeguarding of those who become members of our organization is one of the most important tasks, as the spy system is very highly developed. Therefore, all precautions have been made not to expose members of the grievance committees and Party members and give them definite tasks on how to develop work in the shop without being exposed.

In line with the decisions of the District Committee, a member of the District Committee has been assigned to the stock yards and to Section 2, having stock yards as their point of concentration. The fact that just now we are making our first steps toward organizational work in the stock yards shows very clearly that the Party in Chicago did not understand the importance of penetration of the shops and did not see the influence of the events of August 3 and 8, on the workers in the shops, and therefore missed one of the opportune situations to penetrate into the shops and build the organization. We are now very slowly, overcoming this, but as yet there is gross underestimation of this task.

B. G.

The History of a Shop Nucleus

MANY districts, for example the New York District, have been concentrating upon a number of shops for several years and record very little success. Indeed doubts are creeping into the minds of many comrades whether shop nuclei can be built in the giant fortresses of American capitalism. There is no reason why we cannot penetrate the big factories, but it is indeed doubtful if we can do so with the present methods of work. Take, for example, the history of a shop nucleus in this district. This nucleus in a large auto plant of 6,000 workers was organized in 1929. It began its work well and soon after its formation had 5 members. It issued some leaflets and several numbers of a shop paper and even built a shop committee. But then its work began to lag. The shop paper was issued from time to time and finally stopped entirely. The last issue was gotten out in November, 1930. The representatives of the section committee and the district attended the nuclei meetings at the beginning then every now and then and finally entirely forgot about the nucleus. The nucleus membership dwindled to three members in 1930. The shop committee fell apart for want of systematic attention. Then the section committee, evidently highly satisfied with the situation, expelled one member for failure to "down tools" on May the first. The district never heard of the expulsion.

Things drifted. The working force was reduced to 3,000. Dismissals of workers took place but this went unnoticed by the Party. Conditions grew worse but no actions were undertaken by the Party organization. A member of the shop nucleus arrived one day at the section headquarters and asked the organizer: "Why don't you come down to the nucleus—are you a bureaucrat?" He promised to come down and was given \$2 for the *Daily Worker* which it was promised would be distributed by an unemployed comrade. Nothing happened. No *Daily Workers* arrived. No unemployed comrade was on hand. Things continued to drift. One of the two surviving members of the nucleus appealed to some comrades in the National Office for aid. He was referred to the District Committee. The comrade hesitated to go to the district. Would they give him assistance in such a matter as a shop nucleus? Finally he went and was assured by one comrade that matters would be han-

dled. Several months again passed and nothing happened. No shop papers were being issued. No leaflets. No agitation. The workers were correctly asking where is the Party and were saying that it comes around every six months and then disappears again. At last out of the clear blue sky the district evidently to make up for lost time, sent a telegram to the comrades of the nucleus to inform them that they had been attached to a new section. After that some work was begun.

Are we not correct in asking, can nuclei be built with such casual, haphazard methods lacking in any degree of seriousness? Not at all. Is this an exceptional case? No. For it can be duplicated in this district and other districts of the Party. These methods are by no means a district "exceptionalism." Yet the history of this nucleus shows that it is possible to win new members in the shops. The comrade who related to me this history told me that he whistled one day the "International" and discovered a former Red Front Fighter in the shop. Another day, by another device, he discovered a former member of the British Party. Attending an open-air meeting, he saw 4 workers of his factory coming to the meeting reading the *Daily Worker*. A leaflet recently distributed against wage cuts and speed-up brought several names and addresses. Thus, if work is done, it brings results provided it is systematic, playful, serious work.

(From the report of comrade Weinstein on the C.C. and District Plenums at the New York functionaries meeting on September 12th).

Shop Work—The Weakest Link An Illustration

What about shop work? The weakest link is the shop work. In Chicago district, the most industrial section of the country, we have 12 shop units with 45 members in them. There is no activity in the shop. Occasionally we distribute a shop paper or the *Daily Worker*, but as far as organization work, as far as raising and developing struggles inside the shop, this is absolutely absent. And why?

I think Comrade Browder put the question correctly. We don't pay attention daily to the work of our shop units. We

are paying more attention to some language groups, language organizations and workers' clubs than to the shop units. That is why. The same energy was not given to shop work, and if it was, the shop work would progress. I will give you only one illustration:

In the stock yards we have about 100 workers reading our press, members of our organizations and if we were able to just get together these 100 connections, we would be able to establish a stronger Party than we have, on the basis of a factory branch of Packing House Workers Industrial League. What is true in that particular factory is true in practically every factory where we have some contacts.

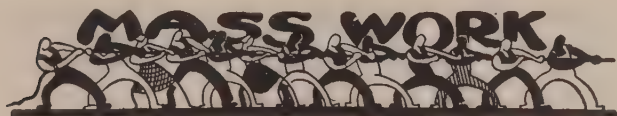
—B. GEBERT, *from Remarks at the C.C. Plenum.*

Shop Work Demands Systematic Follow-up!

In Fisher Body, we were taking up the problem of building grievance committees and the union. Some workers took seriously what we said in our shop paper on this and on two occasions formed grievance committees and took up a fight about the stagger plan workers coming to the plant waiting for work for hours and days. They went as a committee to the foreman and took up the question with him. But no sustained follow-up was made after this action of the workers and the thing naturally collapsed. This shows the actual possibilities yet our failure to give leadership.

In the McKinney Steel in Cleveland, the shop nucleus formed a grievance group or some form of economic organization. The shop nucleus collapsed. The comrades were fired, but the committee still exists. The problem is how to make it function. But we are slow in taking up the specific grievances. In Warren, where we have an old shop group of 100 workers there, we at first did not have a shop nucleus. Now we have one. The fact that we have established it helps considerably in the work in Warren. In some instances we have succeeded in building a shop organization first, then built the shop nucleus and in some cases we have built the shop nucleus first and then built the shop organization.

From the remarks of Sam Don at the C.C. Plenum.



Not Reliance on Spontaneity But Organization is Needed

WE HAD the problem of organization and lack of approach from below in the agricultural work. Our district is chiefly an agricultural district, fruit, vegetable growing, etc., and in California state alone there are from 280,000 agricultural laborers all year round to 400,000 workers at the height of the season and these are largely Mexican and Filipino workers especially in the more basic sections of the fruit industry such as plowing, pruning, picking, etc. A number of spontaneous strikes took place which involved some 3,000 workers. These workers readily accepted our leadership and in fact from time to time when a strike was called they got in touch with our organizers who were in the field and brought them into the strike area. But a totally wrong orientation grew up in one instance, and there was a lack of understanding of the necessity of realizing that we must use the situation for mobilization and try to build the Party units and form committees of the Agricultural Workers Union. The comrades developed the theory that the radicalization is proceeding so fast that we don't need this concentration on the San Joaquin Valley or Sacramento Valley or any special concentration at all. All you have to do is issue a call for a general strike and all the workers will come out anyway. Of course we fought these comrades and insisted on the building of the organization. And it was precisely those comrades who had the theory of the "general strike" who did not have a single farm committee, not a single local of the union. Whereas those workers who were not so politically developed, such as one non-Party Filipino comrade who did not understand the high-falutin' phrases we use, understood it was necessary to establish organizational bases in specific sections.

From remarks of S. Darcy at the C.C. Plenum.

Lack of Democracy in the Trade Unions—Aristocratic Attitude to the Masses

ONE of the most important things that seems to retard the growth of our movement, in spite of the wonderful possibilities among the workers, is the lack of democracy in unions and the Unemployed Councils which the T.U.U.L. organizes.

We try to force issues into the organization by the leaders of these organizations automatically bringing them up without actually trying to involve the membership into discussion. Some comrade makes a lengthy report, a discussion is called for, two or three members of the Party take the floor, and the masses of non-Party workers do not seem to comprehend what it is all about, and as the result they do not seem to get enthusiastic. It is my belief that if the organizers would spend more time talking to individual non-Party workers, and getting them on the basis of the discussions that the Party members have with them, to bring up the propositions there would be more of a response to the Party's policies.

It seems that some of our Party leaders, especially local and on the district scale, take a aristocratic attitude toward the masses and single out workers here and there, who, while they do not understand the Party, are willing workers and classify them as dumb-bells, unreliable and ignorant. While they may not be doing this consciously yet the fact remains that they do it, and in that way they destroy rather than build up. Then they wonder why we once start a movement, it starts with a bang and we cannot keep its mass character. Such is the case in our Unemployed Council where this weakness has invariably cropped up in our work.

When we bring in a member into the Party we immediately shove him into T.U.U.L. work, which would not be bad in itself, but then comes the I.L.D., the W.I.R., the L.S. N.R., and a half dozen other activities and we *completely neglect to give him a theoretical understanding*. Then, after getting some very discouraging results at one time or other, the worker who joined the Party loses faith, and, after two or

three months of intensified activity, he drops out of the movement. This has been one of the reasons that I have found for the big turnover in the Party membership.

Next thing, we send out an organizer into a new territory. He becomes the Party organizer, he becomes the T.U.U.L. organizer, the I.L.D. organizer, the W.I.R. organizer, etc. The result is that he is so confused he actually don't know where he stands. I believe that we should have our Party organizers involved in every phase of the work yet they should be more or less in a leading capacity, that is, leading and directing the work in the other organizations without taking on too much organizational responsibility, going too much into detail. There should be more of a tendency to shove even inexperienced non-Party workers into responsible positions. Even though it may hurt the work for the time being, it will strengthen the movement in the future.

GEORGE PAPCUN

Enrolling the Unemployed in Election Work

An Example to Follow!

We got on the ballot on Sept. 11, after having gotten 2,000 signatures in two days. This great achievement is not only due to the good work of our comrades, but to *the splendid help of the Unemployed Council members and to the general support of the workers.* As a Lithuanian comrade from Kenosha put it at the membership meeting, "It was the easiest thing to get signatures." Workers were suspicious at first, when we asked for signatures, but when they found out that it is for the Communists, they signed gladly. Two members of the American Legion signed their list and promised to take up our endorsement at the Post." This happened in the "Legion-ridden" city of Kenosha, where 10,000 of its 55,000 population is unemployed.

E. G., Wisconsin Section.

Not Drawing in Workers

NO matter how small an undertaking we are involved in, we find that there are a thousand and one details connected with it. Occasionally we let one or two details slip through our fingers, thinking that they are not important, but if a careful study were made of any of our undertakings we would find that every minute detail which fits into the long chain of "follow-ups" helps to bring about better results, and none of them should be considered too small.

In this article I want to take up the parents' committee for relief which we set up in one of the poorest Buffalo schools.

To call the first meeting of parents of School No. 32 it was necessary to get a hall or better yet the school auditorium. We set out to get the auditorium. This required the signatures of several parents who have children in School No. 32 attached to a letter to the Board of Education. Five parents were found, but instead of drawing up the letter with them and calling these parents to the home of one of these workers, we took the road of least resistance and asked the parents to come up to the office of the C.P. This the parents did. The letter was made up by the Y.C.L. organizer, and the parents were automatically asked to sign it, after it was read to them. This they did likewise. The auditorium was given for the meeting. After this was granted, we mimeographed 1,000 leaflets addressed to the parents of School No. 32, but again the members of the Unemployed Council, C. P., and Y.C.L. distributed this leaflet. The five parents were not involved at all.

We also realized that in order to make the meeting look like a parents' meeting, and not another C.P. meeting, we would need some of the parents to sit on the platform and to deliver the speeches, also to run the meeting. However, once more, we visited these five workers and asked them to come up to our headquarters. This they promised, but didn't do. The committee of 5 should have been increased to at least 15 or 20, immediately after the letter was sent to the Board of Education. A meeting should have been held in

one of their homes, the leaflet drawn up there, and these 15 or 20 involved in reaching other parents, of course, with the assistance of the above named organizations. But thinking that this was too petty a task for us, we did all the work, and though the results were good—250 attending—the results could have been better. Only about 5 minutes before the opening of this meeting we spoke to one of the mothers and asked her to speak. She was not at all prepared and so said only about 15 words and sat down. Also about 5 minutes before the opening, we told the comrade who was picked by us to be chairman that he would have that function for the evening. He, too, was unprepared and therefore made a bum job out of it. Though 80 parents signed up and about ten took the floor in discussion, the entire meeting was run by Communists, from the chairman to the main speakers, to the collection of the names.

The workers are not afraid of the Communists. They respond splendidly to our call. But it is necessary to learn to involve these workers in the actual work.

Now, instead of us doing all the work, we are involving the captains of each street to call their neighbors together, all these captains forming an Executive Committee of that Council. It will require only two or three comrades now to give guidance to this mass of people, and other comrades will be relieved to start the same work on another school.

E. S.

Organize the Unemployed Councils!

**CARRY ON THE DAY-TO-DAY FIGHTS OF THE
UNEMPLOYED!**

**Organize the Hunger March to
Washington!**

Agit-Prop Work

How to Conduct Study Circles

ORGANIZING the study circles throughout the entire Party has naturally brought forth a large number of inexperienced comrades as leaders of the circles. The training these comrades will get is of great value for the Party but at the same time we must see to it that the study circles are not sacrificed to inexperience. Therefore a review of our shortcomings, and suggestions how the study circle can be improved, is now necessary.

1. The success or failure of the circle depends to a great extent on the selection of a permanent leader—one who can be depended upon to read and seriously prepare for the circles. This comrade must naturally have an understanding of the fundamentals of Communism. In other words, the life or death of the circle falls mostly on the shoulders of the study circle leader. Why is this so? Because our comrades coming from a hard day's work are too tired or have no time to read much. What is more, there are many workers joining the Party who are not interested or else are not able to read.

The complaints by the leaders that the comrades don't read will not solve the problems of the study circles. On the contrary, let the leader make the lesson more interesting and the desire for reading will improve despite the obstacles mentioned.

2. The leader should not lecture and the following are the reasons. It requires much more experience to lecture than to ask questions. And, even if the leader has experience, the fact remains that after a lecture the comrades forget half of the points touched on and do not understand many of the others. You may even call for questions after the lecture, but very often a comrade, sure he understood the lesson, is wrong in reality.

3. The question and answer method has brought the best results but here too the theoretical questions, unless brought out in the light in the daily experiences of the comrades, are too abstract and not understandable. The average comrade is unable to answer the control questions, or if he has read the

assignment, he answers the questions mechanically without really understanding their meaning.

4. If the answer of a question is not correct or is incomplete or perhaps not clearly stated then a discussion should be developed which will involve all the comrades and in this way all the misconceptions will be cleared up and a correct understanding reached. Another way to bring life into the discussion is by asking, for example, "What is the attitude of the Socialists towards nationalization?" And when this is answered, follow with "Why are they wrong and why are we right?"

5. The discussion on questions should not take longer than is necessary to clarify the answer to the control questions. On the other hand it is contrary to the interests of the circle to rush over the lesson in order to finish it in one evening. In the last case the remainder of the lesson is finished at the following meeting of the circle. If a sharp controversy develops over a point it is useless to enter into long argument which usually reaches no agreement. Better organize a reading circle which will have the task of getting the proper reading material, digging out the answer and bringing it to the coming lesson.

There are many other points which might be touched upon but the article has touched on those which are most important and if carried out will make the study circles interesting and a real contribution to the life of our Party units.

BUILD THE LIBERATOR

**Into a Mass Organ of the Struggle
for Negro Rights!**

PREPARE FOR THE CIRCULATION DRIVE!

Work Among Women

Attitudes Which Hinder the Work

ONE of the leading men comrades in the mine strike made the statements, "no comrade with any ability would do women's work" and "any woman is a fool to do women's work." It is not surprising, therefore, to find that the women comrades in the mine strike were not asked to make reports, were not given any concrete help in formulating plans of work, and carrying out the plans, and that the women comrades had to fight every inch of the way.

Any comrade active in the strike could easily see that even two women on a picket line of a few hundred put pep, enthusiasm, and fighting spirit into the strike. Among those arrested were always a number of women.

For these reasons women as a factor in the strike received mention. However, mentioning in speeches, or instructions, or articles that women should be drawn into leading work in the strike, and should be put on committees, is not sufficient to build women's auxiliaries into a permanent functioning part of the union.

Not sufficient energetic steps are taken by the union to overcome the stand of the miners in certain sections that women should stay out of the relief kitchens, and even agreeing with the sheriff and deputies that women did not belong on the picket lines, that they were in the way, might get hurt and cause trouble.

Not only the men but also the women comrades sneer at drawing women into the struggle. The situation in the textile union is even worse than in mining. We have women comrades in the Textile Workers Union are women. We have women comrades as organizers in textile and these comrades "don't want to be bothered with women's work." Women's work in this case means building the union by using special methods of work, special demands, to draw women textile workers into the union.

It is about time the entire Party, men and women, got a new slant on how to draw the women workers into our campaigns and struggles. We should stop stating policy and then adding "and the women, Negro, and youth." C. D.

Winning the Youth

What Must the Y. C. L. Be.

OUR League does not understand that in its composition it must be a mass organization, that while the League is a Communist organization this does not mean that every member of the League necessarily must be a Communist. On the contrary, our League must be composed of all young workers, of all the elements of the toiling youth who are ready to fight for better conditions and who want to learn to be Communists.

The program of the Y.C.L. states:

"The Y.C.L. is not an organization of the elite, it is a mass organization. Its task is to organize within its ranks not only the advanced elements, but the broad masses of the toiling youth."

Our League cannot be narrowed down into a small organization but must be much broader and larger than the Communist Party.

This wrong conception of what the Young Communist League must be, is found not only in the League, but in the conception of sections of the Party towards the League. For instance, in the struggle centers, comrades were always comparing the growth of the League with the growth of the Party. The Party gained 100 members while the League gained 60 to 70. Well, that is proportional. This is only true if we fail to realize that the League must be made much broader than the Party, that the League must from the beginning, recruit more members than the Party and be of a broader character than the Party, otherwise it will not play its necessary role in the class struggle. It will only be a youth duplicate of the Communist Party.

These tendencies must be fought very sharply at the present time because they express themselves in the daily work of the League. In the Chicago district we had the struggle in the South Side, where during the funeral 200 young workers signed applications for the Young Communist League. What happened in the plans of action that our comrades developed in the Chicago district after the funeral? That is, plans from

August 15th to November 7th. We find that the goal set for the district as a whole is 150 new members. This shows the entire narrow sectarian outlook of our League and its failure to understand how it must build itself in this period and how it must grow in the struggles. 200 applications in one day and yet 150 new members in a period of nearly three months time!

I want to go now, comrades, into most important question before this Plenum and that is the question of the Party relations to the League and the task of the Party in building of the League. The comrades can readily see that in the past months our League wagon has also moved a little although not much and in the moving of our League wagon, it is very important to be able to use the power of the Party, as I would call it the Mack truck, in order to pull the League out of its slump and to push it into the proper direction. In my opinion the Party doesn't sufficiently understand its role in doing this.

The 11th Plenum of the Comintern brought very sharply before all the Parties the question of the youth and the 11th Plenum stated that the Parties must be responsible for all of the work of the youth. In our Party that is not being done. While our League has received much more cooperation and guidance from the Central Committee, we find that down below this has not as yet seeped into the districts and into the membership and units. On the contrary, we find in certain places that the Party and the Y.C.L. act like opponent organizations. Instead of the Party helping the Y.C.L. wagon, moving it out of the ditch, we find instead the Party truck usually pushes the Y.C.L. wagon further into the ditch and grabs all the people that were on this wagon, puts them on the truck and rides away to the destination. In the Pittsburgh strike we sent in as many as 10 or 11 youth organizers. There were many problems confronting the Party in the strike and as soon as the strike developed, the Party grabbed all of these organizers, put them on the Party truck and liquidated the Y.C.L. overnight.

This is also shown in Massachusetts and Rhode Island, where at every moment when a special problem arises, youth organizers are taken from their main work among the youth. There is no conception of developing youth forms of work and no understanding of the role of the youth in the struggles of the workers.

From the report of Gil Green at the C.C. Plenum.