

# Party Organizer



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Vol. VI.

NOVEMBER, 1933

No. 11

*Issued by*  
CENTRAL COMMITTEE, COMMUNIST PARTY U. S. A

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*The articles in this issue are excerpts from speeches made at the Seventeenth C. C. Plenum held recently.*

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"Three months of carrying out the Open Letter in active participation in class struggles have shown that in the Party and its growing circle of sympathizers there exist those forces which can and will carry out these tasks. It is now necessary to have a full mobilization of these forces, to bring them all into activity, and into posts of leadership, develop searching self-criticism of all weaknesses and mistakes, to thrust aside all hampering and obstructing elements, to overcome all weaknesses and obstacles, develop self-initiative from below, with activization of every Party member and unit and to march forward to the winning of the decisive strata of the American workers who will lead the entire working class and exploited masses into the coming decisive class battles."—From Resolution of 17th Plenum, C.C., C.P., U.S.A.

## Excerpts from Earl Browder's Speech to Seventeenth C. C. Plenum

THE Open Letter and the Resolution of the Fourteenth Plenum remain in full force as the basic analysis of our weaknesses and tasks. The recent events have especially confirmed the estimate of the situation given by the Open Letter at the Extraordinary Party Conference, as one of deepening of the crisis, sharpening of the class struggles and intensification of the danger of new imperialist war and especially of intervention against the Soviet Union. We have to especially emphasize that the deepening of the crisis and the sharpening of the war danger have raised the class struggle to a higher level and have greatly intensified the development of the trend towards fascism in the United States.

Now we must review the work of our Party in its main aspects of carrying out the Open Letter since the Extraordinary Party Conference. We state in the resolution that since the Extraordinary Party Conference the Party has made certain beginnings in carrying out the Open Letter. We point out the increased and more effective participation in strikes, especially in the basic industries, and the beginnings made in the building of mass trade unions. Second, some improvements in the methods of concentration. Third, improved application of the united front policy shown in strikes, especially in the silk strike, in the Cleveland Conference for united action where we established before the masses our program of struggle against the N.R.A. and in the successful U.S. Conference

Against War. Fourth, serious beginnings in the transformation of the *Daily Worker* into a mass paper by the improvement in its contents and circulation. Our draft resolution, however, emphasizes that these advances are marked by the most serious slowness, weakness and inadequacies.

We emphasize that the whole Party has not as yet fully understood the application of the Open Letter, that the leading cadres have not succeeded in fully mobilizing the Party for these tasks. *We emphasize that the advances have been of a very uneven character.* Some important districts, such as Cleveland, have hardly participated in these advances. Other districts, for example Detroit, which had made important beginnings have lost their grip for a period and even slipped back. And even in the best of districts, there is a most serious unevenness in the work, an instability of the advances which have been made and continued weaknesses. We have to emphasize that generally throughout the country and in practically every industry we have not made any serious beginnings in mass work inside the A. F. of L. with the possible single exception of some beginnings among the miners in Western Pennsylvania, where we are still largely working on the basis of the old N.M.U. cadres that were swept into the U.M.W.A. in the recent struggles. We have to point out also that in perhaps not a single district has the Party seriously taken up the question of building the Young Communist League or given the youth any serious political guidance or material help.

### Weakness in Negro Work

Outstanding among these various weaknesses has to be mentioned the serious lack of engaging the Negro workers in the struggles that have taken place, of recruiting them into the trade unions, or the Unemployed Councils, with a few good exceptions, such as the St. Louis nut pickers and Chicago garment workers, which occurred even before the Extraordinary Party Conference. And we must further mention the extreme weaknesses of development, the lagging of the unemployed struggles during the past three or four months.

The explanation of these weaknesses come under one head.

*This is the underestimation of the radicalization of the masses, of their readiness to struggle; rising out of this, doubts and hesitation about the Party line, as expressed in the Open Letter, the failure to apply this line boldly and uncompromisingly and the tendency to retreat before or capitulate to the illusions about the N.R.A., to fail to develop struggle against it as a precondition for all revolutionary work. . . .*

We must say it is essential to bring forward the revolutionary



program, the revolutionary character of our Party, to propagandize the revolutionary way out of the crisis, the problem of the seizure of power, the problem of building socialism in America as a problem of the next future of the United States. And on this basis, standing on our revolutionary program, not only in our inner councils, but before the masses of workers, we will not weaken but on the contrary, we will strengthen the daily struggle, we will strengthen our position in the trade unions and other mass organizations, and we will strengthen and build our Party. . . .

There must be the rejuvenation of the Party from the bottom to the top. We must bring forward all those forces who hitherto have not had the opportunity to develop in our movement, whom the Open Letter brought forward, who have proven in practice that they can do it—these elements must be brought to the forefront and all obstructive elements put to one side. This must be the slogan for the Eighth Convention of our Party, for the accelerated tempo of the carrying through of the Open Letter.

## EDITORIAL

**T**HIS issue of the PARTY ORGANIZER contains reports presented at the 17th Meeting of the Central Committee. The plenum was a control plenum to measure the extent to which the Party has begun to carry out the Open Letter. This material should be read and studied by every Party comrade. The Plenum disclosed the fact that only a few districts have systematically taken up the problems of the concentration factories and have checked up on how the work was progressing.

The Open Letter created enthusiasm among the membership and an eagerness to make the change in our methods of work. The Plenum has shown that a decisive change has not taken place as yet. While a certain section of the membership, larger than ever before, has thrown itself into the work with marked results (Buffalo, Youngstown, Indiana Harbor, Paterson, Lodi, Easton, Utah, New Mexico, California, Seattle, etc.) the big majority of the membership has not been sufficiently mobilized to carry out the control tasks. Our Party has prepared and led militant and heroic struggles with a handful of comrades. If we had succeeded in mobilizing more Party forces, the various mass organizations, etc., our results would have been much greater. If the Open Letter had penetrated the entire membership and all the mass organizations, larger numbers of forces would be mobilized for concentration work, and

the tasks demanded of our Party by the Open Letter would be carried out.

Most of the districts have selected five or six factories for concentration. But in many districts we repeated the mistake which is characterized by the Open Letter as being "driven by events", and did not work out "carefully with the comrades of the lower organizations, ways and means for carrying out the resolutions and checking up on their execution". The comrades assigned from the district committee were compelled to run from one strike to another, and consequently had to neglect their original assignment. This is the main reason why in many districts we have had struggles everywhere except in the concentration factories (Districts 4, 5, 6, 7, 8). For example, we developed mass unions in steel, in the Pittsburgh District (McKees Rocks, Greensburgh, Ambridge) and led heroic struggles, but in the concentration factory very little headway was made during this period. On the other hand, where we boldly stuck to the control tasks and the assigned comrades did not permit themselves to be "driven by events", good results were achieved. For example, in the dye strike in Paterson, the backbone of the splendid struggles was the Weidemann shop where through our concentration work, we succeeded in building up a solid organization. *We do not wish to create a conception that the spontaneous struggles of the workers should be neglected by the Party. The Open Letter very clearly states that we have to be at the head of the struggles, but this should never be at the expense of our concentration work.* Concentration means that once an industry, a factory or an area has been selected for concentration, there must be a genuine political mobilization for the job. It cannot mean that because some struggle develops elsewhere that concentration work is to be dropped until there is more time to take up its special problems. Concentration means that available forces of the Party, its committees, the unions and other mass organizations under its influence are to direct their main efforts toward concentration, *using other struggles to advance the concentration tasks.*

While in many places we have developed new methods of mass agitation among the factory workers, there are some districts where the orientation of comrades has not changed with the changed situation. We continue to hunt for contacts and to meet with individual workers. While we must not underestimate the value of this patient building of factory organization, at the same time we must not forget that mass agitation through leaflets, meetings, *Daily Worker*, etc., mobilizing the workers for struggle for better conditions, against the terror of the bourgeoisie, for the right to organize, etc., will bring quicker and better organizational results. No headway



has been made in establishing shop papers in the concentration factories. Even many of the old established shop papers no longer appear regularly.

The *Daily Worker* has not been sufficiently utilized in the past period in our concentration work, in spite of the splendid opportunities which the recent period has afforded us for penetrating the factories with the paper.

We have not succeeded to sufficiently develop and strengthen the leadership of the section and units. Most of our section committees are composed of unemployed comrades and have very little direct connection with the workers in the concentration factories. This fact alone explains many of our weaknesses in leading the struggles of the workers in the factories.

In spite of all these weaknesses of our concentration work, we have succeeded in building organizations in the factory and in gaining considerable influence among that strata of workers who never before were in contact with our movement. More than ever before the districts are striving to build shop nuclei. Many of the old shop nuclei, which have been in existence only on paper, have been revived and are starting to function. It is necessary now to take up very thoroughly the problems of the shop nuclei especially in the concentration factories and in the other important shops.

The Communist Party must be the leader of the workers. To do this we must consolidate the Party. We have to build and consolidate our lower organizations. As Comrade Edwards said at the Plenum, "We have to weld more firmly our connections with the masses in the factories, to sink these solid roots in the factory, to make it impossible for the bourgeois reign of terror to destroy them. To accomplish this, especially in view of the present situation, requires a much more rapid tempo. This situation demands the rallying of all our energies and forces for the carrying through of the Open Letter".

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. . . Never before was the situation in the country so favorable for the development of the Communist Party into a real revolutionary mass Party. But from this it follows also that failure of the Party to understand its chief task—namely, to become rooted in the decisive industrial centers, in the important big factories—never before represented such great danger for the fulfilment of our revolutionary tasks as a whole.—*Open Letter*.

## MINING

### Hiding Face of Party Greatest Error

**T**HE source of all of our weaknesses in Pittsburgh and in other districts is due to the comrades who are afraid to bring out our Party, who have no faith in the workers.

For example, take Ambridge. Our comrades in steel had a big head. They seemed to think that they were going to have 100,000 people in the union. Not a bad idea; it was brought very clearly to them, by members of the District Buro and by Polburo members, that these movements have collapsed before, that we had ten and fifteen thousand in our N.M.U. and now we haven't got them, and the reason we have not got them is because we did not build the Party, did not explain our Party to the workers.

For example, I spent three days in Ambridge. My main purpose in Ambridge was to get our fraction together in the leading strike committee. Three days, and I did not get it. True, I took up other matters. Again, we called a fraction meeting of the McKeesport strike, and not one of our leading Party comrades of the steel union was present. Just myself, but the leaders of the union were not present.

When we discussed steel and made the decision in the District Buro, the Party units met to discuss it and Comrade — would bring up something else in the strike committee. There were twelve decisions, and not one single decision was put into effect, not a single one. And our parade to strengthen the support of the strike was postponed three times because the N.R.A. official wanted to have a conference and then we gave up our parade to see what the conference was, and we have not had the parade in Greensburgh yet.

There was really no terror in Greensburgh, although we were told there was tremendous terror. When we investigated we found that not a single bomb was thrown, not a single striker was arrested. But some of our union leaders were intimidated, and a mental terror was created. Especially did Comrade — suffer from this and completely collapsed, with the result that the workers were driven back to work. We have to take up very seriously the role of individuals in our Party. Our main Party contact is leading comrades in the field and how many times have decisions to be made and not carried out before these comrades are removed? It is all very well to say go and get somebody else. If we were dealing as an opposition in the



A. F. of L. we would know what to do. But these are good comrades leading our work, and what are we going to do when they do not carry out decisions they help to make?

Maybe in Ambridge if I had been there oftener it would have been different. Would we have defeated the terror? I don't think so. The terror was too great. Our weakness was that our comrades didn't realize that they are fighting the steel trust and the government.

The terror in Ambridge is not one that we say we will be able to defeat without much better organization. Of course, we received a setback, but this will be determined in the coming week if we do not get a Party unit. If we are able to weld together three or four hundred workers, then we have not been set back because we can depend on this. When we are fighting the steel trust, we are going to run into terror and if we could get out of these struggles with organization, some clarity, that would lay the basis for bigger struggles.

In Greensburgh we have no excuses, it was a debacle; we allowed intimidation that took the form of terror instilled in the minds of the workers by our own forces. They were terrorized by threats rather than acts. The comrade who was assigned by the union to take care of Greensburgh was not fitted for the job of leading these mass struggles, he is not the type to lead this work. The whole question arises, how are we going to organize our Party? We have talked about this in Pittsburgh and we have not found the solution for it. It is not an easy thing to find. We are laying the groundwork which we will eventually get some good out of, but it is not good at the present time. We have to be able to know whom the Party can depend upon.

How we can talk about the Communist election campaign without building the Party is a thing which I cannot understand. We have national miners' organizers who are also Party members. How is it possible to have such a strike and have no members come into our Party?

Well, of course, if the workers are not asked to join our Party, they will not join. It is not because they forget to ask them to join, it is fear and lack of faith in the masses; and everyone we asked to join our Party in Ambridge, joined the Party. They could have been in the Party two or three weeks before.

—JACK JOHNSTONE.

## Party Functioned Poorly in Mining Strike Districts

**I**N Western Pennsylvania there were 75,000 miners on strike and in Central Pennsylvania a little over 20,000 steel workers on strike in the Pittsburgh District in the last month. And in addition to this I think there were about 1,500 cleaners and dyers on strike in the Pittsburgh District, with the strike sentiment penetrating practically every factory in the District, with all the mines shut down. In these struggles, comrades, with the exception of the steel industry where our union played a leading role—we have played a very insignificant role. We have played practically no role as far as the Party is concerned, that is, the Party as the political leader of the workers, with the exception of a few leaflets—one in the mining industry and probably a couple in the steel industry—not even in view of the election campaign. With all of these strike struggles going on, our Party will not be on the ballot in many places, including the city of Pittsburgh itself. And therefore, comrades, it is necessary in my opinion to speak above all about the position our Party finds itself in at the present time in Pittsburgh, because unless we are able to put our Party to work it is useless to raise any perspective and expect to fulfill any. In the mining district our Party as a Party is not in existence as far as the strikers are concerned. Our Party is composed almost exclusively of the blacklisted, foreign-born miners.

### Change Organizational Structure

Our organizational structure, in my opinion, in the entire district is such that it is impossible for the Party to function as a Party. We have approximately 90 units in the Party in the Pittsburgh District, but only one functioning section committee in the District. The rest of the Party is being led through letters from the District office, through personal visits as much as it is possible for the few leading comrades to visit various units in the Party. I think that this in itself explains why it was impossible for us to mobilize our Party as an organization and make out of the Party a real driving force both in the mining and in the steel strikes. Secondly, our leadership, because of the lack of organizational machinery, that is, the District Buro, is separated from the Party units to such an extent that the Party membership does not know what is the policy of the Party, what are the daily decisions of the Party leadership, and therefore it is impossible to expect that the Party will carry out these decisions, because there is no way of explaining these instructions to the Party units with the exception of letters. On the other hand, those comrades who are engaged in trade



union work and in other forms of activity, such as in the I.L.D. and so on, still do not consider themselves responsible for building the Party, and do not undertake steps to build the Party. I think that now we have the best opportunity really to establish our Party at least in the mining industry. We have established quite a few contacts in the course of the present miners' strikes. We have established some old contacts that have been lost for us since 1931. We have established many new contacts and in discussing this question already there is the possibility of immediately building at least ten units of the employed miners, or at the present time striking miners, who are taking an active part in the leadership of the strike. I do not think that this is sufficient. We cannot simply expect that the workers will join the Party without their seeing the Party in action.

### Leadership Isolated From Members

If we can establish the necessary machinery of the Party in the Pittsburgh District, a machinery that will be able to understand and to transmit to the Party units the decisions of the Party leadership, it will help the Party units to carry out the decisions of the C.C. and the District Buro; otherwise these decisions will not be carried out and I think, comrades, that the separation of the District leadership, and this applies also to the leadership in the units and the lower organizations of the Party, was expressed at every stage in the development of the miners' strike. We were making one decision, and the Party membership was carrying out something else. This did not only happen on one occasion but this happens repeatedly, and this expresses the isolation of the Party leadership from the Party membership. A comrade at one of the District Buro meetings expressed this very correctly when he stated that the workers are not isolated from us but we are isolated from the workers. In this strike the miners were actually carrying out our policy without our being involved as a driving force in the strike.

At the rank and file U.M.W.A. conferences we are holding there are sections of workers that are ready for the Party, and yet I think that in the entire strike period we have succeeded in building only one unit.

—B. FRANK.

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At the same time the Party must carry on a systematic struggle against the bureaucratic isolation of the apparatus from the Party masses, against the suppression of inner Party democracy, for the development of political life in the lower organizations, particularly in the factory nuclei, for the development of thorough-going self-criticism, for the development of initiative in the lower organizations and for the improvement of its functioning cadres.

—Open Letter.

## More Attention to Women in Concentration Districts

**T**HE Open Letter and the Fourteenth Plenum resolution reminded us of the need of collective responsibility from the top committees down. I found for example in the Pittsburgh District, as Comrade Johnstone pointed out, that whenever there is a District Buro meeting the decisions are not carried out in the lower units. Not because the comrades don't want to carry them out, but because in many instances the lower units are not informed of the decisions. We had a concrete example of this in the funeral of the comrade shot in Ambridge. Although we had a meeting of the fraction and all details were worked out, the comrades who were at the fraction meeting did not transmit the decisions to the other comrades in charge of the funeral. As a result of this the action at the funeral did not correspond with the decisions made, and caused the arrest of several comrades.

We can and must at all times strive to bring forward our Party. We had our chance even at the funeral in Ambridge in face of the most terrific terror. When I spoke of the problems facing the workers in Ambridge and ended my speech by saying that I represented the Communist Party I received much applause. This showed us that the workers are not afraid of the Communist Party.

There are times when we are not only hesitant in bringing forward our Party but our Industrial Union as well. I want to give an example of how we can speak even at A. F. of L. meetings. In the strike of the coal miners in Pittsburgh a real united front meeting of miners' wives was held which included 19 locals of the United Mine Workers of America. You have heard of this meeting but do you know the significance of it? When you go back to the coal field you must see to it that these women are instruments within the locals of the U.M.W.A. to win the men over to us.

I went to the meeting. Being a stranger, the women of the U.M.W.A. looked at me with suspicion, for the women have been warned that National Miners women would be there. Even so the meeting laid a basis for real united front action and the women arranged a mass meeting for next week. This shows us that we can work with women of the U.M.W.A. I wish somebody would once in a while say something about the women in the steel and metal workers' strikes. We don't have to say anything about the textile strike in Paterson because they are doing a pretty good job there. The women are leading the strike and doing it well.

—ELLA REEVE BLOOR.



## Carrying Out Correct Decisions

**W**HAT is one of the main things to be overcome before we can carry on good work? There is much looseness on the part of the comrades, especially the union comrades, in remembering and carrying out decisions. The district bureau meets, has good discussions, good decisions are made; the comrades leave and do not carry out these decisions. In some cases, when they leave, they get a new idea; and they carry out their own idea. They ignore the bureau decision.

One of the most important decisions recently was the decision to hold a district meeting of the miners, to discuss the agreement, the question of taking over the strike and all that. One comrade was sent down to work with me and to gather up workers for the meeting; we gathered left wing miners and had a very good meeting, but we didn't mobilize out of this meeting for the Pittsburgh conference because the comrades didn't tell me about the Pittsburgh conference, and the decisions of the bureau. We didn't carry out the decision. Why is it that the comrade, after he left a bureau meeting, did not carry out the decision, did not explain to me the decision and discussion and mobilize these workers for the Pittsburgh conference? What is true of that is true of many other decisions; I can't go into them because I haven't the time. But this is one thing that has to be done. The comrades must know the district bureau is the district bureau; that it discusses the problems, makes motions and decisions; then we must carry out the things decided.

### When Are Decisions "Correct"?

In regard to correct decisions. Yes, comrades, we made a lot of correct decisions, but in this question of correct decisions comes another question. When are "correct" decisions made? There is a "correct" time to make "correct" decisions and also a too late time to make correct decisions. On the whole situation of the United Mine Workers, some will remember at the Extraordinary Conference we had quite a conflict. What was the situation on the question of the United Mine Workers? At that time some of the comrades said the campaign was already beginning to collapse. I had only been in Pittsburgh for some hours, but in those hours I saw a tremendous campaign. I think, while we may make correct decisions now on what we want to do, if we would have made them then, we would be much stronger now; the comrades of the United Mine Workers and the National Miners' Union would have been orientated in the right way. When the masses joined the United Mine

Workers, what was left for the local comrades to do but to join the United Mine Workers too and work with them; I don't mean to liquidate the National Miners' Union; it as such must remain, but the majority (local leaders, etc.) had to go to the United Mine Workers. After I got back to the Brownsville section, when we started to carry out the decisions, what were the results? Some members went into the United Mine Workers, five got jobs and are now working in key mines.

### Lack of Centralized Leadership

Now one other thing that has to be corrected is the situation among the comrades; some of the leading comrades here after meetings, or in private discussions, express ideas they do not express in bureau meetings. Then I ask, "Why don't you say so in the bureau meetings?" they say, "Hell, if I would say this, they would all jump on me." The comrades must be brought to express their opinions, and if they think they are correct, to fight for them, and show them also they have the right to be wrong, if they are wrong; and this jumping on them must be eliminated.

Now, on the strike. One of the main shortcomings was the lack of a centralized leadership on the part of the miners to carry out the good strikes; our main job should have been to organize a good leadership. This could have been done by a policy of concentration. In places where we have more, for instance —, we could have concentrated there; I could have gone there because I was once the leader there and we would have built such leadership, and then the rest of the locals could have built a leadership around this small base. How did we go into this question of building a leadership? I was informed a short time ago, since we came here, that a leaflet was gotten out to the miners in the name of eight local unions, calling a conference. One thing is very definite; we are not going to build a central leadership on the basis of fakery. Let's say that out of these local unions, just one gets up and says this is a lie; our union didn't endorse the call, and the eight local unions did not sign the call, but this was invented in the head of Comrade —; that is not the way to draw miners in; that is the way for defeat for us and not to organize these miners.

—T. M.

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Every Party member must now understand that it depends on correct policy and above all the *execution* of the correct policy whether we will be able to mobilize the masses of workers for struggle and whether our Party, in this historically favorable situation will become the decisive mass Party of the American proletariat, or whether the bourgeoisie with the help of its social-fascist and fascist agents will succeed in disorganizing the mass movement and keeping it down.—  
*Open Letter.*



## STEEL

### D. O. Must Lead Workers' Struggles

**D**ISTRICT Four has made some progress in the carrying out of the line of the Open Letter. True, this progress is not commensurate with the tremendous possibilities.

These beginnings have been made, first, in the penetration of the basic industry—steel—where we have succeeded in building up the Steel and Metal Workers Industrial Union into a mass union. Second, the penetration of the light metal, furniture, shoe and leather and the rubber industry. We have also made some serious beginnings in the development of unemployed work, relief strikes, etc. Third, we were able to make deep inroads among the farmers of western New York and have established new groups there.

There has also been a steady and sharp improvement in the work and inner life of the Party; section committees have been established and are beginning to function.

### Progress in Negro Work

Progress has been made in the development of our Negro work, precisely due to the fact that we were always conscious of the necessity of drawing Negroes into the leadership, not only in the trade unions, but in the mass organizations, taking up the grievances and every single issue and developing a struggle on the basis of these grievances and issues. In practically every strike we put Negro workers on the strike and every other committee that was negotiating with the company. We have drawn Negroes into all the leading committees of the unions and in the department and shop committees. At present we have two Negroes on the District Board of the Metal Workers' Union.

We have made some progress in the League of Struggle for Negro Rights. Its influence is felt to such an extent that it recently affiliated two groups and is taking steps to affiliate churches to the League of Struggle for Negro Rights.

On the question of drawing Negroes into the leadership, the ——— steel strike in Buffalo was led by a Negro worker, a member of the Party who came in from Gary, Indiana. We worked with him to organize the entire department and without a strike we were able to force the ——— Company to grant the demands for this department. The workers in the other department, hearing of

this victory, consulted the wire drawers on how they achieved this victory. It was on the basis of the work among the wire drawers that we were able to draw into a major battle the workers of this decisive steel plant in Buffalo, through which we were able to build the Party, to establish the Steel and Metal Workers' Union in Black Rock. The A. F. of L. is active in Buffalo, but we did not stand on the sidelines. Everywhere the A. F. of L. was active we were there, challenging the A. F. of L. for leadership of the masses. One of the workers pumped a question at John C. Johnson, Secretary of the Central Labor Council, and a Negro worker took the floor and challenged him on the Negro question, and this threw him off his balance, and then I spoke for thirty minutes, after which I told the workers to join the Steel and Metal Workers' Union, and they did join that union.

### **Against Mechanical Separation**

There have been weaknesses also in our work. Leading comrades are often afraid to bring in the role of the Party in these struggles, so deep-rooted is the fear of bringing in the Communist Party. When I was active in the strike in Buffalo the workers did not raise the question of the "Reds," and I myself brought in this question. I said, "You know that I am a member of the Communist Party, but I am also a steel worker and I am here to help you organize for higher wages and better conditions." When this question was raised, the comrades said that the workers would call the union a red union, and although I worked in the steel mills in Buffalo, I had to fight them to get a book for the union, and only a few days ago, after three months of struggle, I got a book to the Steel and Metal Workers' Union. This mechanical separation of the Party from trade union work, this fear that when a Party comrade becomes a District Organizer he cannot have anything to do with mass struggles, is absolutely incorrect. The place of a District Organizer is among the workers and not in an office.

There was also a tendency to put the highly skilled, former aristocracy of labor and certain petty bourgeois elements into the leadership instead of basing the leadership of our unions on non-skilled and semi-skilled workers. Because of this situation the comrades were influenced by the ideology of those skilled and petty bourgeois elements, and we have suffered from this because some of these unstable elements became the active agents and tools of the steel barons in fighting against the union. This should be a lesson not only for our District, but for the entire Party, not to base our unions upon the skilled only, but mainly on unskilled and semi-skilled elements.

—MANNING JOHNSON.



## Main Points of Concentration Forgotten

**W**HILE our Party has participated in a whole series of strikes, the main points of concentration have been forgotten in the midst of this activity. Of course, we cannot fix the class struggle according to blueprint, but these various struggles in which we participate must be utilized to further our organization work in the concentration factories.

For example, in the city of St. Louis, where the main point of concentration was packing house and steel, we find that we led 17 strikes in miscellaneous trades, and that there exists a definite resistance to work in the concentration points. The same thing is true in practically every section, as well as in Chicago, with the possible exception of Indiana Harbor, where we carried through our objective of developing a movement in the ———. This situation exists also in Cleveland and Pittsburgh.

We must see from this that the warning that we must fight against all efforts to divert our attention from the control tasks has not been heeded, but instead we have fallen into the mistake of doing work on the basis of daily events.

### Absent During Struggles

Another feature of concentration is that some struggles have actually taken place in concentration sections, but we were not there at all. We find today, for example, as a part of this whole strike wave, that in the East Ohio Section we have had the largest strike of steel workers. I refer to the ——— situation, where the steel workers carried on a militant struggle, going over the heads of the A. F. of L. officialdom. Mass picketing was carried on. Committees went through the plant department by department to make sure no scabs were there. We had no union or Party members there.

Another phase of this problem is, that while we very correctly emphasized that we should concentrate in key departments inside of the given shops and mills, sometimes we tend to narrow this down. We started a strike struggle in Youngstown among the chippers, but there we limited the strike and made no serious effort to utilize our base to spread the strike and organization. We find, for instance, that the workers have come to the comrades raising the question: "Why doesn't the S.M.W.I.U. worry about the other departments?" While we correctly approached the idea of rooting ourselves in key departments, we failed to understand that we do this only to get a foothold throughout the entire plant.

One of the reasons why the work since the Extraordinary Con-

ference has not progressed so rapidly is because, down below in the ranks of the Party, our approach is not political enough. In many cases we find a complete failure to fight the Industrial Recovery Act. Instead of understanding the N.R.A. as the medium of the bourgeoisie and the State to defeat and attack the growing strike struggle of the workers, we talk about the strike wave occurring because of illusions among the workers that the N.R.A. is for them. In dealing with the N.R.A., where it was dealt with at all, where we were not afraid to deal with it, it was too often done in a general way, instead of relating concretely what did the N.R.A. mean to this or that category of workers.

If we take the Akron section, another concentration section in District No. 6, where the A. F. of L. has over 3,000 members in three big Akron rubber plants, our union hasn't one member. When we asked the comrades why is it that on the one hand the unemployed work is declining and on the other hand we are doing nothing to build the Rubber Workers' Union, they said, "It's the N.R.A." We asked them what happened to the membership and leadership of the Unemployed Council. They said, "They are all working." And when we asked whether these men were being used to build the union, they said "No." They had forgotten all about that. We did not place the question sharply enough, in a political sense, and did not draw the organizational conclusions, which resulted in a weakening of our mass work among the employed and unemployed.

In the election campaign in Cleveland, taking place in the midst of the whole N.R.A. drive, in which Cleveland is boasted of as the best example by the bourgeoisie, where each candidate boasts that he is the best supporter of the Roosevelt program, our election program has not one word about the N.R.A.

This right opportunism which permeates our election campaigns, especially in those localities where we have workers' tickets, this whole opportunist policy of hiding the face of the Party in the election campaign, in the course of strikes, etc., actually helps to defeat the struggles of the workers, because it cuts off the Communists as the active leaders from participating in these struggles.

The basis of the entire opportunist action is lack of understanding of the workers' ticket, and I believe that we should have initiated local united front workers' tickets, in which the Communist Party would come forward boldly and openly, and adopt a minimum program and select candidates—whether the candidate be a Communist or not is not a decisive thing—but a local united front ticket, in which we would play an open and leading role. Instead of this, as we have seen, opportunist ideas developed.

—J. WILLIAMSON.

## CONCENTRATION

### Small Progress in N. Y. District

WE can say for New York that some *small progress* has been made since the Extraordinary Conference. *I want to emphasize the "small."* But what we have done is to direct the serious attention of a section of our Party towards the basic industries. We have got some little achievements already in this connection—*achievements not to be stressed because of the shortcomings, which are the things that must be stressed.* We are checking up a little on the work being done in the basic industries. We have meetings (and have now made a system of this) involving everybody concerned in concentration in each particular industry. Our District Buro regularly takes up concentration industries. Our District representatives in the Section see to it that the Sections do likewise. This is a step forward in New York.

In Marine we find as a result of our small activities in Red Hook that we have been able to get quite a few of the longshoremen there to come toward us on one occasion or another, such as for instance a showing of "Potemkin" where about 1,000 longshoremen came. Many comrades in the trade unions are of the opinion that workers who are Republicans, Democrats and even fascists cannot be approached, but you may be surprised to know that the greatest applause when these workers saw "Potemkin" was when they showed a picture of Stalin, and these were Italian workers into whose ranks surely fascism has penetrated.

### Can Build Party

We recently called a meeting at a school and 400 or 500 of these longshoremen responded although the school was closed against us at the last moment and the meeting had to be held on the street—with some success. A little organization is being crystallized as well and this is a beginning, especially when we see that for a long time we have been "concentrating" in Red Hook and now with small efforts we are getting some results.

On the West Side, in marine, much too slowly, it is true, but nevertheless some real effort, with the result that whereas in one unit we never had any longshoremen and in the other unit we had a few, but not from the concentration docks, we have now one group and already sufficient members, three of whom are Negroes, to build a Party nucleus on one of the concentration docks.



In metal, there was a strike, mainly in the light section of the industry. But we can't say this is as a result of our concentration.

The most important metal plant that we concentrated on was the Robbins Dry Dock where there is now a strike; we find that although we have been concentrating here for a year or more that things were happening inside that we did not know about, namely, that the A. F. of L. was organizing the most basic workers in that drydock. We had a painters' group, but we did not know that the A. F. of L. was organizing. We had some effect on the strike. Through our agitation and the militancy and determination of the workers, the A. F. of L. was forced to call the strike, which has spread to several other shipyards in this port.

City transport—last week's report shows that we have a group of about 40 workers in this industry, which is a step forward, although very little—four groups with some units concentrating on some of these shops. They do not know the best methods of work, we must teach them that.

Harlem, another concentration task, some progress in several directions—one a real consolidation of the leadership in Harlem, which is a tremendous step forward because in the past, due to lack of this consolidation, all kinds of misunderstandings, all kinds of dissatisfied elements were pulling in different directions, which has now been considerably stopped and almost liquidated.

### Revolutionize Workers During Struggles

In bringing forward the Party, this must be said—that the leaders in the struggles, and particularly our trade union leaders, have not sufficiently made efforts to revolutionize the workers in the course of the struggle. If this is not done, we cannot be successful to the maximum in bringing forward the Party.

True, the Party itself, aside from the comrades within the trade unions, who are part of the Party, has a task to perform and we have had very serious shortcomings in this connection. For instance, in not one of the big strikes did the Party issue leaflets as to the role of the Party in these struggles. This was done in a section or two.

The *Daily Worker* was barred from a few of the strikes by our own comrades and we should have used leaflets through which we could have reached all of the strikers. Meetings likewise were not held to the degree they should have been. Very few, as a matter of fact, in the name of the Party inviting these strikers. We are trying to overcome this now.

I want to speak about recruiting. Comrade Stachel has already given an illustration I wanted to use, namely, in fur. We had these major struggles of the last few months. We find ourselves with the

same number in our fraction that we had preceding the struggle. One or two died, one or two kicked out, and one or two gained. But 10,000 workers, a background such as no other sector of the labor movement has, struggles over a period of years, the red issue raised dozens of times and successfully combatted, so that we have the industry organized almost 100 per cent in our union. And still only 100 members in the Party.

Another instance. A meeting of the shoe fraction, 50 present, our criticism of the leadership for not revolutionizing the strikers in the course of struggle. The rank and file picked this up and criticized the leadership for hiding the face of the Party, but when the question was asked, how many had spoken to workers about the Party and given them literature, five raised their hands out of fifty, and only one (after a period of five or six weeks of struggle) recruited a Party member. This shows the situation.

In metal a little success in recruiting, with the result that in a few of the big shops we now have nuclei, in one of them about 20 members in a shop of 300-350 workers. Some little attainment and particularly showing the possibility because these workers are also young Italian Americans and others who the other comrades say are so permeated with fascism and such good Republicans and Democrats that we would isolate ourselves from them if we raised the question of Communism. However, the small results we have had show the possibilities.

### Utilize Rising Militancy in South

ONE of the most important developments in the South in the recent period has been the growth of the fighting militant spirit among hundreds of thousands of Negro masses. This does not always show itself in an organized way. In former years, following lynchings, the general outward expression of the Negro masses was one of despondency. They didn't see a way out, there was no leadership in the fight against lynching. But, particularly following the Tuscaloosa lynching, you find everywhere the desire of the Negroes to fight in one form or another against lynching and other attacks on them. This development of the rebellious spirit breaking out in the open here and there on the part of the Negro masses in the South is of great immediate consequence to our Party.

There is one other side to this picture, and that is the question of the white toilers. Here is the weakest point in our work. However, in the last few months we can observe a new spirit among certain sections of the white workers, and here and there among the white toiling farmers. Our share-croppers write to us that two white

farmers are going along with them to the Chicago Convention in November. There can be noticed a growing interest on the part of certain sections of the white farmers and white workers and a desire for unity with the Negroes. The whites are still opposed to social equality, but at least there is the definite step forward for economic struggles with the Negro masses, which is at least one step forward in the fight for complete equality. Therefore, our important task now is to find ways and means of developing the white workers to take part in joint struggles with the Negro masses.

We have also found this: that wherever the Party has deviated, we have fallen back. Sometimes we talk about right and left mistakes, and think it is an academic struggle. Our experience in the South has shown us that every time we went off the Party line and made mistakes to the right and left on the Negro question, we fell back in our work and the progress we did make in the South came when we carried out the Party line and moved forward.

### Fail to Develop Trade Union Movement

The fundamental weakness in all our work was our failure to concentrate our forces and develop a trade union movement, to take the leadership in at least a few of the strikes that have broken out in the South. We failed to link up the various elements of the struggle. There was too much of a division between the economic struggle and the political and the national struggle. There was a failure on our part to link up the struggle of the Negro masses with the struggle in the shops.

I will give one example of the possibilities, despite the weaknesses in our work. The I.L.D. has 200 members in the ——— territory. Over 50 of them work in the ——— in Birmingham and we have not been able to bring them into the union and Party.

In view of the developing situation, the question of cadres becomes a life and death question, and I don't think the Party as a whole has grappled with this question seriously enough. We had one experience, which shows the spirit and determination of the new masses coming forward in the struggle. The District Bureau decided that I was to take up all questions with the various active comrades in Birmingham—40 Negro and 10 white comrades. I met about 10 of them each day, speaking with them personally. And the main reaction from these comrades was their desire to do more work! They wanted to work. And if we know how to handle the new forces, adopt a bold policy and a patient attitude with these new workers, we will forge the necessary instruments with which we can carry out the struggles in the coming period.

—N. ROSS.



## Communists Must Build Party During Strikes

WITH regard to recruiting into the Party, we have in the silk strike the same difficulties which other speakers have dealt with. It is true that we succeeded in recruiting about 50 silk workers into the Party in the course of the strike. However, we could have easily doubled that number. What was the difficulty? Our Union organizers, especially in Paterson, claim to be so busy that they never have time to talk to workers about joining the Party.

The dye workers have learnt much about the Party since the strike began, and the prestige of the Party has grown greatly. At one of the last meetings which I addressed, when I stated that Jack Rubinstein, a Lovestone renegade now one of the A. F. of L. leaders in Paterson, had been expelled from our Party, there was a roar of applause from the workers present—1,500 of them. But when I told a comrade at this meeting that many of these workers could be recruited into the Party, this comrade laughed; he told me I was dreaming. But the very next day I called a group of them together and seven joined the Party.

I want to give another example along the same lines, not in connection with the silk strike, but with the work of our organizer in an important section in New Jersey. This organizer has contacts with workers in shops. He walks about some sections of Trenton and is hailed by workers who know that he is a Communist organizer and have seen him active in struggles. This comrade, however, did not recruit one worker into the Party in a period of six months. When we asked him to explain this, his answer was, "How can I go to the same workers whom I am trying to organize in the shops, into revolutionary unions, or in the A. F. of L. opposition groups, and at the same time ask them to join the Communist Party? How can I speak to them as a Communist organizer, at the same time that I am acting as a union organizer?" This comrade seems to have the idea that the task of a Communist organizer is to sit in an office, and as soon as the Communist organizer begins to participate in mass work he loses identity as the *Communist* organizer and cannot recruit workers into the Party. We are beginning to break this impermissible attitude down, and we have just received a letter from the Section Organizer stating that he is at last organizing a shop nucleus in a big pottery factory. He actually talked to the leaders of the opposition group in the A. F. of L. in that shop which he himself helped to organize, and found that once he asked them to join the Party, they were ready, they agreed. Many more examples along the same lines could be given.

—R. GRECHT.

## Making the *Daily Worker* a Mass Paper

**T**HE *Daily Worker* has tremendous responsibilities and tasks in the present situation, with the war situation developing as it is, with the development toward fascism, with the strike struggles taking place in all parts of the country. The pressure on the *Daily Worker* is tremendous. The paper is compelled to react very quickly to many developments of utmost importance; therefore, in making an estimate of the paper, we must do this, not on the basis of what the paper was three or four months ago, but on the basis of our role now in organizing and leading the struggles of the workers. We have to state that while some achievements have been made in the direction of popularizing the paper, making it more interesting for newer sections of the workers, the paper has not yet been able to meet its tasks at the present time, and furthermore, we have to state the Party is not conscious of the role that such a paper can and must play in preparing and in organizing the struggles of the workers. We have to bring about an improvement both with regard to the paper and a change in the attitude of the Party toward it, because it is not being made use of now to the extent it should be, and the comrades are not cooperating sufficiently in solving the problems.

### Mass Leaders Must Cooperate to Improve *Daily*

The paper during this past period has not been able to take up the problems confronting the workers in the industries, the general political problems that arise, and become a real agitator, a real propagandist, a real organizer of the workers. This is our greatest shortcoming. The overcoming of this will require the conscious attention of all of the comrades on the staff. It will require more than that. It will require that the comrades in the unions, in the districts, the comrades who are engaged daily in mass struggles, will themselves have to be brought much closer to the staff of the *Daily Worker* in two senses.

First, they must give to the *Daily Worker* their criticism so that we are constantly checked by the comrades engaged in this work; Second, we have to have contributions from the comrades, answering the actual problems as they arise. This is almost entirely absent at the present time. We do not get this cooperation from the comrades of the unions or districts, and the result is that we are not checked in the tendency that naturally finds a place in the paper and the pressure on the paper to transform it into other than a real leading organ, capable of organizing the workers for struggle.

The next period of development in the paper must be the stressing of it as an organizer, as the agitator and propagandist of the masses, their leader in preparing them for struggles, etc. This is the weakest phase of the paper and must be overcome. In this we must have the support of the entire Party.

During the past period there has been some change in the situation of the paper. It has developed somewhat of a broader mass appeal and its circulation is increasing. At the time of the Extraordinary Party Conference the figures showed a circulation of 23,000. The average circulation for July was 24,000; for August, 26,000; for September, 28,000, and for October, up to the 15th, 30,800. This shows a steady and consistent increase in the circulation of the paper. These figures exclude the Saturday issues, which are much higher, the two Saturday issues in October being 74,000 and 44,000. This increase in circulation, which is not an inflated circulation and does not include the special orders that were sent out in one strike situation or another, as well as the bundles which were not sold, shows that the paper can be built into a mass paper.

### Weaknesses in Our Circulation Drive

In noting this increase in the circulation of the paper, however, it is also necessary to note that this increase has taken place without any well developed campaign for increase of circulation throughout the Party. We must point out particularly that the paper is not being used in strike situations to the extent it can be, and there is even a definite resistance to the development of its circulation in such situations. For example, in Paterson, where we had thousands of silk workers on strike, the *Daily* had its own correspondent there, covering the situation and adequately covering the activities. Nevertheless the circulation of the paper was very small in the Paterson area. Neither the circulation department of the paper itself, nor the comrades of the district, undertook to spread the paper in this area. The same is true in many of the other strike situations, and in some cases there has been actual resistance to bringing forward the paper on the theory that the paper would brand the strike as a "red" strike, and this has served as a means of keeping the paper out of the strike area.

When we consider the question of the finances of the paper we find here also the same failure of the districts to function in the mass organizations. The drive for \$40,000 has, until now, been a weaker drive than most any other drive conducted by the paper. We tried to avoid the development of hysterical appeals in the paper itself. We did not begin to write long and frantic obituaries. We thought it would be possible for our readers and the Party to



properly organize this campaign without these frantic appeals. But because these screaming appeals were not made, our Party members thought we were joking when we raised the question of money. But we must state that the question of the \$40,000 is not only a matter of the life of the larger paper, but it is a question of the life of the paper itself. The weakness of this campaign is that it is not organized in the Party, and the drive and the leadership of the Party has not been placed behind the campaign.

The staff of the *Daily Worker* is very conscious of the shortcomings of the paper. And we shall strive very hard to bring about the changes that are necessary in it. But we must stress that the *Daily Worker* will perform its functions properly, only providing that the Party as a whole gives political collaboration to the paper, political criticism to the paper, and provided at the same time the Party sees the necessity of building the paper among the masses of workers.

—C. HATHAWAY.

## YOUTH WORK

### Party Must Help Y.C.L. Win Youth for Class Battles

**T**HE sharpening class relations in the country, the N.R.A., the preparations for war, and the developments toward fascism, all raise to a new plane the question of work among the younger generation.

We cannot call ourselves a revolutionary Party without realizing that the working class youth play a very decisive and determining role in the class war. But too often our Party looks upon the question of work among the youth the same as work among other sections of the population, without realizing that it is the youth who will carry the guns in the next imperialist war and will carry the guns in the final civil war.

The winning of the young generation in America is not a very difficult task once the Party understands its importance. There is no section of the American population today which is so ready for the revolutionary way out of the crisis as the working class youth. The youth in America today have no future before them under the present system. Capitalism can offer them nothing and millions of them are beginning to see this.

This change in the working class youth, in our possibilities of work among them, is experienced every day in the week, on every battlefield of the working class. The youth are in the forefront of the picket lines, of the unemployed demonstrations, in every single struggle in which the working class and the Party are engaged at the present time.

While I emphasize this radicalization of the working youth, I want also to emphasize one other point, that is, that this youth, this new generation in America, has not lived through the experiences of the last war and the post-war period. This new young generation does not remember the betrayals of the reformists, and for this reason, despite their militancy, they are susceptible to the left phrases of the reformists and can be misled by them. It is also important to remember that even the fascists attempt by the utilization of left phrases to create a stronghold among the working class youth, especially among the unemployed masses of youth.

### How Do We Fight for the Youth?

The Party must understand that the question of winning the young generation has as great an importance today to the revolutionary movement as the development of mass trade unions and the development of a mass movement among the Negro people. But how do we fight for these youth? How can we talk about winning the youth for the revolutionary way out of the crisis, when in practice we have no different approach to the masses of youth than the reformist organizations? First of all, I want to ask the comrades some questions: Is it an accident that the first position that our revolutionary trade unions and our Party took on the question of child labor was no different from that of Roosevelt and the A. F. of L.? Is it an accident that none of our unions today is raising sharply the question of discrimination against the youth as a result of the industrial codes? These are no accidents whatever.

The Electrical Industrial Code signed by the manufacturers and agreed to by the A. F. of L. has the following clause: "Employers shall not employ anyone under the age of 16 years." The code drawn up by the Steel and Metal Workers' Industrial Union for the General Electric says, "There shall be no employment of youth under the age of 18 years." The A. F. of L. and Roosevelt state no youth under the age of 16, and our unions go one step further, they say no youth under the age of 18!

Unless we wipe out this reformist approach to the youth question in our leadership, in our Party and unions, all the way down the line, we are not going to make a change in youth work. You

can't win the youth for the revolutionary way out of the crisis until you prove to them in practice that there is a difference between us and the reformists.

Every time we come here we beat ourselves on the breast and say, "We must build a mass Y.C.L." But if we fail to understand that the youth in America have special problems, special demands, that we must fight for, we will never build a mass Y.C.L. in America despite all our good intentions.

### **Must Understand Youth Problems to Give Leadership**

When we have this understanding of the youth problem, then I think we will have some leadership for the youth work. Then, the District Organizers of our Party, instead of saying that they are too busy to give leadership to the Y.C.L., will understand that giving leadership to the Y.C.L. is as important as giving leadership to any other mass work. Then the *Daily Worker* will pay attention to the youth question, and every editorial in the *Daily Worker* which deals with the struggles of the masses of workers will also speak about the special problems of the youth. The comrades who edit the paper will understand that the Y.C.L. is the closest co-worker of the Party in the struggle for the majority of the working class, and that the *Daily Worker* must become an instrument to bring the message of the Party also to the broad masses of American youth.

In regard to the special role of the Y.C.L. and the tasks of the leadership of the Y.C.L. We are trying to do our bit of the work. Since the Extraordinary Conference, we have doubled our shop nuclei from 22 to more than 40. We have made some headway in the Young People's Socialist League, also in the struggle against war. But if anyone believes that the weak forces in the Y.C.L. alone are going to build a mass revolutionary youth movement, they are badly mistaken. How do you expect the Y.C.L. in New York, for example, to become a larger organization than the Party, when in the Party you have some 6,000 members and a relatively developed leadership, and in the Y.C.L. you have a membership of 1,000 with a relatively weak leadership? I want to raise this sharply because the Party leaders in the districts leave to the weak youth leaderships in their districts the sole responsibility for work among the youth. If this continues we are not going to make the necessary headway in our work among the American youth.

—G. GREEN.



## NEGRO WORK

### Must Root Out White Chauvinism to Carry Through Open Letter

**I**T is stated correctly in the reports of Comrade Browder and in other speeches made that we can record certain successes in the carrying through of the tasks that were set by the Open Letter. But at the same time, I want to state here that on one question, the question of work among the Negroes, I do not think we can say that real progress has been made in the application of the Open Letter and the resolutions of the Fourteenth Plenum.

One bright spot in our movement in regard to the Negro question is the work of District 17.

The discrimination against Negroes under the N.R.A. codes, that is, the exclusion of Negroes from industries where large numbers of Negroes have been occupied, the whole question of the cotton plowing under in the South, and the new lynch wave—in this situation the Party is lagging behind in the Negro work more than in any other work.

### We Lag Behind in Negro Work

In the trade union work, we can also record no real advances so far as the Negro masses are concerned. In the recruitment into the trade unions, where we have made some progress, particularly steel and mining unions—this recruitment has not brought a sufficient proportion of Negro workers into the union.

At the same time we can say that the campaign against lynching, and the whole campaign of the Scottsboro case, has almost completely collapsed. This happens at a time when lynching is almost a daily occurrence and the struggle against it is one of the most urgent demands of the Negro people.

The failure to concretize, to develop local struggles, is the explanation for the collapse of the campaign against Scottsboro and lynchings. This is the reason why we are able to develop tremendous mass movements around dramatic moments in the Scottsboro campaign, such as after the Decatur trial, and then in a few weeks this movement collapses.

Where are we to look for the source of our weaknesses? In our failure to seek out and develop struggles around the specific demands of the workers, particularly in the shops, factories and neighborhood.

The Open Letter says the following in this connection:

"The Party can stand at the head of the national revolutionary struggle of the Negro masses against American imperialism and if it energetically carries through the decisions of the Fourteenth Plenum of the Central Committee on work among Negroes."

What does the carrying through of these decisions mean? This means first of all that we direct our work to the organization of proletarian and semi-proletarian Negroes to bring them into the Party, the revolutionary trade unions, organizations of poor farmers. The Fourteenth Plenum says that the red trade unions must become the main channel for our work among Negroes. The Open Letter also elaborates this point and says:

"In all mass actions, strikes and unemployed struggles the Party must pay particular attention that in formulating practical demands, it takes into consideration and gives expression to the special forms of exploitation, oppression and denial of the rights of the employed and unemployed Negro masses."

### **Failure to Raise Negro Demands Costly**

Now, comrades, this has been stated often. It is not new. But it is quite clear that up to the present time we have not sufficiently understood this and it has not been seriously considered by the Party or the trade unions. And why is this? Why do we fail to raise the demands of the Negro masses, particularly in the revolutionary trade unions? We will find that behind this failure, which at times takes the form of resistance, is a social-democratic concept which still exists in our movement; namely: a tendency to regard the struggle for equal rights for Negroes not as a part of the general class struggle of the workers, but as something apart from and even detrimental to the class struggle—a failure to understand the relationship between the struggles for Negro rights, and the general class struggles of the working class, failure to understand that the Negroes in their struggle for equal rights are allies of the working class as emphasized very sharply in the Open Letter. Now this, comrades, is a form of expression of white chauvinism in our movement which is particularly prevalent in our revolutionary trade unions.

We have a most glaring example of this attitude in San Francisco in connection with the local election campaign there. Here we had the crassest capitulation before white chauvinism on the part of the District leadership. First of all they failed to put forward any Negroes on the local election ticket. But this is not all. The Negro question, as well as the question of the other national minorities in

San Francisco, that is, the Japanese, Chinese and Filipinos, were not raised concretely but in a very abstract manner in the election program. On these questions the program had the sole demand, "unemployment relief without discrimination on account of nationality, creed or color."

Now, comrades, this mistake of the comrades in San Francisco had very serious repercussions among the Negroes there. Immediately after we had noticed this omission, we received a protest circular that was gotten out by some non-Party white fellow. This circular had been distributed among various Negro organizations and called upon the workers of these organizations to send in their protest to the District Office of the C. P.

Behind this error it is quite clear that the comrades think that the importance of the Negro question and the other national questions there was to be measured solely on the basis of the numerical strength of the Negroes and other national groups in San Francisco, i.e., their numerical proportion in regard to the rest of the population. If considered on this basis we have to come to the conclusion that the Negro question is of small importance in San Francisco because there are only 21,000 out of a population of 750,000. It is quite clear that this sort of mechanical conception has nothing in common with the Bolshevik theory on the national question.

### Building L.S.N.R. Immediate Task

In regard to the L.S.N.R. Our main emphasis, of course, is building up of the Party and the revolutionary trade unions, Unemployed Councils and poor farmers' organizations among the Negro workers. However, in addition to these main forms, we must meet the need of the rapidly developing movement among the Negro masses, to provide the necessary forms for its fullest development by taking up the task of launching the League of Struggle for Negro Rights.

EDITORIAL NOTE: *Since this speech has been made, the L.S.N.R. has worked out a program, set up a national council and has launched a nation-wide campaign against lynching. Directives have been sent out by the C. C. for the campaign and the initial steps to be taken for the building of a mass movement for Negro rights. All Party members and especially functionaries should become acquainted with the policy, program and tactics of the L.S.N.R. by studying the new 5c pamphlet, EQUALITY, LAND AND FREEDOM, containing the draft program and by-laws of the L.S.N.R., and by reading the special material in the Daily Worker on this question.*



## UNEMPLOYED WORK

### Low Ebb of Unemployed Work Contrary to Open Letter Line

**T**HERE is a serious situation among the unemployed. It seems as though our Party comrades have read only the first part of the Open Letter, but they have not read the second part which calls for organization of the unemployed and a struggle for unemployment and social insurance. The struggle for unemployment insurance has hardly begun.

This is going to be a very bleak winter for the unemployed. I don't think it is necessary to go into any details except to say one thing: the number is hardly diminishing, but on the contrary we can expect it will increase, and the relief appropriations are continually decreasing. This is true of the Federal, State and city governments, if we can accept the statements that are made. None of the promises of N.R.A. can be fulfilled.

Our propaganda against the N.R.A. has not been concentrated in a general sense. One thing is clear: It is up to us, if the workers are not to be drawn into further illusions, but are to follow our leadership, to carry out concrete programs and concrete propaganda. That is, we must apply the facts of the codes to each city, each industry, so the workers will understand concretely how the code applies to them.

### Uneven Development of Work Because of Lack of Direction

What is the state of unemployed work? In Pittsburgh, to a lesser degree in Detroit, and to a still lesser degree in Chicago, the movement is going forward. In some districts, the situation is appalling. We are at the lowest ebb in the unemployed situation in New York. In other districts, we have practically no connections. Nevertheless, toward the West the movement is developing very well. Only recently the Washington Unemployed League, which Muste thought was his, affiliated to the Unemployed Councils together with all other organizations in the State. In Portland, Oregon, where we have a small unemployed council, two other large organizations with a membership of 8,000 to 10,000 are in existence and our organization had no knowledge of them or contact with them at all. Nevertheless Comrade Benjamin, who was making a tour of the State, was able to bring them into contact with each other and already they

have had a successful joint demonstration. In Los Angeles, where the Unemployed League claims it has 126,000 members, we had a conference whereby we brought 84 organizations of the city of Los Angeles together to plan a struggle for adequate relief and unemployment insurance. This is very important since the base of the Unemployed League in Los Angeles is the barter movement.

In certain sections some unemployed work is being done, but it receives little direction. In the South the districts are so large and scattered that the movement does not make sufficient headway. Nevertheless, the Party, I.L.D., and the Unemployed Councils play, perhaps, the leading role in the South.

We will be able to estimate the status of the movement when we say that the taking out of cards and getting stamps has slumped to a great degree. On the other hand, the Muste, the New York Socialist organization and the Borders movement in Chicago have all sagged very seriously.

Our united front has been at the top and has not penetrated down below. Our united front with Muste has been entirely at the top. Although at the convention in Columbus and Cleveland agreements were made, we have been able to get no action out of the Musteites, as far as concrete activity in the localities is concerned. Work was begun by the District in Columbus, which is the national and state center of the Muste movement, only a few weeks ago. The experience we had there should convince all comrades that if we will do work on the basis of the concrete situation we will be able to build up a united front from below.

### **Mechanical Party Control of Unemployed Councils**

On the question of the Unemployed Councils and the Party. I think there is no organization under the leadership of our Party that gets the treatment given to the Unemployed Councils. Go into any of our unions or I.L.D. branches and take an organizer out or put one in, and you will have a rebellion of the whole mass organization. But so far as the Unemployed Councils are concerned, they are "ours". We think we can remove and appoint and do exactly as we please. The organizers that we put in are responsible to the Party but have no responsibility to the masses. Second, we have a fluctuating corps of Party members in the Unemployed Council. It is time for the districts and sections to establish that a certain number of capable unemployed comrades shall have unemployed work as their only Party task. They shall remain there, work there, build up new forces and develop the organization. At the present time the membership does not know from day to day who the leadership is.

Our unions, with the exception of the marine, steel and mining,



are doing nothing. I want to ask whether unemployed work is an inherent part of our revolutionary trade union movement or not? I think our comrades do not realize what tremendous value the unemployed can be for organizing shops. We had a concrete example of this in the McKeesport strike which was successful largely because we were able to bring on the picket line thousands of workers who were unemployed in joint struggle with the employed. The failure to do this work on the part of our unions, can be a serious menace to our shop and trade union work. We have to regard the building up of the unemployed councils simultaneously with the building up of the trade unions, as of the utmost importance. In Cleveland I was informed they were trying to recruit Negro strike breakers. This is extremely serious. We may be faced with race riots because we are not carrying on sufficient work among the unemployed.

Then there is the matter of the reforestation camps and the veterans in the camps. We are doing little or no work here. In all the fascist countries, especially in Germany, such camps form the best recruiting ground for fascism. We must begin serious work in these camps.

The campaign for unemployment insurance was begun on August 5th. So far as most districts are concerned, they haven't even begun. Our fractions among the unemployed have not taken it up. This is an issue for the whole working class. I would like to know what district has formulated a plan to take the unemployment insurance campaign into the organizations and really rally support. By means of the unemployment insurance issue a mass movement can be created in every district whereby we will be able to reach mass organizations that we have not reached before. This central task is being neglected. The districts must wake up to the necessity of doing this work, or the campaign may slip out of our hands under the demagoguery of the social-fascists.

#### I. AMTER.

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It is necessary, above all, to instill the most complete understanding into *the whole Party* that the campaign for social insurance, alongside and including the struggle against wage-cuts with the shortened week (irrespective of whether such a short week is adopted) and the struggle for immediate aid for the unemployed, touches vitally, in addition to the anti-war campaign, the most urgent and burning interests of the proletariat, and that this campaign at the present time is the chief link to be seized to tug the whole chain, that this campaign demands the mobilization of all Party forces for a whole period of indefinite length, and that a planned, "unbroken, every-day and persistent conduct of this campaign is necessary."—*Organize Mass Struggle for Social Insurance*, by S. I. Gusev and Earl Browder.