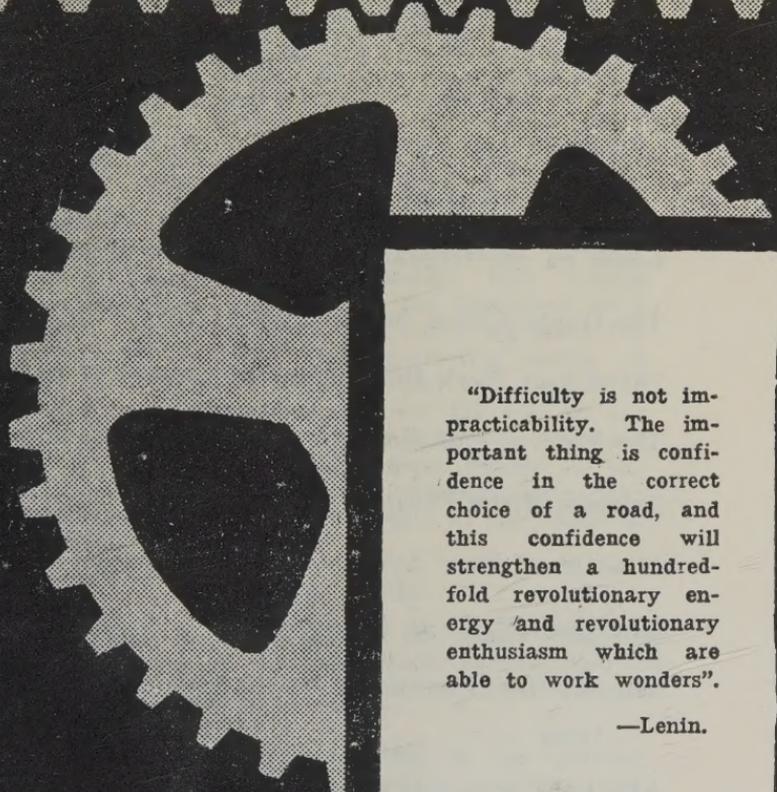


# Party Organizer



"Difficulty is not impracticability. The important thing is confidence in the correct choice of a road, and this confidence will strengthen a hundred-fold revolutionary energy and revolutionary enthusiasm which are able to work wonders".

—Lenin.

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# PARTY ORGANIZER

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## Lenin On the Organization of the Communist Party

**L**ENIN, following the lead of Marx given in the Communist Manifesto, defined the Party as the vanguard of the working class. In chapter two of the Communist Manifesto by Marx and Engels, we read the following:

"The Communists . . . in the proletarian movement in various countries put forward and champion the common interests of the whole of the proletariat, irrespective of national interests . . . in the various stages of development through which the proletarian struggle against the bourgeoisie is proceeding; they always champion the common interests of the movement as a whole. Thus, the Communists practically represent the most determined and the most progressive section of the Labor Parties of all countries, and with regard to theory they have this advantage over the rest of the masses of the proletariat, that they understand the conditions, the progress, and the general results of the Labor Movement. They have no interests other than those which coincide with the interests of the whole of the proletariat."

### Role of the Party

Lenin expressed the same idea in the theses passed by the Second Congress of the Communist International, on "The Role of the Communist Party in the Proletarian Revolution". In these theses we read:

"The Communist Party is a section of the working class; its most progressive, most class conscious, and therefore its most revolutionary section. A Communist Party is formed by the selection of the most class conscious, most courageous and most far-sighted workers. The Communist Party has no interests differing from the interests of the working class. A Communist Party differs from the rest of the mass of the workers in that it sees the whole of the historical path of the working class as a whole, and strives at all the turning points of this path to champion, not individual groups, not

individual trades, but the interests of the working class as a whole. The Communist Party is the organizational-political lever by the aid of which the most progressive section of the working class directs the mass of the proletariat and semi-proletariat along the right path."

In his speech at the Second Congress of the Communist International Lenin said:

"A political Party can combine only a minority of the class, in the same way as the really class conscious workers throughout the whole of capitalist society represent only a minority of all the workers. For that reason we are compelled to admit that only a class conscious minority can guide the vast masses of the workers and get them to follow it . . . If the minority is really class conscious, if it succeeds in getting the masses to follow it, if it is able to reply to every question that comes up on the order of the day, then it is in essence a Party . . . If the minority is not able to lead the masses, link itself closely up with them, then it is not a Party and is good for nothing even if it calls itself a Party."

### Organizational Principles of Lenin

Lenin left to us the fundamental organizational principles of Party organization which have remained in force to this day, and which should be thoroughly studied by every Party member. These fundamental principles are as follows:

1. The doctrine that the Communist Party is the vanguard of the working class.
2. The doctrine of the formation of the principle cadres of the Party, so-called professional revolutionaries.
3. Activity of all the members of the Party, their direct participation in the work of the organization.
4. The basis of the Party organization, its "fortresses" are the factory nuclei.
5. The Communist Party, through Communist fractions in non-Party workers' and peasants' organizations, must link up closely with the masses of the workers and peasants and take an active part in all their struggles, against their exploiters and oppressors and lead the struggles through the Communist nuclei and Communist fractions.
6. Democratic centralism in the Party and in the Communist International.
7. Iron discipline for the proletarian Party.

To carry out these fundamental organizational principles of Leninism, our Party has much work to do. With regard to our Party, it may be said today, what Lenin wrote in 1900 in No. 1 of the "Iskra". He wrote:

"The question of organization is one of our most painful questions. In this respect we have lagged behind considerably from the old workers in the Russian revolutionary movement. We must frankly confess this defect. We must train men and women who will devote to the revolution, not merely their spare evenings, but the whole of their lives. We must build up an organization so large as to introduce division of labor in the various spheres of our work."

### Party Must Be Ready

In 1901 in an article entitled "Where to Begin", Lenin wrote:

"We must work at forming a militant organization and conducting political agitation even in 'drab' and peaceful conditions, and even in the period of 'declining revolutionary spirit'. **More than that, it is precisely in such conditions and in such a period that this work is necessary, because in the moment of outbreaks and outbursts it will be too late to set up an organization.** The organization must be ready in order to be able to develop its activity immediately."

This applies in its entirety to the Communist Party of U.S.A.

We will be able to fulfill Lenin's will in the sphere of organization only when we have a Party closely linked up with the masses of the workers and the toiling peasantry, similar to the Bolshevik Party, a Party capable under difficult conditions of leading the struggle of the working class and the toiling peasantry.

"In the present epoch of acute class war", wrote Lenin in "Conditions for Affiliation to the Comintern"—  
"The Communist Party will be able to fulfill its duty only if it will be organized in the most centralized manner, if it will be governed by an iron discipline, bordering on military discipline, and if the Party center will be an authoritative organ with extensive powers enjoying the general confidence of the Party.

"The unity of the Party, internal compactness and strict revolutionary discipline in its ranks, are not less necessary now than in the period of civil war. Finally, flexibility of organization, the ability quickly to adapt

it to changing conditions,—while preserving the fundamental principles of Bolshevik organization—are necessary.”

In future issues of the Party Organizer we will deal specifically with the seven fundamental principles of organization laid down by Lenin. In this issue we have dealt only with the first point. To assist us to speedily carry out the testament of Lenin the Party Organizer will bring to the Party members Lenin's fundamental ideas on the question of organization, quoting Lenin's teachings on each of these points.

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## The Group System In the Units

**T**he control of membership books has been carried through in most of the units. We set ourselves the task: that through the control we will bring back into the Party those members who for one reason or another dropped out of the Party and will activate those who have become passive in the last period. It is too early yet to establish whether we succeeded in fulfilling this task. Only a few districts sent in the report to the center, and from these it is very difficult to draw conclusions for the whole Party.

Let us take one example. New York District combined the membership control with a thorough registration of the whole membership. Up to date about 4,500 members were controlled and registered. In three months (Sept., Oct. and Nov.) the average dues payment in the district was about 4,500. Without any speculation we could accept the fact that if three months dues payment averages 4,500 members, then the actual active membership in the district cannot be below this figure. But we know very well that quite a number of members drop out of the Party, don't pay dues, do not attend unit meetings. How is it possible that only 4,500 were controlled in the district. Was a conscious effort made to bring back the comrades who have dropped out or become passive? Something went wrong with the control.

One fact however remains. New York District registered on December 23rd about 4,500 members. 4,500 Party members came voluntarily to the unit meetings, or to the Section Headquarters, to pay their dues, presented their membership book for control and received their control stamp. But—immediately after control week, only 3,679 dues stamps were sold at the next unit meeting. Let us assume that every sold stamp represents one Party member. How can we explain that out of 4,500 registered members, who were supposed to be acti-

vized through the control, about 1000 do not appear at the next unit meeting and do not buy stamps? Are these comrades shirking Party work? By no means. Only a very small minority of these 1000 comrades are inactive. The overwhelming majority are active in the unions, or in one of the various mass organizations. Nevertheless, the fact remains that about 20% of the membership failed to pay dues, and a certain number of these members, although they were not busy elsewhere on that night, did not come to the unit meeting.

What will be the situation next week? If every Party member would pay dues, a minimum of 6,300 (5,300 current dues, plus 1,000 back dues) stamps should be sold (assuming that no new members were taken into the Party, otherwise the number sold should be 6,300 plus the number of new members). Thereafter the dues payments should not fall below the number of registered members plus the number of new members. Perhaps the New York comrades will try their best to reach this figure. But we know from experience that if we fall back in dues payments one week, it is quite difficult to make up for it.

Is this only a question of dues payments? As one comrade put the question: "So what? Are you interested in getting dues from your members?" We have to understand one thing very clearly. The neglect of dues payments is the first step on the road out of the Party. The first sign that a comrade is not satisfied with the work of the unit, or fraction, or unit Buro or Section committee can be seen in the fact that he begins to fall behind in his dues. Perhaps he has a grievance against someone, maybe he has been overburdened with work, or on the contrary, he may not have been assigned any responsible task. Something is wrong, either with him, or with the method of work of the Party organization. He does not pay dues, and we let him drift away. We lose him from the Party, and we lose thousands of members each year.

In the registration taken at the beginning of 1933, New York District reported 4,250 members. Today, almost a year later, approximately the same number are reported. What about the 2588 new members, who entered the Party during 1933? New York District today should have 6838 members, but less than 5,000 are reported. The same situation exists in almost every district. We recruit monthly a minimum of 1500 members throughout the country. But in spite of this, we have a slow, almost invisible growth.

### The Way Out

Can we find some method by which this evil of tremendous turnover can be eliminated, or at least reduced to a minimum? Yes, we can. First of all, proper help and guid-

ance by the higher committees can be given to the units. Secondly, we can establish better unit leadership, which will be able to lead the unit membership in mass work, to improve the inner life of the unit, and thirdly, the establishment of the group system in the units will be a powerful instrument by which the bad situation in many units will be overcome.

What is the group system? Let us take an example. A street or town unit has 25 or 30 members. They live in a territory covering several blocks. The members of the unit see each other only at unit meetings, or when two comrades go out together to sell the **Daily Worker**, distribute leaflets, or canvas the houses. The Buro has no other connection with the membership except the unit meetings, or the mail. It would be impossible for the unit organizer to have personal contact with 25-30 members. Because of this situation, the members don't know much about each other. They know one another's Party name. In most cases, they know little more. In the smaller towns the situation is a little better, but not much. In a unit of 25-30 members, it is very difficult for the Unit Organizer to keep in touch with every member. He cannot help the members in their daily mass work, in their political development, etc.

We must find some method by which the members of the unit can get close to each other, and help each other in the work, by which the more developed comrades will help the weaker ones to understand the problems, the more active members activate the passive ones, etc. We must find some means, some form, which will help us to change the present situation.

What is this form? **The group system.**

We have to go ahead boldly with the establishment of the group system in the units. We already have a number of good experiences in certain districts.

How do we organize these groups? We divide the membership of the unit into five or six groups. A group should have no less than four and no more than seven members. **The basis of the group is the territory where the comrades live.** If we have five comrades living near each other, they will comprise one group. In another part of the unit territory, in another block, or on another street, four members of the unit who live near each other will be another group, and so on. In each group, the best comrade is selected as the leader of the group. If we understand the task of the group leader, and the role of the group, then it will be clear why we propose the best comrade of the group, and not a member of the unit buro as the leader.

## How the Group Functions

What is the task of the group leader? He or she is responsible to the Unit Buro for every member of the group. He will visit the members of the group, find out everything about them, about their family life, their home life, their activities in the union or the mass organization, and in this way, help the unit to give proper assignments to the members. The group leader should see to it that every member of his group attends every unit meeting, and should be in a position to inform the unit buro why the member could not come to the meeting. The group leader should know exactly how his group members are developing, what they are reading, etc. He should organize a study circle in the home of one of the members of the group, where an editorial in the Daily Worker, or an article in the Communist will be discussed, or certain books systematically studied. The group leader must know how the members of the group stand with their dues, and must see to it that everybody is always in good standing. If some member of the group cannot attend a given unit meeting, the group leader must collect the money for the stamp and buy it for him at the unit meeting. A good group leader will go into the homes of his group members before unit meetings, and will ask them one by one to come to the meeting. The group leader will help the comrades of his group to carry out their tasks, and will bring the assignment to the member who could not attend the unit meeting. The group leader will see to it that every task assigned by the unit to his group members is carried out. The group leader will report to the unit buro about the problems he faces in the group, about the activities of the individual members in the various mass organizations, and in the territory of the unit.

The establishment of well functioning groups will contribute to the solution of a number of problems that the Party has been facing for a long time, such as: 1. Activizing every Party member to participate in the mass work of the unit. 2. Better control of the carrying out of assignments. 3. We will know better the activity of the members in the mass organizations. 4. We will secure better attendance of the members at the unit meetings. 5. We will have better discussions in the units, because the members of the various groups will raise problems which they have discussed in their circles. 6. A more friendly relationship between the members of the units will be established. 7. The members of the units, as well as of the sections in the big cities, and towns, can be mobilized through group leaders in a few hour's notice, instead of having to wait for the next meeting, or being forced to use the government apparatus—the mails. 8. We will be able to build the Party around each group, providing the groups on assignment from the

units develop activity in the territory of the group. 9. We can develop revolutionary competition between the Party groups in Party recruiting, **Daily Worker** subscriptions, etc. 10. Last, but not least, through the group leaders we will be able to make every member a member in good standing.

With a good functioning group system in the units, New York would not have 1,000 members staying away from unit meetings and not paying dues, immediately after registration. The group system will help tremendously to stop fluctuation. It will help to develop new forces for the Party, because each group leader, with proper attention from the Buro and Section Committee will become a potential leader to take the place of the present leadership in the event that it is removed by government terror, or that it is promoted to higher positions of leadership.

## Division of Work Helps Improve Activity of Units

**A** VISIT to four or five units, especially in the largest districts, discloses one of the reasons for the poor functioning of many of the units.

The major part of the unit meeting is spent in assigning work; there are many cases where comrades, one by one, with good or not good reasons, decline the assignment of certain tasks; and in most cases the reasons given are the necessity for attending a whole series of meetings or being too busy in some mass organization.

There are cases where in a unit three or four comrades are active in two or three and sometimes four organizations. The result is that while busy everywhere these comrades have no time to devote to the unit and many times don't attend unit meetings for weeks. Such a situation, especially in the smaller units, brings the whole unit to inactivity and sometimes to demoralization. While there are comrades who are really active and conscientiously doing work in the trade unions and other mass organizations, yet because of our failure to check up on the activities of the individual members of the units, there remains a category of comrades who use the excuse of being active in some organization as a way of escaping certain duties of unit work.

This is not the first time that we have discussed this problem and proposed the proper solution. Still we are confronted with it for the simple reason that all the past decisions on this matter either remain on paper or we have failed to follow them up.

The way out of this situation is the proper division of work among the Party members. Is it necessary that com-

rades maintain three or four functions, being in leading positions or active in three or four organizations, to the extent that they are not able to give any time to unit work or attend unit meetings? Certainly not. The fact that there are comrades who sometimes are in two or three leading positions, clearly shows that other comrades are practically barred from certain activities, that there is lack of faith in the development of new forces, that the idea of the "indispensability" of certain comrades which still prevails here and there, has to be outrooted. This is not all. The fact that many comrades are so busy—yes, doing Party work, many times very important work—to the extent of divorcing themselves from the activities of the units, shows that we are confronted with an underestimation and misunderstanding of the role of the units as the basic organization of the Party. To whom are these comrades responsible for this work? In many instances they are responsible to other comrades who are practically in the same position—also divorced from the units and not responsible to the unit which is their Party organization.

This problem, of course, cannot be solved within 24 hours. **It must be solved, however, and in the shortest time.** It is the task of the District Org. Commissions and Section Org. Commissions to look into the situation and take drastic steps to divide the work, starting with the comrades in leading positions. This will not only relieve many comrades of some functions, but will bring forward new forces and, more than that, many of the capable comrades, in giving more time to the unit activities or to the activities of leading organs on a section and district scale, will be instrumental in strengthening the activity of the Party as a whole.

The units from now on must check up on the activities of every individual member, making a distinction between those comrades active in the mass organizations who are assigned to certain tasks, and those who are merely members of the fractions. The units must call to the attention of the sections the cases of those comrades handling too many functions in order to facilitate the tasks of the section or district committee in dividing the work.

The moment when units will complete a record of the various activities of their members, will demand regular reports, will guide them in their work, and will practice the division of work also in the units, will distinguish between the activity of the active members in the organizations and the activity of the fraction members, then and only then will many of the excuses disappear, and this will certainly be a step forward in improving the unit life and unit activities.

—F, BROWN.

## The Work of Our Unit and Party Recruitment

**T**HE 5th Ward Unit, E., for a period of weeks and months was in a state of stagnation. The comrades were working hard as individuals, in their Block Committees and other organizations. Some recruitment was carried on, but as fast as workers were recruited, so quickly would they drop out.

At one of the unit meetings, the comrades took up the problem of dropping 7 or 8 Party members from the lists because they did not attend their unit meetings. Most of the comrades present failed to realize the fact that it was mainly due to the poor inner life of the unit, the manner in which our meetings were being conducted, our own failure to provide sufficient interest in the work and activities of the Party that failed to keep these workers in our ranks after we had attracted them into the Party.

For instance, at one of the unit meetings, we had exactly 17 points on the order of business. Meeting after meeting would take up the same dry routine—reading of communications, tickets, and what not. A checkup with comrades showed that our Unit, which comprises mainly Negro workers, had never yet had a discussion on the Party position on the Negro question.

In connection with the Recruitment Drive, our unit has undertaken not only to recruit, but to keep the new recruits in the Party—a really worthy Communist ambition that every other unit of the Party and every individual comrade should strive for.

First: discussions in the unit are being organized on an average of twice a month. Comrades in the unit are assigned to give these talks on burning issues and problems of the day.

Second: the cutting down and eliminating of unnecessary business as much as possible. This is only a matter of planning the agenda, and the Unit Buros actually functioning and bringing in proposals. The usual tendency is for the unit to rehash every question that the unit buro has already taken up. This can easily be eliminated with a little bit of planned work.

Third: when new comrades attend the meeting of the unit, the unit buro assigns a comrade to make a short talk on what the Party is, welcoming and greeting the comrades in joining our ranks, and explaining what are the Party duties, tasks, and responsibilities of every Party comrade.

When we first introduced this into our unit, the response was excellent. The two new comrades were given an idea of what the Party is and what is expected of them. It made them feel at home—that it was their Party, and they were no strangers in it.

While no one proposes that this procedure should become a formality or a ritual, yet we believe that short 10-minute talks to new comrades when they come into the unit meetings, help to draw them closer into our ranks.

Fourth: at the close of the unit meeting, we ask the new comrades their opinion of our meeting, its conduct, etc. It is interesting to note that the first time we did this, one new worker made some real criticism of our unit. He stated that he was very much impressed by the problems we took up, he now is beginning to realize that our movement is a world wide one, that he is glad to have joined the Party, has obtained a good idea of how the Party works. "But", he declared, "you prolong your business unnecessarily. You repeat yourselves too often. There seems to be some duplication. Become more efficient at your work." Of course, the comrade was very hesitant in making this criticism, but it surely emphasized the weaknesses of the inner life, and the work of our unit (and incidentally, probably every other unit in the Party).

Fifth: Introducing more social life. Social life is only known to small circles of personal friends in the movement. The Party as such, the comrades in the Party meet each other weekly at meetings, in the Block Committees, in delegations, demonstrations, eviction fights, etc. Insofar as developing a real comradely and Communist spirit amongst comrades, this is practically unknown.

### Social Life Important

Our unit decided to hold a little social gathering at the home of one of the comrades last Monday (New Years' night). Every comrade promised to bring a little food, coffee, cake, sugar, etc., along, and another comrade promised to supply the music. Over 30 comrades showed up, Negro and white. Ten or Twelve were non-Party.

The comrades ate and drank, sang songs, danced, spoke to each other, and had a real swell time. Later on, the music was stopped and a short talk was given on the Party, and 5 workers were recruited into the Party. All comrades declared that they never spent a more enjoyable evening.

The question of social evenings is not only necessary from an inner Party standpoint (that of improving the life

of our units), but from a broader political standpoint as well. The bringing together of our white and Negro comrades in these social gatherings (and not only at big dances, meetings, etc.), does very much to really convince our comrades that the fight for full social equality is not only a hackneyed phrase that we use for special purposes and mass meetings—but is a living reality practiced and shown to be true in the daily lives of Communists.

Sixth: discussions arranged on topics of local interest and importance. For instance, one of the best discussions our unit had was on the question of the struggle for Negro school teachers getting jobs in the city of Pittsburgh.

Another excellent discussion was provoked by a comrade's report on the picture of Lenin painted by a Negro miner in Greensburg, Pa., which was on display in the Party office. The whole discussion centered around Negro culture, about the oppression that stifles and attempts to kill the tremendous latent potentialities and surging creative spirit of the Negro toilers in this country.

The whole discussion brought out in the sharpest manner the whole national character of the Negro problem in the U. S. A.

The picture drawn by this Negro artist is surely a masterpiece and evaluated as such by the comrades who saw it.

Insofar as recruitment is concerned, it is not only the problem of numbers and getting cards filled out. It is both a question of quantity—increasing our Party quantitatively, and especially qualitatively. The improvement of our inner life, the question of giving some few and simple tasks to new comrades and not overburdening them with tasks immediately; the problem of involving these workers immediately into our ranks and making them feel at home, all of these tasks go hand in hand with the job of further extending the mass work of all units in the neighborhoods and shops, and the individual mass work of each comrade.

—PHIL FRANKFIELD.

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**T**HE Proletariat has no other weapon in the fight for power except organization... The proletariat can become and inevitably will become an indomitable force only because its intellectual unity created by the principles of Marxism is fortified by the material unity of organization which welds millions of toilers into an army of the working class."—Lenin—"One Step Forward, Two Back".

## Lessons of the Packing Strike

(Resolution of Party Fraction, Adopted By District Bureau,  
District No. 9)

**T**HE Armour Packing strike was the first big strike struggle in a basic industry organized and led by the Party and T.U.U.L. in the district. It was an expression of the widespread radicalization of the workers, and the growing disillusionment in the Roosevelt program and the N.R.A., which has resulted in the strike wave throughout the country, and the beginning of the first struggles in the packing industry since 1921. The beginning of strike struggles in the district (Austin, South St. Paul, Minneapolis, Duluth), and the perspective of increasing struggles in the immediate future make it all the more necessary that the lessons of the Armour strike be thoroughly analyzed by the Party, and the necessary conclusions drawn.

The building of the Packing House Workers Industrial Union into a mass union was the result of serious persistent concentration and the correct development of partial struggles for a period of more than a year, and in recent months since the issuance of the Open Letter was given close attention as a district concentration task by the District Committee. The building of the Union, however, was marked by a number of shortcomings and mistakes which had been on numerous occasions sharply criticized by the District Bureau, and had a direct bearing on the shortcomings evident in the strike itself. Firstly, the class struggle program of the Union was not brought out sharply enough, especially in its relation to the capitalist state. Secondly, the hesitancy and in some cases resistance to bringing the Party forward and to the building of the Party, made it easier to bring in the "red scare", and to allow company agents and other disruptive elements to carry on propaganda for the A. F. of L. or for an "independent" union. Thirdly, the failure of the Section to give any leadership or establish any contact with the work in the packing industry, and thereby failing to mobilize the Party for this concentration task and for preparations for struggle. Fourthly, a tendency at the beginning to "soft pedal" the attack on and exposure of the N.R.A. Some of these shortcomings were partially, but not entirely, overcome before the strike, but the major weakness remained, that there was no active functioning Party unit in existence before or during the strike, to which fact many of the other shortcomings can be traced.

## Strike Preparations Neglected

Although the possibility of a strike in the fall had been discussed for several months, and the spontaneous walkout in September against the firing of Union members made it more evident that a strike was inevitable, no real organizational preparations for the strike were undertaken by the Party until almost the last minute, while in the Union itself a certain indecisiveness and vacillating tendency on the part of some leading comrades delayed the preparations for the strike considerably, and gave some disruptive elements in the Union an opportunity to organize a struggle against Party and T.U.U.L. leadership. This lack of preparation was an especially serious matter, when it is considered that the strike was conducted against a powerful Packers' Trust, with a bitterly die-hard anti-union policy such as the steel and auto bosses have; also that while there were sporadic struggles in the packing industry throughout the country, we had no functioning national union to establish connections between the different centers and spread the struggle. Although the National Conference of the Union was held when these struggles had already begun, it was not utilized as a means of mobilization and preparation for strike struggles.

Our first plan was to organize struggles simultaneously in all the plants. But when it became evident that the uneven growth of the Union made this impossible, the tactic adopted was to concentrate on one plant, with the perspective of spreading the struggle to the other plants. While this tactic was undoubtedly correct, it developed a tendency to neglect too much the other plants. The result was that whereas in Armours our Union had the majority of the workers, in Swifts the A. F. of L. became stronger than we were, and in Cudahy we had hardly any foothold. This weakness played a decisive role in the defeat of the strike.

The strike itself actually involved about 1,000 workers of the 1,500. 700 registered for picket-duty at least once, while the active force that maintained the picket lines was never more than 200-300 after the first day of the strike. An important factor was the neutralization of important departments of the killing floor, consisting of A. F. of L. members, the majority of whom favored staying out as long as there were picket-lines, in spite of the open policy of the A. F. of L. leadership to break the strike by sending scabs and strikebreakers through the picket-lines.

## Unable to Spread Strike

It was obvious from the beginning that the strike could not remain effective for very long if the Swift workers were not called out. This was due to the difficulty of maintaining picket-lines covering several miles, day and night, and the impossibility of identifying Armour scabs who were filtering through the Swift entrance by mingling with the Swift workers. Our policy from the beginning was to try and get a strike vote taken by the Swift workers at the earliest possible moment. A Swift mass meeting was held on the same night the Armour strike was called, but it showed that we were in an extremely weak position in Swifts, and that there was practically no sentiment for strike among the Swift workers. We worked hard to build up strike sentiment within a few days in Swifts, and we succeeded in calling four days later a big mass meeting of Swift and Cudahy workers; here, too, we encountered great resistance to calling a strike, especially calling a sympathy strike without even presenting demands, but we succeeded in getting a Swift committee elected to present demands, with power to call a strike. In the next four days, Swift and Cudahy carried on such a campaign of terror and intimidation in the plant as to cow even the most militant workers, and at Swifts the committee was terrorized, the answer to their demands was postponed, until they refused to take the responsibility to call a strike. At both plants, hundreds of workers were persuaded to remain in the plant day and night, by threats and intimidation, and would have been prevented from leaving if a strike was called. This campaign of terror succeeded so well, that at the third Swift mass meeting, the workers felt it would be useless for a small minority to go on strike, and the sentiment was almost unanimous against going on strike, but to wait for settlement of their demands. The sentiment of sympathy for the Armour strikers was nevertheless shown by the financial support voted by the workers.

The refusal of Armour & Company to negotiate except through arbitration (which the strikers rejected), spread a defeatist mood among many of the workers, who have had no traditions of struggle nor organizational experience in recent years, and the feeling grew among them that if Swifts did not join them, all was lost. For several days, the sentiment for returning to work was only checked by the hope of Swifts joining the strike. Actually, after one week the strike was still effective, as the 300 scabs in the plant were not from the important departments, and could not operate the plant; the newspaper propaganda, however,

that the plant was operating with 800 scabs who remained in the plant day and night, had a discouraging effect on the workers. The Strike Committee therefore decided that if the final Swift mass meeting did not take a strike vote, an Armour strikers' meeting would be called next day to decide whether the workers were willing to remain out longer, or whether we should make an organized retreat.

### Strike Committee Repudiates Party

Before this could be accomplished, however, a well-organized offensive against the strike started, beginning with the arrest of the leading comrades, the police smashing the picket-lines, and the newspapers proclaiming that the strike was over. We were caught completely unprepared, and the attack was helped along by a few company agents in the Strike Committee winning over the weaker and vacillating elements in the committee to sign a statement repudiating the Communist leadership, in the hope that this would gain some concessions for the strikers. The fact that immediately afterwards, the Strike Committee members were made to realize the mistake they had made, and all of them withdrew their signatures and repudiated the statement, did not stop the company agents from carrying out their original plan of announcing in the press that the Communists were repudiated, and the damage was done. With the majority of the workers thus tricked or driven back to work, it was considered advisable on the eighth day to officially call off the strike, in order to prevent the victimization and isolation of the best and most militant elements of the Union in the plant as much as possible, and to put up a fight against discrimination.

The attitude of the police and local authorities, and of the Farmer-Labor leaders, was one of hostility masked with pretended sympathy, which misled many of the strikers. The experience of the Austin strike sell-out, however, made the strikers firm against arbitration, and hostile against any efforts of the Farmer-Labor leaders to "settle" the strike as could be seen by the hostile reception Congressman Shoemaker received on the picket-lines. The policy of neutrality or hypocritical "sympathy" was exposed, however, in Mayor Mahoney's open attack on the strikers as "chiselers". Governor Olson played a more clever role, however; in answer to demands that he intervene with the militia, Olson's attitude was that he was satisfied the local authorities could break the strike without his intervention. The workers on strike received in a few days a valuable class education which shattered many of their previous illusions.

The question is raised whether it was correct to call

the strike, in view of our many evident weaknesses. The strike was necessary and inevitable. It grew out of a whole series of partial struggles previously developed, and it was clear that either we should choose the proper moment for the strike during the busy season, or a strike would be forced upon us by an open attack on the Union by the company during the slack season, when mass lay-offs take place, and our Union would have been smashed. Our failure to act would also have given a weapon to the A. F. of L., as we have always stressed that our Union was one of action and struggle in contrast to the A. F. of L.

### Shortcomings and Mistakes

What were some of the outstanding shortcomings and mistakes in the conduct of the strike:

1. Improper organization of the strike so that the leadership would have better contact with the rank and file. Failure to hold regular strike meetings, due to the constant danger of scabs breaking through when pickets were withdrawn at any time of the day or night. This made it possible for hundreds of demoralizing rumors to be circulated, by the A. F. of L. and company, without being sufficiently combatted.

2. Unpreparedness for the terror. Although we knew that an attack could be expected, we were not prepared for it when it came. Also, insufficient combatting of the illusions among the strikers about the so-called "friendly neutrality" of the police and the deputies.

3. Insufficient isolation of disruptive elements. Some company agents were openly exposed at the very beginning of the strike, but were not sufficiently isolated.

4. Slowness in mobilizing the Party and mass organizations to support the strike. Food and funds came in so slowly, that if the strike had lasted another day, the strikers' kitchen would have had to close down. Insufficient mobilization in St. Paul of the unemployed to help picketing.

5. Although the "red issue" came forward at the very beginning of the strike, the Party moved very slowly to counteract it. The Party statement was delayed until it was too late to distribute it, and the **Daily Worker** distribution was not organized properly and could have been much more effective. The fact that we had no functioning Party unit made it more difficult to counteract the propaganda that the Communists were "outsiders", and we could not depend on Communists who were strikers to give leadership to the Strike Committee when the arrests took place.

6. Our previous failure to work inside the A. F. of L. union to build an opposition there and develop the united

front, resulted in our almost complete isolation from the A. F. of L. workers, which could have played an important role in strengthening the strike. This can also be traced to our not having a functioning Party unit.

7. The Party leading fraction in the strike was not sufficiently connected with the Twin Cities sections; the District Buro met only once during the strike, and should have had at least one more meeting during the crucial period in the last few days. The sections outside of the Twin Cities hardly reacted at all to the strike, until it was nearly a week old.

### **Tasks of Union and Party**

It is inevitable that the defeat of the strike, and the discrimination and lay-offs in the plant, create difficulties and pessimism in the ranks of the workers. Against this defeatist attitude we must carry on the most vigorous struggle in the Union and the Party. The strike has created a solid militant core in the Union, and consolidated the best elements more closely to the Party, and brought some of them into the Party. The A. F. of L. has more openly exposed its strikebreaking role to the workers, and our Union must thoroughly expose them and win workers away from them. The possibility for building the Union, even though under greater difficulties, still exists and must be fully utilized. In one plant, the Union is still nearly 100% organized and has won some raises in pay. We must undertake the task of rebuilding the Union in the concentration plant, based on the most militant elements, and weeding out the company agents. Meetings of department representatives of the plants must be called. The Union must undertake a real struggle against discrimination, and for relief of laid-off and blacklisted workers. Partial struggles must be developed in the plants. An unemployed movement must be organized. Educational activities must begin, including forums, classes, and the continued issuance of the Union paper. Mass meetings must be organized on the lessons of the strike, and the statement of the Union on the strike must be given mass distribution. Increased efforts must be made to draw workers into the Party, and to establish a functioning Party organization in the packing plants, and strengthen the Section leadership and include some workers from the plants; this is the only guarantee that the same mistakes will not be repeated again. Close contact must be established between the Section leadership and the work of the Party and the Union in the packing industry, which will remain the chief concentration point of the District Committee, which will review the carrying out of these tasks at regular intervals.

## Methods of Mass Agitation Among the Ford Workers

**P**ARTICULARLY because of the special position which the Ford Motor Co. occupies in the capitalist world, the activities of our Party among the Ford workers assume tremendous importance.

More than 150,000 workers were employed at the Ford plant during the course of the last few years. These workers live in many small Ford-controlled towns, as well as in Detroit and Dearborn. About 9,000 of these workers live in Dearborn, where the Ford plant is located. About 5,000 are employed at this time in the Ford plant.

Our agitation therefore has two sides, one, the direct agitation in the plant itself, and secondly the agitation among the Ford workers not employed at the time in the shop, but who are in hopes of being hired and who are employed for various periods from time to time. From this it is clear that any agitational material issued in the district reaches large numbers of Ford workers.

We distributed many leaflets to the workers in the Ford plant. At first we distributed long, large leaflets, but the reaction among the workers made it clear that short and concise leaflets had much greater effect. The most effective leaflets were those containing one idea around a special slogan. Such, for example, was the leaflet issued when the Ford plant shut down during the Briggs strike last January. The leaflet raised the slogan of demanding pay for every day lost as a result of the closing of the plant by Ford due to the strike. This was the most effective leaflet we had issued. This was valuable not only because of the issue raised but because its size,  $4\frac{1}{2} \times 6$ , made it easier to distribute in and around the shop. Such a leaflet was also issued during the recent Tool and Die Makers strike.

### Methods of Distribution

The problem of distribution inside the shop is difficult in view of the method of production, which keeps the men apart, as well as the strictly enforced rules which keep the men from talking to each other. Even during lunch time the men are prevented from talking to each other. We have used a number of methods of leaflet distribution, which have proven successful. One is the bringing of rolls of toilet paper which contain leaflets rolled in them. In this way quite a few leaflets get into the hands of the workers before the company gets wise. On the cylinder line the workers attached a leaflet which had been dampened

with water to the warm core which passed along the line and was read by many workers before the foreman discovered it. During Christmas season a group of workers in one department got out a leaflet. It was folded to a very small size and a Christmas seal wrapped around it. The leaflets were dropped on the floor in various parts of the department and picked up by the workers. But the distribution inside the shop could not be very effective without considerable help from the outside.

The Ford plant was built with the idea of preventing any activity of workers. Street cars stop on Ford property and the workers are compelled to walk over a viaduct into the plant. Any worker who walks across the road under the viaduct is immediately fired. On a number of occasions we were able to get leaflets distributed here, but not with sufficient success. The best and most effective method of reaching the workers in the shop with leaflets from the outside was by distributing them in street cars and automobiles.

There are four main street car lines which carry workers into the Ford plant. By stationing ourselves at the street car junction points we were able to carry on an effective distribution. We distributed the leaflets at a time when almost everyone on the street car was a Ford worker. A bunch of leaflets were handed into the car and quickly found their way from hand to hand. The leaflets were thus discussed by the workers before they went into the shop. We reached the workers who went to work by auto by waiting at stop streets near the Ford plant and when the cars stopped we handed a leaflet to each occupant of the car. With other comrades assigned to places where workers who walked to work could be reached, our distribution was very effective. In the method described above, we have on a number of occasions distributed 10,000 to 15,000 leaflets in about one hour.

Another method was used in connection with the election campaign and in preparation for the Ford Hunger March. The road toward the Ford plant, either by street car or automobile, passes a number of railroad viaducts. By painting short slogans about one foot high, we bring them to the attention of the workers. Because the walls of the viaduct are of cement, the paint soaks in deeply. The Ford company has on every occasion covered the slogans with paint, but even this makes the workers discuss the slogan.

In carrying out our agitation we make some small use of the **Ford Worker** and the **Daily Worker**, but certainly not sufficiently. In the Ford section committee a plan was worked out for the selling of the **Daily Worker** at the street car junction points every day. Such a method will reach many workers with our press.

— MAX SALZMAN

## The Nash Strike In Kenosha, Wis.

*(Statement of District Buro)*

**T**HE Nash Motor Company was one of the first plants to sign the NRA Automobile Code with the statement that wages of Nash employees would be increased by 10%. No sooner did the plant begin working upon the new models than it became obvious to the workers that instead of wages and working conditions being improved, they were being worsened.

The Auto Workers Union, affiliated to the Trade Union Unity League, had six months previously started a campaign to organize the Nash workers into a militant union, at the same time raising demands and awakening the desire for struggle on the part of the Nash workers to realize them. The Auto Workers Union carried on its work inside the shop, also issuing leaflets, calling mass meetings, etc. It was only after this activity of the Auto Workers Union that the American Federation of Labor came upon the scene.

The strike, which broke out on November 9th in the final assembly line, was, to a degree, due to the work carried on by the Auto Workers Union. The strike itself was spontaneous and was not called by the Auto Workers Union or the A. F. of L. This shows that both the Auto Workers Union and the C. P. were isolated from the large mass of workers in the shop, reaching but a small group with their activity and organization. Because of this, we were not the organizer of the strike. This isolation, pointed out by the Open Letter, is true today of the District as a whole as well as for Kenosha. The men simply walked out because the new piece work system lowered their pay by 40c per day. The only demand raised by the workers was for 1½c increase per car. When the walk-out occurred, the Party and the Auto Workers Union in Kenosha were on the job. Already in the morning some comrades were working inside the shop agitating for the spreading of the strike, and putting forward demands for militant mass picketing and rank and file leadership. The first meeting held outside the plant was addressed by our comrades. The American Federation of Labor leadership came in later and began a campaign against our union and the Party, doing everything possible to prejudice the workers against us. At this time, it was necessary to show great determination and to proceed with the meeting in the German-American Home which was originally organized by our Union.

### A. F. of L. Takes Leadership

The pressure of the A. F. of L. bureaucracy and the lack of experience on the part of our comrades caused some hesitation and thus permitted the A. F. of L. to temporarily outmaneuver them. It was able to take over leadership of the strike. Our comrades, however, showed good judgement when, in spite of the hysteria created by the reactionary labor leaders, they were able to inject into the meeting and raise before the workers our militant program of action as the only guarantee for the success of the strike.

The A. F. of L. leadership at the beginning of the strike offered no demands or program. They discouraged mass picketing and made no attempt to turn the lockout into a strike, but were preparing for the betrayal of the strike. It was our task to prevent the A. F. of L. from isolating us from the workers and to organize to take over the leadership of the strike. The Auto Workers Union pointed out the necessity of united action on the part of all strikers and those locked out, around common demands, regardless of union or non-union affiliation. The proposals and demands made by the Auto Workers Union were:

1. 30% increase in wages for all Nash workers.
2. Abolition of the gang system.
3. Turn the lockout into an effective mass strike.
4. Elect a broad strike committee with representatives from each department.
5. No settlement by departments but by the shop as a whole.
6. No return to shop on promises of arbitration. We must win our demands through militant action.
7. Mass picketing! Every man, striker and locked out worker, must come and picket.
8. No settlement by the committee without the fullest consultation and vote of all the men in the shop.
9. No discrimination against any worker for his activity in the strike and lockout. In event of settlement every worker must get back his job.

The Auto Workers Union met every day during the strike, reviewing the situation and making proposals for the next day. The members of the Auto Workers Union were on the picket line daily, setting an example of militancy for the other workers; mingling with the strikers and discussing those proposals. The strikers accepted the proposals of the Auto Workers Union and although they followed the leadership of the American Federation of Labor, they be-

lieved that the only correct proposals were those put forward by the Auto Workers Union. Leaflets were issued daily warning the strikers to be on guard against treachery and betrayal. The Communist Party nucleus in Nash Motors also met frequently, issued a leaflet to the strikers, and regularly sold the **Daily Worker** to the strikers.

### Betrayal Tactics of A. F. of L.

During this period the American Federation of Labor did not call any mass meeting nor consult with the workers as to the next step. Only under pressure after seeing that the demands of the Auto Workers Union became popular, did they come forward with a set of counter-proposals. Their proposals consisted of: recognition of the union (A. F. of L.); abolishment of the gang system; seven hour day; time and a half for over-time; rest periods during the day; etc. Even these inadequate demands were not put forward seriously by the A. F. of L. leadership. They had no intention of mobilizing the workers for a struggle to win. They relied solely upon the arbitration machinery of the NRA and carried on secret negotiations with the government mediator, Dr. Lapp, and the representatives of the Nash Motors Company. No attempt was made by the A. F. of L. leadership to raise relief for the strikers. The Unemployed Council, however, issued a call to all workers in the city to support the strike and promised solidarity on the picket line.

On Monday, November 20th, the strike was at its height. On that day, we witnessed the greatest and most militant picket line, consisting of more than 2,000 workers, men and women. The same afternoon, thousands of workers gathered in front of the Nash plant and then paraded through the streets of Kenosha, mobilizing sentiment and support for the strike. It was precisely on this day that the A. F. of L. leadership carried through its act of treachery and agreed to call off the strike, issuing an order to stop picketing.

The shameful settlement agreed to by the A. F. of L. does not contain one single demand which was originally put forward either by the workers or by the A. F. of L. leadership itself. Instead of recognition of the union, the Nash Motor Company, in the settlement, refers to paragraph 1 of the union proposal (recognition) by stating that this "is fully covered by law by the Automobile Manufacturers Code and we always have and always will comply with it". In paragraph 5, the Nash Motor Company says: "full right of discipline and discharge shall remain with the company, but this right exercised with due regards to the interest of the employees." This paragraph which the Nash Company

refers to is the famous open shop clause in the Automobile Code which was agreed to by the NRA, Green, etc.

Thus the A. F. of L. officialdom deserted the 3,000 workers in the plant who were locked out, and betrayed the workers in the assembly line who were the first to go out on strike. The settlement does not say one word about the question of wages. Not a word about the gang system which is so despised by the workers. In fact, on this point, the A. F. of L. officials say that in view of the fact that industry everywhere is adopting the gang system, there is nothing that can be done about this in the Nash Motors. Time and half for over-time was completely thrown overboard. The same is true with the question of the rest period. The demand for the seven-hour day was just a fake because the Nash plant was working 35 hours a week before the strike.

Many of the workers going back into the factory are not yet clear as to the settlement. In the mass meeting itself there was a certain amount of opposition, but due to the confusion and the tactics of the A. F. of L. leaders, it was difficult to determine the exact number of those who voted "no".

### Lessons of the Strike

It is the task of the Party and the Auto Workers Union to continue to expose this flagrant betrayal of the A. F. of L. In the shop we must continue to raise the demands and grievances of the workers; to mobilize them for everyday struggles. The workers have demonstrated a willingness to fight and we can look forward to new struggles in the very near future. These struggles, however, must be under our leadership and not under the leadership of the A. F. of L. bureaucracy. The Party and our Union have shown themselves as the only true defenders of the interests of the workers in the strike and lockout. Many of the workers see this. The leaflet issued by the Auto Workers Union exposing the meaning of the settlement was received enthusiastically by the Nash workers. The so-called Red scare which the A. F. of L. attempted to create was not successful because of the correct line pursued by our Party. The fact that our comrades at strike meetings took the floor at every opportunity and pointed out to the workers the burning issues and exposed the A. F. of L. leadership, has created a great deal of sympathy inside the shop for the Auto Workers Union and the Party. As a result of our activity during the strike, we have helped to greatly discredit the company union in existence in Nash Motor Company.

The shop nucleus must continue its work from within, and must recruit some of the best elements into the Party. The Auto Workers Union can be built if it can properly mingle with the workers and put forward a daily program of action based upon the needs of the workers. The A. F. of L. has succeeded in misleading many of the workers in getting them to join it. The number that they claim is undoubtedly exaggerated. However, while we must continue to build the Auto Workers Union, a strong opposition group to work inside the A. F. of L. must be organized at the same time.

The Nash strike should arouse the Party in our District to the importance of shop work and to the possibility of leading economic struggles and building the revolutionary unions. Had our Party worked more diligently inside the Nash plant and carried on a more vigorous organizational campaign, there is no doubt that we would have been more certain of defeating the reactionary A. F. of L. officialdom and could have maintained the leadership of the strike from the start. The experiences in this strike prove the correctness of the Open Letter to our Party membership.

The Party and our unions will draw valuable lessons from this strike which can serve as a future guide to action.

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## Improve the Fraction Work In the Mass Organizations

**I**MMEDIATELY after the Extraordinary Party Conference the Language Buros of the C. C. accepted the Open Letter with enthusiasm, discussed, and with practically no exceptions began to draw up plans of work in their particular sphere of activity.

To better enlighten the comrades in the key positions in the various mass organizations (fraternal, cultural, etc.) some of the buros called special fraction conferences at which the programs of work were discussed in the light of the Open Letter. The past activities were reviewed, the weaknesses discovered, and the new tasks determined.

Already at this conference, some of the buros could register some results on the concretization of the program, and analyze the experiences in their first steps of concentration (Yugoslavian, Greek, Armenian, Hungarian and other conferences). Some of these experiences were made known in the Party Life Column of the **Daily Worker**, for the purpose of stimulating the fractions in their activities

and making these experiences available to other fractions of language mass organizations.

In all discussions the comrades active in the mass organizations spoke without exception about the necessity of involving their organization in the daily struggle, of making the organizations instruments for reaching the workers of the basic industries, for building the unions, etc.

Hundreds, thousands of members of the language mass organizations not only accepted the Open Letter with enthusiasm, but were eager to concretize the plans of work, eager to be guided in the concentration work, and eager to become a factor for the penetration among the masses.

### Must Follow Up Control Tasks

After a month, after a good start, the Yugoslavian Buro of the C. C. is sounding the alarm, finding out that many of the fractions are either inactive, or are showing open opportunism and sectarian tendencies as in the case of Farrell, Pa., where the Party members have practically divorced themselves from the Yugoslavian workers who constitute a large portion of the steel workers in Farrell, or as in other places, are functioning very badly.

Such a situation, however, is not limited to the Yugoslavian field. We find, if not the same, a similar situation in other language fields. We must ask ourselves: how is it possible that after such a good beginning, after the special fraction conferences and tours, after a campaign of enlightenment in the language press, we did not move forward as we expected? Is it because the programs were wrong, because they were not based on the Open Letter? No. Many of the programs and especially the one worked out by the Yugoslavian Buro were good, basically correct, and because of this some of them were published in the **Daily Worker** as examples to be followed.

The first reason for the weak results is to be found in the failure to follow up and control the tasks, the failure to lead and help the fractions in their activities. The second reason is that while the programs were good, were discussed and the comrades from below were urged to work out their tasks accordingly, very little or no effort was made to simultaneously strengthen the fractions ideologically and organizationally. In many instances the District Committees, the Section Committees failed to check up on the activities of the fractions, especially in those districts where there is no continuity in the work of the language mass organizations or where these were simply abolished or disappeared.

It is because of lack of guidance, because of the fact that especially the new Party members are not clear on the

task of the fractions that some of the good results completely disappeared.

This was the case of the Greek clubs in Baltimore and Philadelphia which, after having grown into real mass organizations, are today reduced to merely paper organizations because of lack of guidance, of misunderstanding of the relationship between the Party and the mass organizations, and especially because of lack of enlightenment of the nature and tasks of the fractions. And these are not isolated cases.

### How to Improve Activities

What must be done to remedy this situation, to improve the activities of the fractions in the language mass organizations as a prerequisite for the concretization of the program of work?

1. Through the language press, through the Buros and the comrades in charge of guiding the fractions on a district and section scale, we must enlighten the comrades on the nature and tasks of the fractions.

2. Where the District language commissions are in existence they must work hand in hand with the Org. Commission, must go down and examine how the fractions are functioning, assist them, and not limit themselves to taking up the current problems with the language buros. Where there are no language commissions in existence they must be formed, or at least steps must be taken to put one of the members of the Org. Commission in charge of this important work.

3. The language commissions in connection with the Org. Department must determine how many and who of the comrades of the mass organizations are to compose the group of actives, having as their major Party task the work in the mass organizations.

The same process shall take place on a section scale, in regard to the locals and neighborhood organizations. While the fraction consists of all Party members in a given organization, the Party must make a distinction between those few comrades who are in the leadership—the real active ones—and those who are merely fraction members and need not be continuously occupied with work in their mass organizations. This procedure will prevent so many Party members in mass organizations from escaping the activities to which they are assigned by the units by giving the excuse that they are busy in the mass organizations.

4. The units from now on must demand a report from time to time from those comrades active in the mass organizations and also check up on their activities.

5. The language press, the buros and fractions must be mobilized to energetically conduct the recruiting drive among the sympathetic elements in the language mass organizations, among whom there are hundreds who are enthusiastically willing to follow the Party line, and make powerful instruments of the existing mass organizations for the reaching of the masses in the factories. —F. BROWN

## The First Month of the Recruiting Drive

ON the first of December, our Party began an intensive drive for new members. Our task in this recruiting drive was to strengthen our base in the factories, among the decisive elements of the American proletariat; to win for the Party workers from the concentration factories and industries and from the industrial, independent and A. F. of L. unions; to increase the number of Negroes in the Party, and to build new factory nuclei and strengthen the old ones, and to make the Party fractions function.

How were these tasks carried out in the first month of the drive? A total of 2100 were recruited, a gain of 25% over the previous month. The five concentration districts, New York, Chicago, Cleveland, Pittsburgh and Detroit recruited a total of 895 workers. 602 (68%) of these were unemployed. Only 32% are employed. Where was our major recruiting carried on during this month in these districts? The figures indicate that it was not in the concentration industries. A total of 201 (22%) were recruited in all five concentration districts from the concentration industries, and of this 201, only 83 are employed. 100 of these belong to unions—55% to the A. F. of L. and independent unions and 45% to the industrial unions. 88 of these 201 are native born and 17 are Negroes.

What conclusion can we draw from these figures? That the Party in these districts, while it has improved to a certain extent its work in the concentration industries, has not as yet linked up recruiting with its daily activity. Unless recruiting is made an inseparable part of all our work around and in the concentration factories, mines, etc., and in the unions of the concentration industry, we will not succeed in rooting our Party in the basic industries, and we will not make our Party the mass revolutionary Party which it must be if it is to lead the American working class in the struggles which it is facing in the immediate future.

For example, New York District has as its main concentration the marine industry. We know that work is

being carried on, led by the Party fraction in the Marine Workers Industrial Union, among the longshoremen in New York. Yet only one employed and 13 unemployed marine workers were recruited into the Party during a period of five weeks. The same situation exists in Detroit. Surely the 10 auto workers (only 2 employed) does not reflect the amount of activity and attention given by the entire district to work in the automobile industry! And can Chicago be satisfied to have their Party work in the concentration industries judged on the basis of 6 steel workers, 9 metal workers, 2 automobile and 2 **unemployed packing house workers recruited**? Was no railroad work carried on during this period in the Chicago district? Pittsburgh makes a better showing in this respect, recruiting 14 steel workers, and 49 miners, as does Cleveland, which, out of a total of 115, recruited 40 from the basic industries.

If we apply the same logic to our recruiting among Negro workers, we could only assume that the Party in the concentration district carries on no activity among the Negro masses. We know that this is not the case.

There is only one way to remedy this unsatisfactory situation. The PolBuro has decided to continue the drive until the Convention. We must at once cease considering recruiting as a task separate and apart from our every day activities. To win workers for our Party—workers from the basic industries,—American workers—Negro workers,—must be our first and last consideration in every task which we undertake. When we begin carrying out our work with this in mind, the recruiting figures which we present to the Convention will show a different picture.

## Meeting the "Red" Attack In Strike Struggles

**I**N nearly all struggles, and particularly strike struggles, which are led by unions affiliated to the Trade Union Unity League, and where the leadership consists of Communist Party members, inevitably the bosses raise the red scare in an effort to disrupt the strike and alienate the strikers from the leadership and the organization.

In every struggle which is conducted militantly and fearlessly the charges of "Communist inspired" and "Communist led" are a common occurrence.

The attitude taken by our comrades and the tactics resorted to often determine the success or failure of the employers when they raise the "red scare". Too often have our comrades followed a line of covering up and retreating in the face of the bosses' assault on the union and leader-

ship, of denying, etc., and finally winding up in swamp of opportunism in an effort to keep the union and strike in lily-white, simon-pure "American" lines. Too seldom do our comrades meet the red scare head-on, take the offensive and expose it to the workers. Too often the role of the Communist Party is deliberately hidden in the struggle and the revolutionary character of the strike, its leadership and the organization leading the strike are hidden because of an opportunistic fear that the workers will drop the union and strike, will desert the struggle and repudiate the leadership, if its Communist character becomes open and known. Undeniably this is a disease in the movement which appears in nearly every struggle.

### Lessons from New Mexico Strike

Some lessons from the strike of the miners in New Mexico in this regard are illuminating. How the comrades in N. M. met and defeated the red scare and came out of the struggle much stronger provides some interesting experiences for the entire movement.

In New Mexico the miners followed the leadership of the National Miners Union to victory, through an intense three-month struggle, which was conducted under conditions of severe repression, terror and practical illegality.

The coal operators even prior to the strike raised the red issue. The bosses were joined by the Chamber of Commerce, by the City Government of Gallup, by the Mayor, and by McGrady from Washington who added his support. At this time there was a tendency on the part of even leading comrades to cover up and crawl into a shell and merely to try to scoff away the bosses' attack. This was, for example, expressed in a lack of willingness to circulate the **Daily Worker** amongst the miners, to put out the **Labor Unity**, etc., because the **Daily** vigorously attacked and exposed the "New Deal", exposed the Roosevelt program, exposed the NRA, etc., and because the **Labor Unity** often referred to "revolutionary unions". The comrades thought if the miners saw the **Daily Worker** and **Labor Unity**, the attacks of the bosses would be given justification and the miners would desert us in hordes, because these miners were still deeply under the illusions and demagoguery of the NRA and Roosevelt. As a result the **D. W.** was kept hidden in an inside office of the union headquarters, while the opportunistic theory gained headway.

### Miners Liked the Daily

One day, however, one of the active union leaders from the M—mine, who was an enthusiastic supporter of the NRA and Roosevelt and who was considered "unripe" to be

approached for the Party (but who later became one of the most steadfast Party comrades) accidentally picked up a copy of the **Daily Worker**, read articles on the NRA and Roosevelt program, and from then on was very clear as to what the NRA and "New Deal" were all about. This experience somewhat convinced the Party comrades that the workers would not run from us in terror if they read the **Daily Worker**, whereupon the **Daily Worker** was systematically circulated. From the beginning the miners liked the **Daily** and considered it their own paper. The **D. W.** salesman had little difficulty in selling 100 to 150 copies daily to the strikers. Later, the **D. W.** could be found in every restaurant, pool-room and barber shop in town along with the capitalist daily papers.

In the period preceding the strike, while the enemy was raising the red scare far and wide, and our forces were doing little to combat it for fear of "repercussions", but had a tendency to shy off the issue, it was noticeable that the enemy was making progress in the N. M. U. ranks.

### Red Scare Combated

When the strike was declared the red attack still continued. Now, however, the Party forces met the issue full force. When Mayor Watson, or McGrady, or General Wood, or the coal operators raised the red scare, the Party forces immediately responded by raising in turn the question: "who are the Communists and what do they stand for?" When Mr. Iden, head of the State Federation of Taxpayers came to the strike zone for the purpose of issuing a whitewashing report justifying the huge expenditure for troops and martial law, he condemned the strike as part of an international Communist conspiracy to overthrow the government. Iden's report was met by a campaign by the union leadership among the strikers as to the role, function and program of the Communist Party. Thousands of circulars were issued by the union to the strikers and workers answering every red attack, explaining the purposes of such attacks, the motives and reasons behind them, covering in detail the fighting class character of the N.M.U. which in itself explains why the bosses hate the N.M.U., and then explaining what the Communist Party stands for. These leaflets and statements were issued openly in the name of the Party. This brought the Party before the miners.

During martial law several mass meetings were permitted for various reasons by the militia. During the height of the red campaign of the bosses and city officials, a representative of the District Committee of the Party openly appeared before the strikers and explained the role of the Party in the struggle. The miners then knew the Party,

knew its role and program, because it came out openly to answer the slander and lies of the militia and bosses.

Throughout the strike there was always present in the strike district a representative of the District Committee of the Party, who guided, led and gave to the strike leadership the experiences of the Party. At the end of the strike, when the victory meeting was held, this representative appeared at the meeting and addressed the miners and was given a tremendous ovation.

When Major John Moore of the National Labor Board arrived in Gallup to "settle" the strike, he thought his task was relatively easy, because the military stockade was full of every leader of the strike and Moore was to deal with only plain miners from the picks, who constituted the Executive Board of the strikers. But Moore came to find that another force was present—the Party. Exasperated because the strikers firmly insisted upon certain demands, Moore shouted—"someone is giving you instructions." At another time he attacked the Communists, saying "you would sign if you would not listen to the Communists." He was answered by non-Communist strikers, "if you want to argue Communism, alright, if you want to argue the strike, that is alright too." At the first meeting with the strikers Moore had things pretty much his own way. But in the meantime the strike leadership consulted with representatives of the Party.

### **Party Building Responsible for Successful Strike**

Another disease in the movement, which Comrade Browder sharply called attention to at the 17th Plenum, is that of failing to build the Party prior to and during the struggle, but leaving this until after the strikes. Such mistakes were made in the Utah strike. Learning from the Utah errors the New Mexico comrades at the outset resolved to establish the Party as a firm guarantee of militant leadership and correct strike tactics.

It can be said that without the Party in the Gallup struggle, new and raw as it was, no victory or sustained struggle would have been possible. The Party here functioned as a steel frame-work within the union and strikers' ranks, holding solid the ranks and leading the workers to victory. By development of the captain system in mining camps, local unions and among the strikers, close touch could be maintained by the Party and union leadership with the masses of the rank and file. The picketing was organized on the captain basis as well. Such measures made it possible for the Party and union leadership, functioning illegally, to keep in close touch, lead and direct militant mass and guerilla picketing.