

The Workers Party Membership and the Plenum of the Central Committee

By I. AMTER.

The Plenum of the Central Executive Committee of the Party pointed out three poignant facts, viz., that there is an acute danger of war—an imperialist war against the Soviet Union; a sharpening of the attack on the working class, as evidenced in the fight against the miners; and thirdly, the growing resistance of the workers.

War is no more an abstraction—an abstraction based upon the theory and fact that the contradictions of capitalism lead to imperialist war. War is becoming an actuality. Preparations are being made by every country—including the Soviet Union, which realizes its proximity and is preparing men, women and children to resist gas attacks. It is obvious in the preparations of the U. S. Government in its navy and aircraft program, which will swallow up billions of dollars, while Coolidge is howling about \$473,000,000 for flood-control and threatens to veto the bill. Billions for war purposes, actual warfare going on in Nicaragua and constant readiness for it in China. Mental, physical, industrial and military preparations—to say nothing about the sharp relations between the U. S. and Great Britain—and of the entire imperialist world and the Soviet Union!

Conference Failure.

The Geneva and the Havana Conference—and now the new Geneva Conference—what do they signify? Are they attempts to ensure peace? There are not—they are attempts in Geneva of the United States and Great Britain and France to establish their hegemony—and in Havana, the efforts of American imperialism gracefully and peacefully to put the ring of slavery into the noses of South and Central America.

And the coming Geneva Conference? Will it produce peace—with its regional security pacts, which mean mutual treaties of war between different groups of imperialist states and their satellites. There is no peace on the horizon or in the zenith—war is treading the earth with ponderous steps—and the workers must beware that they are not caught unprepared.

Unemployed Problem.

The attacks on the workers—the slashing of wages, the lengthening of hours, the killing system of speed-up, the army of unemployed, a permanent army that will never again find a job in the factories. The assaults of the unions, beginning with the miners; the constant, unhindered use of injunctions, police, sheriffs, national guardsmen, the brutal murder of workers, the trampling on their "rights," the anti-injunction moves and the anti-strike bills to be presented to Congress for enactment into law—these things are known to every worker today, for we are going through a period of sharp attack on the working class.

And the workers? The workers are beginning to fight back. Beginning with the strike of the Passaic textile workers, through the miners' strike, the strike of other textile and of shoeworkers, the growing strike movement in all parts of the country, demonstrate that, in the midst of nation-wide unemployment, the

workers are beginning to resist.

The attack on the miners' union, after the pail of the official hand has been lifted, has called forth violent resistance by the miners of Pennsylvania and Ohio under the leadership of the left wing. "To hell with the injunctions," "Onto the picket lines," "Away with the officials who have led us into this mire"—these are becoming the slogans of more tens of thousands of miners only last year supporters of Lewis and his gang.

The strike of the Ladies Garment Workers and of the Furriers demonstrated the militancy of the workers who were freeing themselves from the senile grasp of the Socialist Party. Militancy and left wing policies—a new breath of the fighting spirit is entering the body of the American worker, who has risen out of his lethargy and intends to get his own!

Miners Await Daily.

In this fight what does one find as far as the Party is concerned? The attack on the Daily Worker and the Uj Elore are one answer. The capitalist and the authorities know that the Communists stand behind every one of the fights that the workers put up. They know that the miners await the arrival of the Daily Worker each morning, disappointed if it fails to arrive on the morning train, and down again for the evening train, to learn the latest from the battlefield, to feel a greater sense of solidarity through the columns of the Daily Worker.

Communist Opportunities

The attacks on the working class will be launched with even greater violence on our Party, as the animating and guiding hand of the workers in their struggle.

What then does the situation present to the Party? Greater and more profound opportunities for establishing the leadership of the Party than ever before in the history of the Party. The elimination of the Socialist party as a party, claiming any rights within the working class. The extinction of the Socialist Labor Party, the slow decline of the I. W. W., despite the small prestige which it gained in the Colorado strike, and which it has lost through its shameless tactics (in trusting Governor Adams, the "progressive" governor of Colorado, in withdrawing the mass picket lines at his request during the sessions of the Industrial Commission, and, if the reports be true, the return to work in the mines before the Industrial Commission has reported, but on the condition that they will accept the Commission reports which puts the I. W. W. in the category of the reactionaries), all this gives our Party the opportunity to build up its ranks and develop its leadership of and FOR the working class in the present and future period of struggle.

Mobilize for Struggle.

After the report of I. Amter, member of the CEC of the Party and District Secretary of District 6 (Ohio), the DEC Plenum unanimously adopted the following resolution:

"The DEC Plenum wholeheartedly approves the thesis of the CEC in its appraisal of the economic and political situation and calls upon the membership of District 6 to reorien-

tate itself to the new situation, which demands

(a) Fullest activity of the whole membership.

(b) Fullest loyalty of all the members.

(c) Complete discipline of the Party membership.

"The miners' struggle, the rising resistance of the workers everywhere, the attacks on the trade unions, the injunction issue, the anti-strike campaign, indicate clearly that the workers are entering a period of bitter struggle, both to maintain their standards and to protect their organizations. These struggles together with the danger of war and an attack on the Soviet Union will lead to sharp attacks of the capitalist class and the capitalist government on the working class and particularly on the most advanced section, the Communists.

"The campaign of the Party for relief of the miners; for saving the trade union movement and building up the unions; for protection of the foreign-born; for building up the Young Workers' Communist League; the Negro, Women's and Co-operative department, for work among the farmers, and the building up of the Party and raising its ideological development, demand complete unity of the Party. Every Party member must realize his duty as a Communist and must show full loyalty to the Party so that the Party as a whole will be able to do its work. Discipline is absolutely necessary—more than before, otherwise we will fail in our tasks and the working class will suffer.

"Forward to work under the leadership of the Central Executive Committee. Each member doing his part to consolidate and unify the Party and increase its leadership over the masses."

Tremendous Task.

It is obvious that our Party—which is the only growing proletarian organization in the country—with its 14,000 members, is an extremely weak organization. In a country with 35,000,000 workers and 6,000,000 farmers, this Party of ours has a gigantic task, made the more difficult because of the language differences, the youthfulness and inexperience of the Party membership, the powerful strength of our enemy, the capitalist class and the capitalist government, the close alliance of the reactionary officialdom of the unions with the government and the capitalist class.

Nevertheless, our Party does not and will not shrink from its task. The working class has no other leadership but our Party. The workers are turning more and more to the support of the Communists. The delegations to the Soviet Union are opening the eyes of the workers—the native workers—to the truth about the Soviet Union. The treachery of the trade union leaders, the unmasking of the government, the bursting of the bubble of "prosperity" and "opportunity" are revealing America as the Communists have analysed it.

First Place to Party Work.

With these gigantic tasks before us, how can our Party perform its duty if the three basic conditions mentioned above are not fulfilled,

viz., fullest co-operation; fullest discipline and fullest loyalty? It is clear we will fail in our work if these conditions are not realized.

What is full co-operation? It means the giving of all the energy and time to the Party work, not shrinking from tasks imposed, considering the Party work the most important in the world; doing the work in the trade unions, not mechanically, but with the real intention of building up the unions and establishing the influence of the Party in the unions, in the fraternal organizations, clubs, among the women, Negroes, co-operatives, farmers, etc. Not showing unwillingness to do Jimmy Higgins work and also propaganda and organization work, considering all the work of the Party as important for the growth of the working class movement—and of the Party.

Discipline Essential.

Full discipline. Our Party does not yet know what discipline is, even though some members are of the opinion that our Party today is merely imitating the discipline of the Russian Communist Party. These comrades do not consider whence the disciples of the Russian Party came—that it came from the necessity of the class struggle, and that, as we can surely await vicious attacks, our Party will be prepared to meet them only if it is well disciplined.

But, even assuming that these attacks might not come, how can our Party do its work if it is not a well-knit-together, well-oiled machine, each part fitting into the other and working with precision and power in order to batter down the machine of our enemy. Only in this way can a Communist Party perform its work—and succeed in leading the workers from the daily struggles into the gigantic proletarian revolution.

Devotion to Party.

And finally full loyalty. What does this mean? This means something that must be cultivated in the Party—a devotion to the Party—not something abstract, but something that attaches a child to its mother, something that it prizes above everything else—something to be willing to sacrifice everything for—be willing to die for. In America, in 1928, this sounds like a poet's phantasy. We have to learn from the Russian Communists, O, yes, from the Hungarian, the Bulgarian, the Italian Communists. Even though we are not yet called upon to give up our lives, we must create among the membership that love for the Party, that loyalty and devotion that will place the Party above everything else.

And loyalty to the Party as a whole, not to a section, not to a faction, not to a department of the Party work. We must draw all the activities of the factions, departments, auxiliaries, toward the unifying center, the Party—so that the Party as a PARTY becomes the center, the sun radiating its energy, its power, into all ramifications of the working class.

Let us go forward under the leadership of the Central Executive Committee—each member doing his part, helping to consolidate and unify the

Literature and Bookshop Committee (Sub-Committee of the District Agit-prop Committee) is a great step forward toward a greater stimulation of literature work. It is, however, clear that the efforts of this committee alone cannot solve the problem. What is necessary is a machinery, a district apparatus, cooperation and help not only from all the literature agents and functionaries of our district but also the entire Party membership.

The District Literature and Bookshop Committee has therefore outlined a definite plan of activity the carrying out of which will bring us nearer to the solution of this problem.

The first steps towards the organization of the machinery is the election of well functioning Section Literature Agents. They in their turn should see to it that live and capable comrades should be elected as literature agents in each unit.

The second step is the organization of literature squads in each section.

Literature Squads.

The Literature Squads are to be organized on a basis similar to The DAILY WORKER Builders. The objective should be to draw in as many comrades as possible into this activity until the entire Party membership participates in this work. The squads are to see to it that there is appropriate literature at mass meetings, as well as at open forums in their sections, at union meetings, meetings of fraternal organizations, workers' clubs, etc. In addition to this the squad, will be charged with the duty of putting the Communist, our Party monthly organ, on the newsstands and to check up on the monthly returns. The literature agents will have to arrange for the distribution of pamphlets and books in front of shops and factories. It is proposed that educational meetings led by capable comrades should be arranged for the members of the squads at which this or the other pamphlet is to be discussed. The members of the squad will be charged with the duty qualified to speak at units on the pamphlets. The literature agents must try to get into this work as many sympathizers as possible.

Establish Bookshops.

The objective of the District Literature and Bookshop Committee is to establish bookshops in every section which have permanent headquarters. For that purpose a special fund must be raised. Units should buy their literature direct from section literature agents and in such a way help to establish a section center for the distribution of literature.

Organization.

The most important prerequisite in carrying out this program of activity is the cooperation and help the literature agents will get from unit organizers and other Party functionaries. The unit organizers must see to it that the question of literature is put on the order of business at every meeting and the literature agents should be given enough time to take the question up.

Only thru such cooperation and a real understanding of the importance of this work will we be able to go forward to much greater achievements. The increased sales in several sections in this district is a good indication of the possibilities of our efforts along this line.

Party and to make of it the leader of the struggling masses!

This was the spirit of the three membership meetings that have already been held in District 6—in Cleveland, Youngstown and Akron. This is the spirit that must animate the entire party.