

# The WORKING WOMAN

*The Voice of Women Workers*

Published Monthly by the Central Committee, Communist Party, U. S. A.,  
Section of the Communist International

50 East 13th Street, New York, N. Y.,

Entered as second class matter April 22, 1930, at the Post Office New York,  
N. Y., under the Act of March 3, 1879.

VOL. 2

SEPTEMBER, 1931

No. 9

Subscription Rates: 50 CENTS PER YEAR; Foreign \$1.00. Single Copies 5 Cents



## Struggle Against Growing Miseries of jobless Women

By ANNA DAMON

The misery of the unemployed working women and girls throught the country in the third year of the capitalist crisis has now reached new depths with the official federal and municipla government still refusing to give unemployment relief.

The story of the 100,000 jobless women and girls of New York published in this issue is a story that can be repeated in all industrial and agricultural centers. Slow, gnawing hunger that saps the vitality and life of the women workers, reducing them to physical and nervous wrecks. The fear of having no roof over their heads leaves its telltale marks on all unemployed women. Furtive, silent hiding in dark unsanitary places, ashamed to reveal their suffering and misery—capitalism has taught them they must hide their misery for they are women.

Especially appalling is the growing personal degradation of hundreds of jobless women and girls forced into the horrors of prostitution.

The case of the two young unemployed girls, Margaret Walsh and Jean McCuen, who were forced into selling themselves to live, the reports of the Young Women's Christian Association and the Committee of 14, show what is happening to tens of thousands of working girls similarly situated. No jobs, no relief, their parents also unemployed, these young working girls, in the very bloom of young womanhood, were made the victims of that horrible institution of capitalism, prostitution. "We sold ourselves for a sandwich," that cry of anguish from Jean McCuen should make every working woman, girl and housewife more determined than ever to fight for unemployement insurance.

The fearful extent of the personal degradation of unemployed workingclass women is seen in the latest report of the Committee of Fourteen that reports the following increase of prostitution:

Thirty-eight huses of prostitution in the Red Hook district of Brooklyn during the first two months of 1931 as compared with 19 houses during a three year period from 1927-29, is reported.

The same increase is shown for all boroughs in New York City.

The Committee of Fourteen, an old bourgeois reform organization was forced to admit the case:

"The abnormal number of unemployed young men and women, in whose ranks are many who are turning to crime and vice to get money."

In this situation workingclass women, employed and unemployed, must join in the great struggle of the Unemployed Councils, the Trade Union Unity League and the Communist Party for immediate unemployment insurance, against evictions and for immediate cash relief of jobless women and girls, married and unmarried.

More than ever before working women and girls must plunge into the election campaign of the Communist Party to strengthen the

More than ever before working women and girls of all races must plunge into the election campaign of the Communist Party to strengthen the fight for unemployment insurance, against the stagger plan, against wage-cuts and speed up, against discrimination and lower wages for Negro women

In connection with the drawing in of women and girls in the struggle for unemployed relief, the district women's department must be strengthened and the method of work among jobless women placed on a basis of mobilization for day to day demands.

Most districts have paid less attention to drawing in women into the councils of the unemployed than to any other phase of work among the unemployed. The slow progress in drawing women into the general councils of the unemployed is due in the main to the fact that the councils of the unemployed do not carry on any struggles which would draw the women into the movement and into the councils as a result of their activities.

Women will come into the councils of unemployed when there is definite work for them to carry through. Cases of unemployed women breadwinners, of jobless unmarried girls, struggle for free food and clothing for children of the unemployed—would serve to bring out the need for women to join the unemployed council activities.

All sorts of confused ideas exist regarding the drawing of women into the councils of the Unemployed and the districts instead of seeking for forms and methods of drawing women into the councils. In Denver, as a case in point, separate councils of the unemployed women organized. In Ohio, Women's Auxiliaries were formed. Special committees of the councils bringing in specific proposals to the council as to how to begin work around specific issues in the locality and to draw working women and girls into the struggle, is the correct method.

These proposals, together with organizational measures such as holding of special meetings of women, should be discussed by the entire council. And after the plan has been worked out and adopted by the council, special meetings of women in the neighborhood, at employment agencies, factory gates—should be called to rally them around the issues raised.

The struggle against the high cost of living, against high rents, for free milk and lunches for school children, for immediate cash relief of especially needed cases of jobless women-breadwinners and unmarried girls are among the issues to rally all women in a given neighborhood.

The "Working Woman" should reflect these rising struggles of the unemployed and employed and especially invites worker correspondence on this subject.