

## BUILDING PARTY INTO MASS PROLETARIAN PARTY

**T**HE Open Letter of the Extraordinary Party Conference raises very sharply the problem of building the Party into a revolutionary party of the proletariat. It states that "in spite of the spread of the mass movements and, above all, in spite of the radicalization of the masses of workers, the Party has not developed into a revolutionary mass Party of the proletariat."

The influx of new elements into the Party during the past few years emphasizes the powerful attraction of the Party to the large masses of toilers. More than 35,000 workers joined the Party in the last three years.

During the past six months, our Party recruited 8,300 members. These workers joined as a result of the general activity of the Party, rather than through any special effort on the part of the Party membership. In proof of the above facts let us compare the figures of the last recruiting campaign (1932) with the recruiting during the first six months of this year.

During the 1932 three-month recruiting campaign, 6,300 workers were recruited into the Party, with a monthly average of 2,700 in the last two months of that period.

In the past six months of this year, the Party has had no special campaign, but led many successful strikes and struggles, yet reached only half the monthly average as compared with the 1932 campaign. We have not fully attained the realization that daily recruiting of the best element in struggles and activities is of vital importance.

As a crass example can be cited the Furriers Union. Under the leadership of the Party, after a victorious struggle, the Furriers Union has established itself as the only union in the industry, wiping out the reformist union and organizing 10,000 workers into its ranks. Yet, today, after more than one year's existence, the Party fraction numbers only 100.

### **Failure to Recruit During Strikes Weakens Proletarian Base**

In going over the figures of new recruits of 1933, it is seen that only a very insignificant number were recruited from those workers involved in strikes and struggles (Detroit auto strike, Penn. miners strike, shoe and textile, metal strikes, etc), with the bulk of the workers coming from the ranks of the unemployed.

In the Detroit strike, led by the revolutionary union, we did not pay sufficient attention to recruiting into the Party and to building and strengthening the factory nuclei. In the April strikes in Pittsburgh District, only a negligible number were drawn into the Party.

The same holds true in most of the struggles during this period, with the exception of the St. Louis nutpickers' strike, where, through conscious efforts of the section leadership of the Party, they succeeded in building a Party nucleus in almost every department of the factories, building the Y.C.L. also. The Party in St. Louis, in contrast to the other districts, knew how to boldly bring forward and emphasize the role of the Party in the course of the strike.

### **Central Tasks of 14th Plenum not Carried Through**

At the Fourteenth Plenum, the Party set itself, among others, the following task: the organization of a firm basis for our Party among the decisive strata of American workers in the most important industrial center.

Still the existing shop nuclei in the basic industry did not grow. Ninety percent of those who joined the Party were unemployed and a very small percentage of the employed workers came through direct activity in and around the factory. An analysis of the composition of the membership shows that only 3% of the members are steel workers, a little above 5% miners, not quite 3% automobile, only 1% marine, 1.3% railroad, 3% chemical; 28% of the employed members, or 7% of the entire Party membership, are working in mines and factories which employ 500 or more workers.

The tremendous fluctuation in the Party which in some concentration districts exceeded in the last period the 100% mark, took place mainly in the street nuclei. In the shop nuclei, even in those instances where we did not succeed in carrying on effective struggles, we did not lose members, but at the worst, remained stagnant, proving that organization at the point of production is more stable than on territorial basis. In the Chicago district, in spite of the unsatisfactory factory work in the past, the membership in the shop nuclei grew steadily while at the same time there was an 80% fluctuation of the membership, although militant mass unemployed struggles were carried through.

### **Extraordinary Conference Adopts Control Tasks to Carry Through Open Letter**

At the Extraordinary Party Conference, the task was set to root the Party in the decisive elements of the working class in the basic industries. Emphasis was again placed on the necessity of concentration and the Conference concretely laid down the plan for the next period. The five concentration districts, Chicago, Detroit, Cleveland, Pittsburgh and New York, were assigned the special task of concentrating on altogether about 50 factories in the steel, mining, railroad, marine, automobile, besides those specific industries and problems which the districts have (stockyard, Negro territory, etc.).

The Extraordinary Party Conference set the following control tasks:

1. To establish active Party units, drawing in the most advanced workers through personal work with them.
2. To build real mass trade union groups with functioning Party fractions in the sections.
3. To issue popular factory papers, or, for the beginning, factory bulletins.
4. To develop united front action, win the social-reformist workers and expose and fight reformism and social-fascist leaders.
5. To develop strong corps of proletarian cadres, experienced in mass work, and establish collective leadership of sections and tried secretaries in units, establish around the lower committees of the Party broad, active cadres which must be constantly instructed and utilized for the effective mobilization of the Party membership and for mass work; to draw active workers, members of the Party, from the factories into the leadership of the section committees.

## Build Party into Mass Proletarian Party

Every Party member, every leading committee, imbued with the central task of building the Party into a mass Party of the American proletariat, must exert all energies toward the carrying out of this task. The Open Letter states:

“A Communist Party, with a very weak and inadequately functioning organization in the big factories and among the decisive sections of the American industrial workers, a Communist Party whose entire agitation and propaganda, whose entire daily work, is not concentrated on winning over and mobilizing these workers and winning of the factories, a Communist Party which through its revolutionary trade union work, does not build highways to the broadest masses of workers, cannot lay claim to a policy capable of making it the leader of the working class within the shortest possible time.”

—J. P.

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