



## THE TASKS OF THE T. U. U. L. AND THE COMING NEW YORK CONFERENCE

By JOSEPH ZACK.

The Trade Union Unity League in the New York District has doubled its membership since October, 1931, having now 17,000 members and is growing at the rate of 1,000 to 1,500 new members each month.

The TUUL has 68 shop groups in plants of more than 700 members. These plants total 35,000 employed workers (exclusive of the Needle Trades) and 30 opposition groups in class collaboration unions which have a membership of about 50,000. Thus, including New Jersey, the apparatus of the TUUL has direct organized contact with about 115,000 workers in New York City and vicinity, while its ideological influence is even wider.

### Upward Development

The TUUL in New York district is distinctly in upward development not only ideologically but organizationally as well, and our problems are ones of growth. The TUUL has in the last six months led about 11,000 workers in strikes against wage cuts and for wage increases. The workers defeated the wage cut in most of the strikes led by us and in the well organized ones got wage increases and shop committee or union recognition. About 65 per cent of the strikes were won, the rest were lost. It will be seen from this that in the majority of the strikes we were either victorious or partially successful. We are becoming more proficient in leading workers in action.

### The Main Recent Activities

The last six months' activities were marked by: (1) Spreading and more successful operation of our factory groups, (2) Building up of opposition groups in class collaboration unions, (3) Drive to eliminate bureaucratic practices and organizational chaos in the inner workings of our unions, (4) Beginning of activities to attract the unemployed in the class collaboration unions and in industry generally, (5) Crystallization of united front from below tactics in practice in a number of industries.

Another characteristic of the last six months activities is the growth of our young organizations in the metal and transport industries as well as the growth of the shoe workers union based not as in the past upon the small shops but on the contrary upon the large plants.

### Coming Struggles

The perspective for 1932 is one of many more strikes than in the year gone by. The wage cut offensive of the bosses is now hitting also the organized labor aristocracy where wage-cuts of 10 to 30 per cent are demanded by the bosses even before the expiration of the collective agreements.

As to the unorganized which in this district are about 90 per cent of the total of the working class, they have in most cases already received the third wage cut amounting altogether to 30 to 70 per cent of their "prosperity" times wages and will in the course of the year undoubtedly receive a fourth one which will leave the average wage of semi-skilled and unskilled at the low level of \$10 to \$16 per week, while that of the skilled will vary between \$20 to \$45 per week for a full week's work. Accompanying the wage reductions is a further intensification of speed-up, part time work, elimination of extra pay for overtime, and in some trades among the unorganized lengthening of the working day as well.

In the first six months of the year we have already about 5,000 workers out on strike under our leadership in this district.

### Dictatorship by Injunction

These strikes particularly those in food and metal show the enormous obstacles the bourgeoisie is determined to interpose and now in the economic struggle, be that struggle ever so small. The police protection to struck plants is something extraordinary. There are more police than scabs and wherever there is a little bit of fighting the place looks like a war camp inside of five minutes with all the police armament in readiness from tear gas to machine guns.

Particularly vicious has been the use of court injunctions against us which are obtained by the bosses with extraordinary rapidity and of a sweeping character prohibiting all movement or organization from a to z.

There are three types of injunctions we have to deal with in this district:

1. Injunction taken by a small boss covering the place struck.

2. Blanket injunction taken out by a corporation, trust or bosses association covering all shops or plants under its jurisdiction, irrespective whether the workers in many of them are or are not on strike.

3. Blanket, permanent injunction taken out by the A.F.L. or "socialist" controlled union in agreement with the bosses, prohibiting us from striking any of the shops in the whole trade whether organized or not, monopoly of organization being claimed by the A.F.L. union. (In this kind of trade whenever we succeed to organize a shop, the boss signs up with the American Federation of Labor, whereupon the latter invokes the injunction against us.)

### Police and Gangster Corruption

We see also closer co-operation of the gangster groups with the police against us in strikes, in some cases detectives officer the gangster groups.

The harassing of our strike activities by arrests, deportation, threats, fines, court and bail bond expenses, etc., is also more severe than ever. A result of this increased terrorism,

we have lost some of our gains in the food and metal industry. These facts and experiences ought to have considerable bearing as to what is to be done next.

### The Main Inner Weaknesses of the T. U. U. L.

In spite of the considerable advances made due mainly to the objectively favorable situation, and improvements in our methods of work, our inner weaknesses must still be considered the main factor in not making greater advances. These weaknesses are in the main of the following character:

1. Clinging generally to agitation methods and tactics and often to outworn ones (this particularly in unions operating in trustified industry.)
2. Sticking to small shop sections of industry, needle, food, etc.
3. Prosperity opposition tactics in class collaboration unions (building, needle, printing, pocketbook trades.)
4. Lack of planning or organization and financial questions and general gross underestimation of the importance of good organization.
5. Lack of planned, collective activation of the membership, "the office" being the union. (food, needle, marine, etc.)
6. Separation from the struggle of the unemployed (shoe, metal, furniture, marine, transport, etc.)
7. Insufficient clarity on methods to attract the youth to the trade union movement and no specific methods or tactics to attract women workers.
8. Outside of the needle trades no activities to attract Negro workers.
9. None of our unions engaged in political struggles even of the every day elemental variety. They are not political minded. Slow to move jointly, "each for itself," they come for help when they are in trouble but don't get excited when others need it, the result is that collective action can be brought only partly and that only under tremendous pressure.
10. Our defense organization (legal defense, defense against gangsters and police terror) is chaotic and haphazard, each union for itself.
11. Strike preparations are mainly agitational as to serious organizational preparations, particularly as to strike funds, defense and relief. They are in each case exceedingly weak.
12. United front activities are in the main still in an agitation not in action stage. This applies particularly to the Food and Marine Workers Union.
13. Educational activities are badly organized with little or no planning or follow up. Lately there has been more top attention to the development of new cadres but all unions are bad in this respect, transport, metal, marine, medical building maintenance, are among the worst.
14. Our unions generally are at the tail of events, they act more or less passively. Only under tremendous pressure from below or as on questions of a general nature or in affecting turns in their accustomed inner rackets only under strong pressure from above. They are a driving force in the main in an agitational sense, generally handling current business and hoping for things to turn up. This lack of driving leadership is the main cause for the tremendous disproportion between the objectively extraordinarily favorable situation, our great ideological influence, and of the slowness of our organizational growth.
15. Practically no progress in organizing trade union work in Jersey, industrially the most important territory in this district.

### What Is Being Done To Correct These Weaknesses

We are a movement whose social composition flows:

1—from the unorganized with all the lack of organizational experiences and,

2—from the skilled organized trades where the bulk of members never participated in union organizing activities. This terrific lack of independent class organization experience reflects itself disastrously upon our movement.

The American worker who grumbled but hoped for better times or luck or left it to the strong leader is reflected in our organizational weakness. If we only realize it and buckle down to learn the most elementary things in class organization in the economic and political field and do not tire to teach as much as we know to new comers, we will lead out of agitation on to action and organization, from abstract agitation to concrete to everyday class politics not only on big things but on the small ones that stir even the most backward worker.

### The Political Side of Organization

The question of organization is, of course, not a mere matter of technique. It is primarily a political question. The old unions were stabilized on the basis of either collaboration with or toleration on the part of the bosses on the basis of an upward developing capitalism. A union with a small active and large passive membership could exist, "the office" functioning as the union.

Red trade unions whose existence and effectiveness depend not only on the mass but how alert that mass is to its class interests at the point of

## Women and War A New Pamphlet Now Ready to Spread

What has the war in the East to do with women workers in factories, fields and homes in the United States? What did the World War mean to women of the working-class, and what will the next imperialist war mean? What preparations is the United States making for war? And why does the capitalist class want war against the Soviet Union, the workers' republic?

There are some of the questions answered in the new pamphlet, "Women and War," by Grace Hutchins, published by the Communist Party of the U. S., and now ready for distribution in connection with International Women's Day, March 8.

With illustrations and a picture-cover drawn by William Gropper, the pamphlet presents a most attractive appearance and it should be distributed by the thousands not only women workers but among men workers as well. To secure the widest possible distribution for the March 8th demonstrations, send your bundle order today to Workers Library Publishers, Box 148, Station D, New York City. Five cents per copy. \$3.33 per hundred, plus express charges. Less than 50, no discount; 50 to 1,000, 33 1-3 per cent discount; 1,000 and over, 40 per cent discount.

## "ECONOMY" DRIVE HITS U. S. POST OFFICE WORKERS

### Substitute Clerks Fired By Thousands Thru-out the U. S. A.

(By a Worker Correspondent)

CHICAGO, Ill.—President Hoover's so-called economy drive has invaded the post office also. As a result, hundreds of substitutes have been laid off. And the rumor has that all the substitute clerks will be laid off eventually.

Those substitutes who are "fortunate" and happen to be working, are making two or three dollars a week. They are supposed to feed their families with these miserably low wages.

The purpose is to curtail the expenses, but the post office dept. puts the whole blame on the decrease of volume of mail. While it is true that the mail has been decreased considerably, particularly since January 1st, but on the other hand the speed-up system has been intensified to an unprecedented degree. The post office is swarmed with so-called "efficiency" experts, whose purpose is to stand like watch dogs and speed up the workers as much as possible.

As everybody knows, three bills were recently introduced in Congress proposing wage cuts. The advocates of wage-cuts have such supporters as the fake progressive Senator Borah.

And what are the officials of the National Union of Postal Clerks doing in order to resist the proposed wage cuts? Nothing! The union leaders are not even making any gestures as their colleagues in the A. F. of L. do occasionally. Instead of fighting against the "stagger" system and wholesale dismissal of the substitute they being praising, in flowery language, the loyalty and the so-called patriotism of the sub-clerks. And as against the coming wage cuts, they express their indignation and wrath with such sharp and threatening phrases as "it is unjust," "we will be hurt" etc.

production must have a tremendous large active organized for collective leadership.

### The Essential Difference

Organization inside big plants can only be done by developing the workers that work there into rank and file organizers. This essential difference between old organizing tactics emanating from class collaboration days and red trade union organization is not understood. The result is we also have "offices." Very often we have said to our red opposition; "independent leadership of economic struggles," but the tactics to achieve it, the organization methods with which to carry it through have by no means been made clear as yet, we have by far not as yet convinced our own red opposition that the new opposition tactics are necessary or feasible.

### More Political Discussion

We often said that strikes are feasible and can be won in times of crisis. Generally our active members will say yes, we illustrate it by example, actually when it comes to their "own" industry or shop they will often answer no. If not verbally then actually, by their behaviour in practice. It is but seldom that the maneuvers of the American Federation of Labor or the socialist party are a subject of discussion in our unions. A denunciatory article sometimes analytical is as much as we take notice of them. The result is a low political level in our every day activity.

### Planning to Reach 25,000

In order to get the trade unions and leagues to reach out more effectively towards the solution of the tasks enumerated, we propose a planned "improve the organization and recruiting campaign." Each union and league to set itself objectives according to its own possibilities and problems. The sum total of this drive to result in improving our organization generally and bringing the membership of the T. U. U. L. in this district up to 25,000 members by the end of May.

The plans for this drive will be submitted separately.