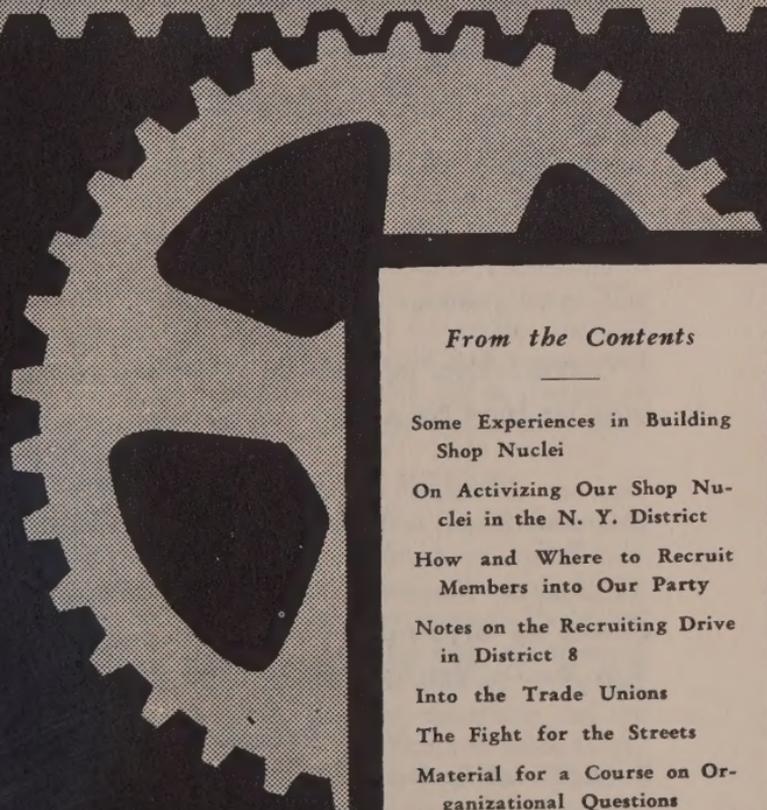


Party Organizer



From the Contents

Some Experiences in Building
Shop Nuclei

On Activizing Our Shop Nu-
clei in the N. Y. District

How and Where to Recruit
Members into Our Party

Notes on the Recruiting Drive
in District 8

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Material for a Course on Or-
ganizational Questions

Vol. IV

DECEMBER, 1931

No. 11

Issued by

CENTRAL COMMITTEE COMMUNIST PARTY, U. S. A.

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PARTY ORGANIZER

Vol. IV

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Intensify the Organization of the Unemployed

Put Our Resolutions into Life!

THE National Hunger March has mobilized large masses of workers. It has focused attention upon the demands of the unemployed. It has challenged the whole policy of the Hoover government to degrade the unemployed masses and to make them ready tools in the hands of the capitalist class. The National Hunger March has been one of the greatest national mobilization by the Party of the employed and unemployed masses. At the same time it has revealed big weaknesses in *organization* work which must be overcome immediately after the return of the delegations.

The National Hunger March must be followed by the most feverish activities to develop the struggle for the local demands and for the fight for unemployment insurance. But these aims can be accomplished only if we *organize* the work of the unemployed, if we build unemployed committees, in blocks and around flop houses, unemployed registration bureaus and other gathering places of the unemployed. The building of the unemployed committees is developing entirely too slowly and the unemployed committees do not yet embrace and speak in the name of the large masses of unemployed workers. There is still too narrow an outlook with regard to the forms of organization, too much a tendency of narrowing the unemployed committee down only to small numbers of registered workers. The forms of organization called for by the resolution of the Central Committee and by the directives given by the Executive Committee of the Communist International at the 11th Plenum must be put into effect. All along the line of march where the workers have been organized, the Party must endeavor to set up local unemployed committees and unemployed councils.

If the movement which was been developed is to be crystal-

lized *organizationally*, most resolute steps must be taken to build the unemployed councils as collective bodies having the unemployed committee as their base and containing representatives of trade unions and other workers' organizations. The unemployed councils must quickly pass over from the stage of general struggles for immediate demands and unemployment insurance and must take up the concrete struggles for the most immediate demands by organizing in the unemployed councils, food committees, committees for the fight against evictions, trade union committees, education committees, and other committees which are called for in the resolutions of the Central Committee.

We must record that the organizational work in connection with the unemployed is entirely underestimated and that old forms still exist and that measures are not taken to put the forms of organization into effect which will *organize the millions* of unemployed workers. The Party organizations must finally break with the underestimation of organizational work, with the inattention to organizational details, with the opportunistic passivity in respect to the great question of organization. Without organization no stable consolidated mass movement capable of achieving the mobilization and organization of the millions for the big class struggles.

Study this Material on Unemployment Work

Resolution of the 13th Plenum of the Central Committee on Work Among the Unemployed. Published in **THE COMMUNIST** for October.

Resolution of the International Conference on Unemployment held in Prague in August. Published in **THE COMMUNIST** for December.

Review of the General Line and Activities of the Party in Unemployment Work. Published in the **DAILY WORKER** of November 28 and 30.

Unemployment and the Communist Parties, by O. Piatnitsky. 15c pamphlet published by Workers Library Publishers.

From the Practical Work For the Practical Work

In this Section of the PARTY ORGANIZER the comrades of the shop nuclei, fractions and street nuclei speak. Send in your experiences in all fields of Party work to the PARTY ORGANIZER, P. O. Box 87, Station D, New York City.

Rooting the Party in the Shops

Some Experiences in the Building of Shop Nuclei

Failures in Understanding Party Functions in the Shop

IN LINE with the decision of the 13th Central Committee Plenum of turning our face to the shops, especially the large shops of basic industry, our district during the past few weeks has made some very serious efforts in the formation of shop nuclei in a number of metal shops in the New York District. The Party registration helped us to locate a number of comrades working in shops for quite a period of time without a shop nucleus actually having been formed. In this work, a number of very valuable experiences must be pointed out.

I want to give an example of one case, of a white goods factory involving about 100 workers where 4 Party comrades are employed. When we were informed of this, we sent a letter to the comrades asking them to call at the district office for a meeting where we would take up with them the question of the formation of a shop nucleus. Twice the comrades failed to respond. Only the third time, when a letter was sent out under the D. O.'s signature and sent special delivery, did the comrades appear. In taking up the question of forming a shop nucleus, the following very basic things were evident;

One of the comrades stated as follows: "I thought that our Party has changed its policy. It doesn't come with orders from above, but allows the comrades below to decide. Why can't we in the shop decide whether we should organize a shop nucleus or not?" "Let's wait until we have a number of workers in a grievance committee and then proceed to the organization of a shop nucleus." A third comrade pointed out "I am active in Party work in the section and if a shop nucleus is formed, I will have to give up Party activity." Still another comrade stated "There are no issues around which to organize a shop nucleus. Let's wait until we get a wage cut and then we will be able to mobilize the workers."

Let us try to analyze some of these statements of the comrades. Upon requiring from the comrades more information regarding the conditions of the shop, we found out that they are working piece-work and that they must report to the shop every day. Many times, they wait around for hours before they are given a bundle of work. We have cases of workers making from \$7-\$10 a week. Certainly this is an issue around which the workers can be mobilized and organized, yet the comrades speak of waiting until a wage cut is given them. What is this, if not a wage cut?

The next point. The comrades speak of not wanting to organize a shop nucleus because this will take them away from Party work. This point shows definitely that there still is the old attitude left that Party work is something apart and distinct from trade union and shop work. This is a remnant of the old days in the Socialist Party where the idea prevailed of politics being separated from economic struggles in the shops, and we must admit that many of our Party comrades today, especially some of the old Party members, still have this view in mind, for the comrades in this group who expressed this opinion happened to be charter members of our Party. However, it would be incorrect merely to blame these comrades involved, though their arguments are concessions to opportunism. It seems to me that the Party as a whole has not as yet succeeded fully in bringing before the Party membership the fact that our Party will not be able to really become a mass Communist Party and lead the struggles of the workers unless we root ourselves inside the factories, inside the basic indus-

tries. The experiences we have had with the comrades in this shop must be an indication to us of some of the enormous tasks that will be confronting this district in the work of building new shop nuclei. Together with the general decisions of the Party, a real ideological campaign must be carried on in the Party press pointing out to the Party members the importance of work within their own shop, the drawing in of the workers into the union, grievance committees, various other groups inside the shop, to make the shop nucleus, in the factory the political leader of the struggle of the workers for their everyday economic demands.

LENA DAVIS.

On Activizing Our Shop Nuclei in the New York District

THE basic fault for the weakness and the quality of the shop nuclei lies in the fact that we have not as yet succeeded in bringing to the Party comrades the real meaning of "face to the shop" and "work within the shops."

For instance, we have cases, very characteristic, where metal comrades volunteered for shock troops for concentration on the waterfront but refused to carry out the work in their own shop. This is not only one case but dozens of cases. Perhaps this is not because the comrades don't want to do the work but because we have not really found the methods bringing before the comrades in a concrete way how to do the work in their own shop so that their job is not in danger and so that they build the Party and the trade union in their own shop.

The shop papers also reflect this situation. They are general. We have on the first page something about the war danger and a number of other general problems but on the back page they speak of a ten per cent wage cut in the shop. They haven't learned to link up the question of the concrete issues in the shops with the general issues in the country and international issues but they speak generalities and not concrete issues involved in the shop.

The district agitprop department and the district as a whole, in order to remedy this regularly must pay closer attention to the shop papers. We have also proposed that the general in-

structions that go out from the district shall not include the shop nuclei but regularly the district gets in touch with the comrades of the nuclei. For instance on recruiting, we get in touch with the comrades in the shop nuclei on this question and don't send out the general instructions.

—*From a Report of the New York Org. Dept.*

More Swing to Our Shop Work

IN spite of our Plenum discussion it seems that shop work is not yet taken up *in practice* as a central point. It is interesting to observe the following: That when there are definite campaigns like the Hunger March, even the anti-war campaign, with dates set for these campaigns as the Hunger March, the entire Party is behind it and the district leadership feels that it must give to it daily guidance. Insofar as shop work, however, is concerned we don't feel the same conscientious, painstaking and daily attention given, especially to work in those shops where we have at least shop nuclei and individual comrades working in large plants. When there is a conference or a campaign the district leaderships already feel that a neglect of any detail might hinder the campaign. But so far we do not have the same approach on detail, individual guidance insofar as shop work is concerned. Shop work is not taken up with the same *swing* and in the same spirit of *emergency* as the other campaigns of the Party. In the practical work we are alarmed at the neglect of various details in connection with our current campaigns. The same attitude is not manifested in *practice* towards shop work. For instance, we have already reached, to an extent, a step in the development of the life of the Party, that if an eviction takes place, the comrades immediately raise the question of a struggle against it, check up on the unemployed branch and the Party units for developing a struggle against it. But should a wage cut take place in a shop where we have comrades or a shop nucleus, there is not the same approach from the viewpoint of check up and organization for struggle. It is necessary to particularly again emphasize the question of individual approach to shop work and what the Plenum emphasized, that the whole attention of the Party should be given to it.

Extracts from a Report from Cleveland to the C.G.

Improving Internal Life of the Party

Why We Have No Adequate Forces Weaknesses of Higher Committees — Lack of Shop Workers

THE district org. department as well as the district committee and the district buro are composed mainly of Party functionaries. With very few exceptions have we actual workers from the shops. In the district committee we have about five, in the district buro we have only one and in the district org. department we have only one.

This hinders us greatly in taking up concrete shop issues as we are not directly connected with workers in the shop. In addition we are not developing new cadres as we should be, by taking promising workers and giving them the training of being on these higher committees. At our last meeting we decided to add two workers to the district org. department, one from metal and one from marine.

We undoubtedly have scores of comrades who understand what we mean by "shop work" and "developing shop work" but it seems we bury them. We must have a special digging committee to dig them out. We must develop a system in the immediate future where we send comrades from the district to the section and meet with all the comrades in the units and on the basis of that dig them out.

The question of forces is absolutely something that we must change immediately. To begin with, we must add members to the district committee and to the district buro and to the sections—workers. When I say workers I don't want to approach the problem mechanically—just someone who works in the shop and just because he is a worker put him on. I mean comrades who have shown in the process of struggle that they have the ability to develop and understand the line of the Party. We have dozens of these but simply haven't looked for them.

From a Report of N. Y. Org. Dept.

Party Recruitment Drive

How and Where to Recruit New Members Into Our Party

THE decisions of the October Plenum of our district committee, based on the decisions of the Central Committee Plenum, were that our recruiting campaign should be concentrated as follows: 1. On the shops. 2. In Negro territory. 3. Language organizations.

The recruiting of new members into our Party cannot be made a separate campaign, divorced and isolated from the every day tasks of the Party, and the important campaigns carried on. On the contrary, the recruiting of new members into our Party must be a result of our preparations, organization, and carrying through of these campaigns.

In our recruiting campaign, we do not want to concentrate only on recruiting individual members into our Party. Our major task is to recruit workers from the shops, Negro neighborhoods and language mass organizations, into the Communist Party. We cannot forget the recruiting of young workers into the Young Communist League, to help the Y.C.L. organize units in shops where we have nuclei or connections, especially at the X, Y, and Z plants.

The concentration on shops, Negro neighborhoods and language organizations however, does not mean that no workers shall be recruited from the revolutionary or reactionary trade unions, from the ranks of the unemployed or the Workers Ex-Servicemen's League. On the contrary, more workers will have to be brought into the Party, because we have actually lost contact, especially in the reactionary trade unions.

Tasks of the Section Committees

1. A special meeting of the section committee is to be held, at which the plan is to be discussed and applied to local conditions.

2. A meeting of all unit organizers is to follow the meeting of the section committee, where section organizers, section

org.-secretaries are to explain this plan, from where it is to be brought to the units and discussed at one meeting, where nothing else is to be taken up.

3. Each section committee with the unit organizers, is to assign shock troops (groups of from 7 to 10 white and Negro party members) preferably comrades assigned to the Party fraction in the League of Struggle for Negro Rights for concentration on recruiting of Negro workers from the L.S.N.R., unemployed block committees and Negro mass organizations.

4. Each section committee at the same meeting is to assign shock troops (groups of from 7 to 10 active shop workers and picked comrades from street nuclei concentrating at a given shop) to shops where we are concentrating (auto: Section A, B, C; Pottery: Section D; and Furniture: Section R.)

5. Section committees are to check up on language fractions in their territory in the recruiting campaign.

6. The section committee is to make sure that all members of units are involved in the recruiting campaign—not only the shock group in a given section. The shock groups are organized for the purpose of activizing all the members and drawing sharply the attention of other Party members to the importance of concentration on shops.

7. Immediately upon the appointment of the shock groups, their names and the units they are members of, to be given to the district office and a meeting called with the district org. department. This is to be done the week prior to the unit discussions.

8. The section committees are to establish a system, whereby the new members are called in on a section basis, investigated and assigned to units. If the applications are endorsed by two Party members who know them, no long drawn out investigation is necessary.

9. Special care shall be taken by the section org. dept., not to have applications lie around for weeks before comrades are assigned, and again that units do not wait two or three months before a member is actually called to meetings.

10. The section dues secretary is to have a supply of dues books and initiation stamps (both 10 and 50c) for the new members.

11. The section committee meetings with the unit organ-

izers is to set a quota for recruiting of new members for each unit, from the shops, Negro section and language organizations, unemployed councils, W.E.S.L. (where same exist).

12. Special meetings of sympathizers, Daily Worker and language press readers, members of mass organizations to be called by the street nuclei.

Negro Department

The district Negro department in its plan of work must bring out concretely the recruiting campaign in connection with its concentration.

a. Steps are to be taken to have a representative of the department at the section committee meetings where the recruiting campaign will be taken up.

b. The Negro department is to help the section committee in the organization of shock groups and assignments of quotas of Negro workers to be recruited into the Party.

c. Special meetings to be called in the Negro neighborhoods, where the Party is to be brought forward and recruiting for the Party carried on.

d. The department is to bring to the attention the concentration points mentioned in its plan of work to the section committee, for assignments of shock groups and forces for carrying on the campaign.

The T.U.U.L. and Unemployed Council Party Fractions

a. The section committee in conjunction with the district unemployed secretaries, is to call and make arrangements to have special meetings with fraction secretaries, where the recruiting campaign is to be outlined, and unemployed workers that join the Party are to immediately be assigned to the respective fractions.

b. The fraction of the trade union committee is to have special meeting at which the recruiting campaign is to be taken up and unions for concentration picked out.

c. The recruiting is to go hand in hand with the activities of the Hunger March throughout the whole district. The Hunger March is to serve as a basis for the establishment of Party units in every city and town.

From the Plan for the Party Recruiting Drive of Detroit.

Note on the Recruiting Drive in District 8

THE decisive question for us in recruiting during this period, particularly in view of our basic weakness of not being rooted in the shops, must not be the number of new members only, but should be the number of new members who are recruited from the big factories. From now on, a strict record will be kept not only of the recruits from large factories but more attention will be given to analyze regularly the type of members we recruit into the Party. We can show by a few figures, however, that the number of recruits who are employed are very small compared with the number of unemployed workers that we recruit. We cite for instance the last four weeks as a typical example:

	<i>Unemployed</i>	<i>Unemployed</i>
September 19th	10	56
September 26th	13	48
October 3rd	19	87
October 10th	28	92
	70	283

We can see an approximate relationship of 4 to 1 comparing unemployed workers being recruited to the Party with employed workers. Some sections, recruit absolutely no employed workers whatsoever for months and months. This is a very serious problem and reflects, of course, a complete lack of shop activity.

We must further record the fact that of all the new members taken in, practically not one new member has been taken into our existing shop nuclei, and while there are several prospective shop nuclei to be organized, none of them have as yet been organized in the period covered by this report. A special examination must be made at once of the activities of the shop nuclei.

Our experience shows the possibilities of mass recruiting, and simultaneously our failure to organize and direct our recruitment into the big factories and more especially our incapacity to create the proper inner life to keep the new mem-

bers and organize our apparatus in such a way as to see that the dues purchases correspond to the above.

Recommendations:

1. The main emphasis from now on shall be:

(a) Building of shop nuclei and recruiting new members for existing shop nuclei.

(b) Take the following steps to help cut down the high fluctuations in the Party membership by:

1. Wherever we have mass recruiting, applicants shall be called to special series of meetings—either 2 or 3—where before being accepted into the Party, at these meetings we shall explain to the applicants the fundamental points concerning the class struggle and their responsibility in the Communist Party. If they attend these meetings, they shall then be turned over to the units where their application shall be voted upon in the regular procedure.

2. That we direct the attention of the agitprop department to greater systematization of the new members classes.

3. That open Party unit meetings shall be abolished as a regular procedure and only on special occasions shall they be held.

4. Major attention shall be given to neighborhood meetings on local issues by the Party units, as well as open forums to take care of all those workers who are interested in the propaganda and agitation of the Party, and at these meetings the question of recruiting shall be placed in the forefront.

(c) Improve the organizational apparatus in the sections and units so that dues payments shall be more regular, corresponding much more to the actual figures and thus liquidating the growing discrepancy which is appearing in all sections. In order to facilitate this:

1. That a one-page document shall be gotten out on tasks of a unit financial secretary.

2. That we work out a system of classes for unit financial secretaries on a section scale.

From a report to Chicago District Org. Department.

Passing Up Opportunities to Recruit Members

Lack of faith in the masses expresses itself in a failure to organize the masses, to realize that the workers who come to our meetings and rally behind our slogans are ready to join in our movement and fight for these demands if we properly approach them.

In Anderson, Ind. where the circuit court room was shut down on us in the last minute as a result of the growing struggles led by the Party and Unemployed Council we nevertheless rallied 1,500 workers on the court house lawn in a highly enthusiastic meeting but not one single attempt to recruit workers, not one member taken in as a result of this huge demonstration! In Terre Haute with 600 workers attending a militant indoor rally which was the culmination to a week of mass demonstrations in protest against the attempt to railroad two communists who had fought in an eviction case, only 3 joined the Party, the rest (the report is 100) joined the U. C. While failure to recruit at all is one form of opportunism as in Anderson, failure to recruit for the Party at a November 7 meeting shows opportunism in another form but it still is lack of faith in the masses, looking down on the "raw" workers.

At the same time in contrast to these two glaring examples of opportunism is the case of Evansville where 25 out of 125 workers signed up for the Communist Party.

One more point. In most cases where there is no appeal or a very poor appeal for membership there is also a weak sale of literature, showing that comrades who do not realize the importance of organizing the workers do not think it so very important to get our literature to the workers, do not realize that our literature is a great organizer. It is high time to get deeper into the masses, to know their responses and feelings, and to organize the hundreds of fighting workers who come to our meetings and applaud our program.

N. Ross.

Why We Do Not Keep All Members Recruited

WE have recruited a number of new members to the Party in our section in Youngstown, O., for the last few months, but we do not keep them all. After investigating why the comrades drop activities and with it the attendance at the units, I found the following:

A very good active Negro comrade from the unemployed council was recruited to the Party. After attending the first two meetings of the unit, election of new officers took place. (It was about the time comrade Browder's article appeared in *The Communist*, "Faith in the Masses"), and we elected the new comrade as agit-prop director of the unit.

The comrades of the unit thought that they did a good job and followed the correct line of the Party by electing a new Party member to an important office. But what happened to this comrade? The comrade understood that he is elected to some important office, but what the office never explained to him fully, and he did not bother to find out. In the meantime he picked up a couple days of work and was not able to come to the meetings of the unemployed councils nor was he able to attend a couple of unit meetings.

One morning he came to the headquarters to find out how things were going on. The secretary of the unit met him and told him that if he did not come to the next unit meeting he would be called to account. I followed him and asked him if he knows what he is responsible for. His answer was that he did not know, all he knew is that he was elected to some office, he does not know the name of it, and he does not think he can keep it, and it is no use to come to the meetings. Only after a long talk to the comrade did he promise to come to the meeting.

According to reports he was not at the unit meeting. Yet no attempt so far was made to get the worker to the meeting. This is how we kill good members.

—M. F.

Agit Prop Work

WHAT ABOUT YOU

YOUNG FELLOWS AND GIRLS ?

CAN YOU GET RELIEF FROM THE CITY OR CHARITIES?
DO YOU INTEND TO SLEEP IN THE PARKS?????????
WHO WANTS TO WALK THE STREETS WITH AN EMPTY
STOMACH?????????????????
DO YOU KNOW WHY THE BOARD OF EDUCATION REFUSES
TO FEED THE HUNGRY CHILDREN?????????????
WHO IS RESPONSIBLE FOR OUR CONDITIONS?????????

WE ACCUSE



MAYOR ROESCH AND THE CITY COUNCIL
AND THE BOARD OF EDUCATION

OF STARVING

thousands of children and unemployed young boys and girls
of the City of Buffalo!

WE CHALLENGE these officials to defend themselves at the

PUBLIC TRIAL
ON THANKSGIVING DAY
NOV. 26th AT 3 P.M.
565 WILLIAM ST.

Come to this PUBLIC TRIAL and have your say on how conditions are at home. The Youth Com. of the Unemployed Council challenged the City officials and the Board of Education to come to this trial and to defend themselves. Anyone will have the opportunity to express his or her opinions.

YOUTH COMMITTEE
BUFFALO UNEMPLOYED COUNCIL.

A GOOD YOUTH LEAFLET



Into the Trade Unions!

Communist Leadership Can Only be Supplied to the Mass Organizations Through Functioning Party Fractions!

FRACTIONS are one of the most important links through which we can develop the work of the Party. Our comrades do not know what the work of the fractions really is. We must state that in most cases, especially in connection with the trade unions, the fraction has not been the place where the Party comrades take up the policy confronting them in the particular union in order to put forth the policy of the Party and to draw in members of the union into struggle and activity. The fraction has not been a political guide. While we have tried in the last few weeks to change this situation we must admit that we still have a great deal to do in order to turn the fractions into political bodies to take up policy and discuss it and bring it into the unions. We have a situation where hundreds of Party members who are eligible to be in the A. F. of L. unions, active there or in the revolutionary unions, do all kinds of inner Party work and there is a very strong tendency to a great extent to distinguish between trade union work and political work. Some comrades having the mistaken idea that trade union work is not "political" work.

We have situations where in the units we have comrades who are org. secretaries of the units and Negro work directors and women directors and all sorts of small functions, and who could be active in the unions, but who consider that internal Party work is more "important" and more "political." Nothing can be more "important" and more "political" than to bring the Party into the leadership of the masses in the trade unions.

—*From a Report of the New York District Org. Dept.*

Narrow Inner Outlook

Examples of Neglect of Mass Organizations

THE district Harlan-Mooney Conference was held in Youngstown had about 16 *locals of the A. F. of L. represented*. The comrades state that in fact they could have gotten even more. The Cleveland District Painters Council as a result of our activities was compelled to endorse the conference. This official endorsement in a way opened our doors to enter all the other locals of the council. Yet this was not done sufficiently. Of course we still have a good chance to do it now in reporting on the conference to the locals.

At a unit meeting in Cleveland however, the discussion brought out that about 6 members of that unit belonged to various language mass organizations *but not in a single one of these organizations was even an attempt made to have a discussion on the war danger and to introduce such resolutions*. What still more emphasizes the peculiarity of it, is the fact *that all these organizations meet in the same hall where the Party unit meetings are held*. There were also two members in the same unit belonging to the Food Workers Union affiliated with the A. F. of L. Nor was it attempted at the local union meeting to bring this point up. But what strikes one particularly is that the Party members in a way consider the question of introduction of resolutions a new suggestion. This only goes to show that we did not really sufficiently bring it into the consciousness of the Party membership from the viewpoint of personal guidance, checkup and direction.

The same week there was a functionaries' conference on the war danger in Cleveland. Neither the report nor the discussion mentioned, let alone emphasized, *bringing it into the mass organizations* even through such a simple step as discussion and introduction of resolutions. The organizations that I have mentioned are of course those that we consider directly under our control. Insofar as mass organizations under fascist and social-fascist control are concerned, there is not even a sufficient outlook towards them insofar as penetrating them with our anti-war campaign.

—S. D.

The Fight For the Streets

By L. ALFRED

INTRODUCTORY NOTE: *In this period of sharpening struggles, practically every demonstration must be prepared to adopt defense measures against attacks. UNDER WHAT CONDITIONS TO DEFEND, HOW TO DEFEND, HOW TO ORGANIZE AND PREPARE SUCH DEFENSE, these are some of the questions answered in the following, which is the greater part of an article printed in the Communist International, No. 15, Sept. 1st, 1931.*

THE worst thing that can happen to a Communist is for him only to look on at the fight of the masses and not to fight actively with them. The question of demonstrations is a burning organizational problem of the present day, a question of technique. The use of an elastic tactical method by the revolutionary masses in demonstrations is urgently demanded by the class struggle as it is developing today.

The creative instinct of the masses in their fight for the streets is constantly bringing new experiences, new forms of struggle. It is in the course of these struggles that the correct tactics for demonstrations will be worked out, and Communists must learn them in order to be able to lead the masses who are fighting on the streets. It is only on the basis of a careful study of these recent experiences of struggle that any fruitful discussion of the question of tactics for demonstrations becomes possible.

The necessity of regarding demonstrations at the present time as an art, and of making use of an elastic, mobile tactical method free from any tendency to become stereotyped, has been forced on the workers by their class enemies. When demonstrations are prohibited and therefore have to be carried on illegally, when the bourgeoisie mobilize their guards equipped for civil war against the demonstrators, when demonstrations have to be carried out under the constant menace of attack by police and Fascist murder-troops, then it becomes clear that they must be organized in quite a different way from the more or less peaceful political processions of the preceding years of capitalist stabilization. It is absolutely necessary to

cast aside the usages, traditions and methods of these old demonstrations, because to stick to them under present conditions entails a bloody punishment.

How impossible it is to use old methods in the fighting demonstrations of the present day was shown by the experience of the failure of the anti-Fascist demonstration in Helsingfors on the occasion of the Fascist "march on Helsingfors" on July 1st of last year. A critical analysis of this demonstration was given in the "Proletaari," the organ of the Finnish Communist Party. The Lappo group and other active Fascist elements from the whole country gathered in Helsingfors on July 1st and held a great demonstration on the central square of the town, the so-called Senate Place. The local Communist leadership did not know any better than to try to meet this situation by summoning the workers of Helsingfors, by means of leaflets, to a counter-demonstration at the same time and place. But the workers, who up to then had followed the calls made by the Party, did not turn up on this occasion. There was no counter-demonstration. The Fascists were able to carry on with their insolent counter-revolutionary demonstration without any interference.

It was, of course, correct to summon the masses to a counter-demonstration, but everything else that was done was wrong. The whole of the preparations made for the demonstration consisted only in the distribution of a leaflet. That was how they had always done it before, and it had always come off. But the distribution of a leaflet is inadequate as a means of organizing an illegal mass demonstration. It was a particularly gross blunder to suppose that without any preparation whatever the workers would assemble on the Senate Place, where the most active and bloodthirsty sections of the Fascists from all over the country were concentrated, armed with long knives and revolvers and ready to fight, and where the police had gathered the whole of its forces. Such an assumption was all the more naive because the leaflet "honestly" gave the place of the illegal demonstration. It is not to be wondered at that the workers did not follow this advice, that they did not go one by one into the enemy's camp without first assembling and organizing their forces.

Just because of the fact that, as a result of the white terror

and the deviations among the Communists, the spirit of the workers was low, the organizers of the demonstration should have set themselves, in the first instance, a much more modest task than a direct frontal attack on the heavily-armed main forces of the enemy. They should have raised the self-confidence of the masses, they should have shown them that a mass struggle under difficult conditions can be carried out, provided that the correct approach is made, provided that the first thing that is undertaken is a relatively easy task, and then, encouraged by minor successes, it is possible to pass on to the solution of the more difficult tasks of the struggle. The following out of this line would have meant, in connection with the "march on Helsingfors," that *the first task to be undertaken was real preparatory work in the factories and working-class districts, then the assembling of the workers in the working-class districts, and only then the attempt to push forward into the center of the town if the strength and spirit of the masses had been such as to justify this bold step.*

The points at which demonstrations first assemble, and from which they march off, must be where the working masses are, where they can be most easily attracted, where the opponents are weakest: in the factories, at the exchanges, in working-class districts. This rule is simple and cannot be disputed, and yet it is often forgotten. It is true that successes have been achieved with surprise demonstrations in the center of towns, where the demonstrators have assembled in small numbers in the streets near the center, and then suddenly formed a demonstration under the eyes of the astonished police and the "upper classes." But even such demonstrations are as a rule first prepared in the working-class districts.

Although the working-class districts must be the points from which the demonstrations must move off, this does not by any means imply that demonstrations should limit themselves to the working-class districts. On the contrary, demonstrations in working-class districts are as a rule only justified when the forces are too weak to penetrate the middle-class areas. Demonstrations must start in the working-class quarters in order to bring on to the streets the largest possible number of workers and then to move forward to the real objective of the fight, which generally lies in a non-proletarian quar-

ter. The fighting demonstration of today is not a political procession, but a real means of exerting revolutionary mass pressure. In recent demonstrations the special objectives of the struggle have been town halls and other public buildings. The objectives of the struggle, of course, vary as the political situation changes. But in any case it is right and proper that proletarian demonstrations should tend to be directed towards middle-class areas. A great hunger march from the districts of the poor to the districts of the rich is in our opinion one of the most successful forms of fighting demonstrations at the present time.

It is true that the police do not like the starting points of demonstrations to be in working-class districts, especially if the demonstrators assemble not at one place but at several points, because this compels them to split up their forces and to maintain an extensive service of patrols as well as to decentralize the police reserves. The fundamental principle of the police tactics in suppressing "internal disorders" is the concentration of forces, the avoidance of splitting up the police forces and thus allowing them to be beaten piece-meal. For that reason there can be no more advantageous position for the police, enabling them to attack the demonstrators, than when the masses are called to one central assembling point or a small number of points, as was done in Helsingfors.

The decentralized, "partisan" method of assembly for a demonstration has the further merit of surprising the enemy; there are many possibilities of misleading the police. Of course, a mass demonstration which is not spontaneous but is the result of preparation cannot come as an absolute surprise to the police, because the arrangements and the time of the demonstration must be made known to the largest possible number of workers. But it is not absolutely inevitable that the police should know at what point large contingents are to meet and through what streets the demonstration is to pass.

Of course, the workers at various factories, exchanges, houses or blocks must know where they are to assemble in the first instance, after which they will follow the lead of groups acting under special instructions. But even if these points are known to the police it is impossible for them to post overwhelming forces at every factory, every house and every public

house where the demonstrators may assemble. In order to split the police forces still further, in some demonstrations recently special groups have been formed whose task is to make a determined move behind the police reserves and in this way to keep the reserves busy and draw them off, freeing the main mass of demonstrators and gaining time.

It used to be common for a demonstration to march outside the town and to hold the actual meeting there, in some open space or place isolated from street traffic by gardens or parks. When a demonstration has been prohibited such a procedure is not correct. The isolation of the participants in an illegal demonstration from the rest of the inhabitants gives the guards of the bourgeoisie the most favorable opportunity for staging a blood-bath. Moreover, the effect of the demonstration is almost entirely restricted to the participants themselves.

Where the workers have some experience in the organization of illegal demonstrations, the demonstration is as a rule held at street corners where numbers of people are moving or in squares with a number of ways out which are better suited for elastic manoeuvring and the organization of mass defense against provocative attacks made on the demonstrators.

The question of physical resistance against police and Fascists is a particularly burning one in demonstrations at the present time. To preach non-resistance to workers who have been provocatively attacked by the police and Fascists is to abandon the field of the class struggle. Proletarian defense against armed attacks by the State and volunteer murder-columns of the bourgeoisie is not only permissible, but must be consciously organized and led. But at a period when the time has not yet come for the decisive struggle for power by the working class, when there is not yet any question of armed revolt, it is necessary also to raise the issue of how far purely physical resistance should be carried, and at what cost.

In an armed revolt attack at all costs is essential. But anyone who tries to apply this rule also to physical resistance in current class battles is guilty of a sectarian interpretation of the class battle. Lenin emphasized that strikes are a "school of war" for the working class, but not the war itself. That is true also of demonstrations. A demonstration, like a strike,

cannot lead to a decisive result: the bourgeoisie cannot be overthrown by a demonstration. The bourgeoisie makes the demonstrations of the present day a "school of war," of the decisive struggle for power, not only for the police but also for the working class.

In militant demonstrations the workers and peasants are hardened. But they are not the decisive struggle. In European countries at the present time it might be possible to lead the advance guard of the working class to an attack at any price, but not the broad masses of workers themselves. Anyone who does not take account of this fact isolates himself from the masses, and will not be in a position to lead when the broad masses are prepared to fight whatever the cost. What is necessary today is not an attack at any price, but the greatest mobility, an elastic combination of attack, defense and retreat, so far as concerns physical resistance against the civil war guards of the bourgeoisie.

After the first illegal demonstrations in Germany, the workers very soon overcame the tendency to non-resistance. It was only at the beginning that the demonstrators dispersed immediately on the arrival of the police. They very soon passed on to showing resistance in cases where they had to deal with weaker police forces, and only when overwhelming police forces arrived would they disperse, only to reassemble at another point. The German workers did not adopt the line of resistance at any price, but in each particular case decided the question of how far they were to carry their resistance, in accordance with the concrete situation and the relations between the forces.

For example, the Berlin organization of the German Communist Party cannot be reproached for not having called on the masses to offer open physical resistance, in spite of the panic shootings and provocative attacks of the police, on the occasion of the recent great meeting at the Palace of Sport, when the building was surrounded and turned into an armed camp by the concentrated forces of the police.

The question of armed demonstrations is similar to the question of physical resistance. The slogan of an armed demonstration means the same thing as the general slogan of the arming of the proletariat. To raise the slogan of an armed

demonstration without any anticipation of a speedy transformation into an armed revolt, and before the pre-conditions for a successful revolt exist, is to be guilty of playing with revolution. If certain impatient elements demand the arming of demonstrators, it is necessary to look carefully to see whether there is not an attitude of panic behind the demand. The demand: Give us arms, or else we will not go on the streets—in many cases has been nothing more than an idle excuse for passivity and unwillingness to undertake revolutionary mass work. It is characteristic that these elements ask the Party for arms instead of themselves finding arms.

During the month of June of this year in many countries there were serious clashes between workers in demonstrations and the police, in the course of which the demonstrators armed themselves with stones, bricks, pick-axes, bottles, flower-pots and similar objects. Some cases also occurred where the workers disarmed individual policemen and made use of the weapons they took from them in their own defense. To "offer" to arm the workers in this way would be ridiculous. We do not object to individual proletarians arming themselves, but we raise objection to the slogan of arming the workers as a general agitational slogan at a period which is not ripe for armed revolt.

On the question of the cadres, the initiative-groups in demonstrations, we fully accept the views of "K. F." in the April number of the journal "October." He writes:

"The method of also forming groups within the demonstration is by far the best method of giving the whole demonstration a better stiffening, of enabling it to act in a more unified and determined way than hitherto. No new special organization is required for this. It is quite sufficient if from every nucleus four to six good comrades, who are physically suitable for the purpose and know each other well, march together in the demonstration and do not allow themselves to be separated by police attacks, but always get together again and shout appropriate slogans, making use of suitable opportunities to give short speeches. If by means of such groups we give a framework to the whole demonstration at all points, then it will be much easier to get the masses to stand their ground, when attacked by the police and to deliver an appropriate reply to the attack."

Initiative-groups in demonstrations therefore do not con-

stitute any special, independent organization, but are organs of the Party units or of the corresponding basic units of other revolutionary mass organizations; they are directed by these organizations, and work within the limits of the organization. No objection could be raised, of course, to these initiative groups from the various units, for example, in a single town, being called together for joint discussions on the even of particular important actions and being given their instructions together. This would not in the least conflict with the correct organizational political principle that the organizing and leadership of political mass activities, including mass demonstrations, must be conducted by the basic units of the Party and other revolutionary mass organizations and cannot be handed over to any independent and special "demonstration meetings."

Material For a Course on Organizational Questions

I

A. Why must the class-conscious worker organize into the Communist Party?

IN the history of the labor movement, a number of great struggles and revolutions have taken place without the existence of an organized Party (Paris Commune). These revolutions were defeated because there was no firm and conscious leadership of the class struggles against the background of the entire international situation. There was no Party. We have other examples from the post-war period—the Hungarian Revolution and the Bavarian Soviet Republic in Germany. Here we had a Communist Party, but it was very weak, had no mass influence of an organized nature, and leaned to a great extent on the treacherous Social-Democratic party, and on this account was also drowned in blood by the bourgeoisie. The Communist Party is therefore necessary for organizing

together the most advanced, the most class-conscious, the most determined, the most revolutionary sections of the proletariat, in order to lead the proletariat in the class struggle.

B. The Party is the most class-conscious vanguard of the working class.

The majority of the workers are under the influence of the ruling class. Therefore the Party can include in its ranks only the minority of the proletariat, the most class-conscious minority. It constitutes the leadership "composed of the best, most conscious, most active and most courageous of its members." (*Program of the Communist International*). The vanguard of any class is a part of that class, closely bound up with it, not a sect, separated from the class. The "most advanced" part can also make mistakes. In order to correct them, in order to maintain the authority of the Party over the masses, *Bolshevik self-criticism is necessary.* (*Stalin: Leninism*).

C. Organized Troop.

Discipline and system in the struggle of the masses is possible only when the Party is a firmly organized core. This requires discipline. In times of illegality and civil war, this is intensified. The maximum of discipline, of striking force and activity of the membership is guaranteed by *democratic centralism*. Democratic centralism is the most rigid centralization, firm unity, central political leadership by the Central Committee, together with far-reaching activity and independence of the lower Party organizations in the daily struggles and revolutionary mass actions of the proletariat. In normal times all the leading Party bodies are elected by the membership. These elections must be passed on by the next higher Party bodies. Discussion of all the problems by the membership is permitted within the frame-work of the principles and decisions. After the questions have been decided by the highest body, no more discussion is permitted, and the decisions must be carried out in disciplined fashion. It is imperative that all decisions are carried out, the guidance being always given by the next higher body (district committee, Central Committee, Executive Committee of the Communist International). The highest body is the Party convention, or the world congress.

International discipline is necessary because we are in international Party in contrast to the Second International. The fight of all renegades from Communism was principally directed against international discipline. That means a return to "national autonomy," which was largely responsible for the collapse of the Second International in 1914.

The *unity of the Party* must be based on the unity of conviction. The political unity of the Party bases itself on the recognition and carrying out of the decisions of the world congress and the Party convention. Struggle against "freedom of opinions and groupings." (The Trotskyite conception of the Party). Bolshevik unity is a unity in theory and practice as the basis of the strength of the Party. "The Party is strengthened by cleaning out the opportunist elements." (*Stalin: Leninism*).

D. The Party units insure the contact of the Party with the masses.

Only those who are active in the work of the lower organizations (the nuclei), can be members of the Party. Thus the passive, the cowardly and opportunist elements are kept out. (Paragraph 3 of the Statutes of the Communist International, Paragraph 1 of the Statutes of the Russian Party, which Lenin put through in his fight against the Mensheviks at the Third Party Congress of the Russian Social-Democratic Party in 1903.)

E. The Party is the highest form of class organization.

Other proletarian organizations (trade unions, cultural, sport organizations, etc.) represent the interests of the proletariat in various specific fields. The Party, on the other hand, represents the entire interests of the working class. Therefore the Party is above all other proletarian organizations. It is the head, the leader in the proletarian class struggle. The leadership of the Party in the mass organizations must be insured by the *organization of communist fractions*. The fractions are executive organs of the Party. They have no power of decision, like the Party nuclei. All fraction decisions require the endorsement of the respective Party bodies. Our leadership in the mass organizations must be secured by conviction and winning the confidence of these masses, and not by compulsion and command.

F. The theory of spontaneity.

The conception that the masses of workers will enter the struggle spontaneously, and that the Party will only need to place itself at the head of these struggles, is based on a false conception of the role of the Party. It signifies and underestimation of the leading role of the Party, will inevitably lead to a lagging behind the masses, and lead to an opportunist policy (tailism).

G. Fight against opportunism.

To maintain the unity of the Party, its close contact with the masses, and its leading role, a constant, consistent, and uncompromising struggle is necessary for the line of the Party against all right and left deviations. Such deviations inevitably recur constantly because the Party is surrounded by a bourgeois environment and the pressure of bourgeois conceptions are reflected among those sections of the Party which are unable to withstand this pressure. Right opportunist deviations express themselves in yielding to the bourgeoisie and to reformism (legalism); underestimation of the fighting capacity of the masses, lagging behind the mass movement. The "left" opportunist deviations reflect the pseudo-radicalism of uprooted petty-bourgeois elements which, isolated from the masses, have no understanding of the conditions of an organized mass movement. They demand measures and methods which isolate the Party from the masses (sectarianism).

As a general rule, during the entire period of the struggle for power, the main danger is the right danger. But there are also certain conditions of struggle when the "left" danger can become the main danger (especially after defeats of the working class, when a section of the Party does not understand the changed conditions of the class struggle.) See *Lenin: Infantile Sickness of Leftism.*

Conciliation, the veiling of fundamental contradictions, toleration of groupings, allowing comrades to remain in leading functions who are not in agreement with the policy of the Party, are all impermissible whether the deviations are from the right or from the "left."

H. Combining the legal and illegal conditions of struggle of the Party.

It is clear that, the sharper the class struggles become, the

more dangerous the revolutionary developments become for the bourgeoisie, the sharper will become the measures which the bourgeois state employs against the revolutionary vanguard, the Communist Party. As the fascization of the state progresses in the course of the sharpening of the class antagonisms, the democratic mask becomes more and more removed, and the legal possibilities of activity for the revolutionary labor movement diminish. The Party cannot consider it its task during this development, to limit the activities within the legal frame-work of the state—that would mean the renunciation of the organization of the revolution (legalism). On the contrary, the task of the Party under such conditions of Party work, is to carry on its work also under the illegal conditions, and not to fail particularly at such times, to a turn to the broadest masses of workers (danger of sectarianism). An illegal Party is confronted with exactly the same task as a legal Party, the conquest of the decisive majority of the working classes *only in the course of struggle*.

The path to conquest of the majority is not to limit ourselves only to the organization of all daily struggles of the factory workers and unemployed against capitalist exploitation (economism), but to make it clear to the workers that every struggle for economic partial demands assumes a political character, especially now, in the present world economic crisis, when the capitalists, the social democrats, fascists and the capitalist state attack the fighting working class with every possible means, especially when these economic struggles are carried on in important industries and large factories. The political slogans of the Party must be issued in connection with the economic demands, and, in connection with these economic and political partial demands we must demonstrate the necessity of the proletarian dictatorship to the broadest masses (example of the Soviet Union).

The main task of the Party for the transition to illegal work is the firm organizational link with the masses of factory workers through *politically active factory nuclei*, strong connections of the Party with the proletarian mass organizations through well-functioning fractions, creation of specific forms of mass work such as unemployed councils, strike committees, committees of action, the creation of new proletarian mass

organizations, and above all the application of the proletarian united front from below in the most diverse forms, etc. Technical questions, such as the preparation for the going underground into illegality, here play a subordinate role (setting up illegal buros, places for meetings, duplicate committees in case of arrests, courier apparatus, cleansing of offices and residences of piled up material and addresses, etc.)

J. The significance of Marxist-Leninist theory.

Is it necessary to have a special science (theory)? Is not practical experience on the basis of our factory and trade union work, etc., sufficient? "Without revolutionary theory there can be no revolutionary movement." (*Lenin: Collected Works*). The practical experience of the worker leads only to an understanding of the identity of his interests with those of his fellow-workers in the factory or trade, develops his hostility against the boss, or will lead to the *pure and simple trade unionism*, that is, surrender of the workers to capitalist influence. For a revolutionary understanding of how to defend the interests of the workers and the necessity of the overthrow of the whole order of society, an understanding of the theory of Marxism-Leninism is necessary. Without this theory we have spontaneous struggle, that is, struggle coming into existence by itself, without conscious guidance, leading to senseless acts of desperation, such as took place at the beginning of capitalist development (wrecking the machines) or later, the pure trade union reformist labor movement. "The spontaneous development of the labor movement leads to its subordination to bourgeois ideology. . . . For the spontaneous labor movement is trade unionism. This means the ideological enslavement of the workers by the bourgeoisie." (*Lenin, Collected Works*). The difference between this and Communism consists in the insight into the conditions, the course and general results of the proletarian movement. This insight is given by Marxism-Leninism.

Marxism has scientific evidence to support it; (1) the inevitability of the collapse of capitalist society by the sharpening of its internal contradictions, expressed in the extreme sharpening of the class struggle, the proletarian revolution; (2) the necessity of the proletarian dictatorship as a transition to the communist classless society (*Lenin State and Revolution*).

Marx and Engels already laid the basis of proletarian strategy and tactics on this foundation and on the basis of the experiences of the revolutions of 1848 and 1871; (3) Lenin, on the basis of the experiences of the three Russian revolutions (1905, March, 1917, and November, 1917), and the seven decades of the international labor movement, on the basis of knowledge of the concrete conditions of the epoch of socialist revolution (imperialism), was able to create a comprehensive strategy and a well-worked-out tactic.

“Leninism is Marxism of the epoch of imperialism and the proletarian revolution. More precisely: the theory and tactic of the proletarian revolution in general, the theory and tactic of the dictatorship of the proletariat in particular.” (*Stalin: Leninism.*)

Thus the principles of Communist Party organization consist: (a) in carrying through the Bolshevik policy developing daily struggles of the working class, through partial demands, the application of the united front tactic, and raising the political consciousness of the workers; (b) in the application of democratic centralism and firm iron discipline; (c) laying the basis for linking the Party with the broadest masses of workers through the factory nuclei as the basic Party organization; (d) in the connection with the mass organizations (through the Communist fractions) as transmission belts between Party and proletarian masses.

These Bolshevik principles of organization are unimpeachable. That does not mean that we must build up organization in accordance with one scheme for all periods and situations. Our organization must be elastic and adaptable. It must adjust itself to the specific conditions. Policy and organization form a single whole, and cannot be schematically separated. Our method of organization in the legal period are different from those during legal times. The various phases of revolutionizing of the masses must also find expression in our organizational work.

Various forms of united front organs. We must also make a difference whether we are building up our Party organizations in industrial districts or in farming districts, etc. The main thing is that we must first set ourselves our political task, and adjust our organizational forms and methods of

work to these political tasks. Without a good policy we cannot have a powerful organization and without an active Party organization, we cannot have any concrete carrying out of our political line in practice. This mutual relation between policy and organization must be constantly taken into consideration, for otherwise our organizational work degenerates into schematism and bureaucracy.

Control Questions:

1. Why does the neglect of theory necessarily lead to opportunism?
2. Why does Lenin regard the pure trade union movement as a bourgeois labor movement?
3. Can there be such a thing as a Marxist without being a Leninist?
4. What is democratic centralism and how are these methods changed in times of illegality?
5. Why is the factory nucleus the basis of the Party and why must we organize communist fractions in the mass organizations?
6. Within what limits and under what conditions, can a discussion be carried through in the Party?
7. Why is dependence upon spontaneity opportunistic?

References for Reading:

*Stalin: Leninism.

Lenin: Collected Works.

*What Is to be Done?

Lenin on Organization.

*Lozovsky: Lenin and the Trade Union Movement.

*Program of the Communist International.

*Lenin: Infantile Sickness of Leftism.

Theses of the Second Congress of the Communist International; "The Role of the Communist Party in the Proletarian Revolution."

Rosa Luxemburg: "Mass Strike, Party and Trade Unions."

* Each student should have the specially marked references, while the rest of the literature is meant principally for the instructor.

(To be Concluded in the Next Issue)