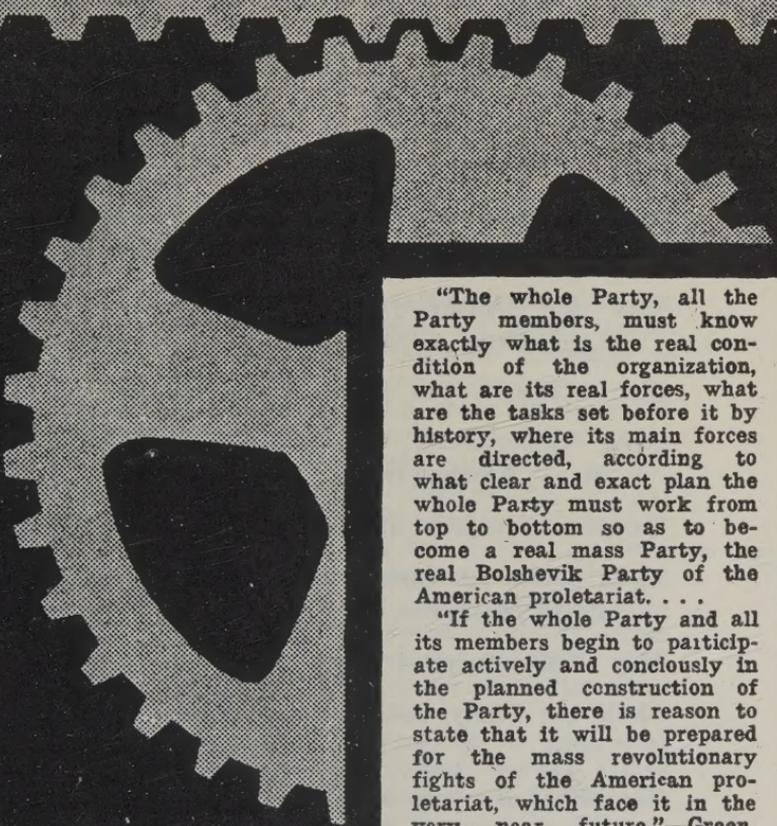


Party Organizer



"The whole Party, all the Party members, must know exactly what is the real condition of the organization, what are its real forces, what are the tasks set before it by history, where its main forces are directed, according to what clear and exact plan the whole Party must work from top to bottom so as to become a real mass Party, the real Bolshevik Party of the American proletariat. . . .

"If the whole Party and all its members begin to participate actively and consciously in the planned construction of the Party, there is reason to state that it will be prepared for the mass revolutionary fights of the American proletariat, which face it in the very near future."—Green, "SOME QUESTIONS ON THE WORK OF THE CPUSA."

Vol. VII.

March, 1934

No 3

Issued by

CENTRAL COMMITTEE, COMMUNIST PARTY U. S. A

CONTENTS

●

Pre-Convention Discussion in the Units	1
How S. P. Took Advantage of Our Work	4
How the Unemployment Councils Were Built in Lackawana County	7
Shall We Split Our Districts and Sections	9
> Some Experiences in Concentration on Republic Steel, Youngstown	13
On Some Problems of the Harlem Section	19
Open Letter An Instrument for Penetration Into the Basic Industries	22
May First Parades	24
Shall the Party or the Trade Union Be Organized First?	26
> The Shop Nucleus at Sparrows Point	28
The Struggle Against War and Fascism in Our Shop Papers	30

PARTY ORGANIZER

Vol. VII.

March, 1934

No. 3

Pre-Convention Discussion in the Units

By F. BROWN

THE pre-Convention discussion takes place at a time when the revolutionary crisis is ripening, when the whole world is closely approaching a new round of revolutions and wars. Because of the urgent necessity of bringing clarity to the membership on the general Party Line and of raising the Communist consciousness of every Party member as to the tasks of the units and the members, the discussion assumes a special importance. Through this discussion the Party must learn that only through a clarification of the Party line and through a real understanding of the situation in the territories and shops in which the units are functioning will the units be able to work out their program of work and their tasks, and that therefore discussion is necessary at all times and not only before conventions.

If we examine the discussion which takes place in the units, we find that in general it is very poor. In many instances it is mechanical and deals only with mere assignment of tasks. While in some of the units genuine political discussions are held on the main problems which confront the Party in general, as well as on the specific problems of the units, in others there is no discussion at all. There are many Party members and leading comrades in the units and sections who believe that the discussion of the Party line is an abstract thing, and that the unit discussion shall limit itself to the taking up of the tasks which the shop nucleus or street unit must carry out.

This tendency is sometimes exaggerated to the point where the discussions on general problems brought before the units by the Center or by the district committees are postponed for weeks because they are regarded as hampering the activity of the units. Or discussions are carried on mechanically, as for example in a New York unit, where the day after the Austrian revolt broke out, a discussion was held on the Resolution of the 13th Plenum of the ECCI, without one mention of the Austrian situation. The mobilization for the distribution of the *Daily Worker* was confined in this unit to a bureaucratic order for special distribution. The organizer of this same unit made a proposal to her

buro, that in this pre-convention period, discussions be postponed for a period of four weeks in order that the unit might have more time to carry out its work.

Discussion Lever by Which Party Will Be Activized

When we consider that the majority of Party members have been in the Party for less than two years, then we will understand that it is necessary to hold political discussion in the units. Only in this way will we raise the Communist consciousness of the Party members and gain a better understanding of the nature and tasks of the shop nuclei and units. This will help to increase the activity of the Party, to develop within the units an understanding that they are the Party in a given shop and territory and at the same time develop each individual Party member as a leader of the working class.

It is precisely because of the lack of political discussion in the units that activities are hampered, that here and there we encounter resistance in performing some task, or that friction develops between the members.

Discussion is the lever for the activization of the units as such, and of the individual Party members.

Party Line Must Be Explained and Applied

What kind of discussion do we need in the units? Not an abstract discussion on the Party line or on the Party program and its ultimate aims, but a discussion on the basis of an analysis of the situation in the place (shop or territory) where the unit functions as an integral part of the general Party line and Party program. But this is not enough. In view of the fact that so many new members are at all times entering the Party, discussion on the fundamental principles of our Party is necessary in order to help the comrades to understand, not only the general Party line, but the necessity of carrying out the tasks embodied in the Party resolutions. Here we should note that some of the old Party members, instead of being the driving force in the discussion, instead of stimulating it by their example, and in this way establishing a closer unity of the old and new members, resist discussion. Their claim is that discussion of this kind is an old story for them, and they see no reason for repetition. This claim is not valid. If they would help the new members to a better understanding of the fundamental principles of our Party, these older comrades would have an opportunity not to repeat what they already know, but to further develop their own understanding and through this development raise the whole ideological level of the units.

How can we explain that often new Party members be-

come demoralized after a few weeks, and many times drop out of the units? Because of the lack of interest of the unit meetings. Because many times all burdens are shifted to the shoulders of the new and enthusiastic members. The units and especially the unit leaders forget that the new Party members must be developed into Communists and that only with their development will we succeed in keeping them in our ranks and develop them further.

It is not enough to believe that the line of the Party is given through the **Daily Worker** and the other Party organs, and that every Party member shall learn it from the columns of our papers. In many cases we are confronted with the problem that Party members, and sometimes whole units, do not thoroughly understand the problems treated in our press, despite all of our efforts of popularization. These problems can be simplified by verbal explanations in the unit discussions, which will help many of the Party members to understandingly read the Party organs. For this reason the units should institute a regular discussion of the main editorials of the week in the **Daily Worker**, on some of the articles in the **Communist**, **Party Organizer**, etc.

Discussions Must Be Led

These discussions will not develop spontaneously. They must be led. For this reason the comrades of the Unit Buro, as the political leaders of the unit, must prepare themselves for the discussion. Therefore, it is necessary that in the coming elections the best comrades shall be elected to the unit buros. This will partially solve this problem. But only **partially**, because the solution of the problem of how to develop discussion in the units and raise it to a higher level requires the solution of another phase of this problem: namely, the development of the unit leadership to real political leadership.

The pre-convention discussion in the units will achieve its aim of clarifying the Party line and the tasks with which the Party is now confronted only if the units in their discussion will succeed in understanding the necessity of fighting for the Party line. This does not mean to discuss the Party resolution and the tasks before the Party in an abstract manner, but to apply the Party line in the solution of the specific problems of the units in their shops and territories.

What do we mean by the Party line? Is it an abstract thing? The Party line means the way in which the Party as the vanguard of the working class carries on its work in the shops and among the unemployed; the Party program for work among the Negro masses; the approach of the Party to the united front; how we work in the A. F. of

L.; the work of the revolutionary unions, etc. It is this understanding which we must bring to our members in this pre-convention discussion. And in the achievement of this understanding, the units will realize that political discussion, at all times, is the means of clarifying our tasks and the lever by which the activity of each individual Party member will be developed.

How S. P. Took Advantage of Our Work

(Lessons and problems are from the work of Shop Nucleus—
New York District.)

By MARGARET COWL

DURING the strike in this shop, the Party unit ceased to function. Now and then the **Daily Worker** was sold to the strikers. The strike was led and won by the militant trade union and its leaders were known to be Communists. But since the Party nucleus was not on the job to broaden out in a more political way the struggle which the trade union was carrying on around the demands of wages and union recognition, and because there was no recruiting into the Party of the best fighters during the strike, those most known to the workers, a Socialist who had been forced to support the strike, was elected shop chairman. He carried on disruptive work against the union and openly sided with the boss against the workers after the settlement of the strike. He began to organize a clique to bring the A. F. of L. into the shop.

How D. W. Helped to Defeat S. P. Policies in the Shop

Mainly due to individual efforts of certain of our trade union comrades connected with the strike, about 8 new members were recruited into the Party after the strike. The Section committee immediately attached several comrades (including several trade union members who had been active in the strike) to this shop nucleus, to give personal guidance.

The nucleus spent entire meetings in serious discussion of how to convince the workers in the shop that S. P. policies were being brought into the shop via the shop chairman. Special committees were appointed to write articles for the **Daily Worker**, giving the difference between the rank and file controlled trade union and the A. F. of L., supported by the S. P. These articles were written on the basis of the actual conditions in the shop, before and after the strike and in other shops controlled by the A. F. of L. in the same industry. These special issues of the **Daily Worker** were sold and distributed inside the shop by members appointed by the nucleus. Copies of the **Daily Worker** were sold to more reliable workers or left at the machines and in the dressing

rooms. At each nucleus meeting there would be a check-up of previous decisions. The discussion centered around how Communist leadership should be established in the shop, around questions of immediate interest to the workers. This work was carried through not without inner struggle. Influences of the "red scare" had to be combatted. Resistance to bringing in the leadership of the Party nucleus and the **Daily Worker** in the re-elections of shop chairman had to be overcome. Due to persistent work of the nucleus, the Socialist shop chairman was removed by a nearly unanimous vote of the shop meeting.

Strengthening the Nucleus

In the course of the above work, each meeting of the nucleus took up the question of how to recruit workers into the Party. Party members began to bring their lunch into the shop and converse with workers during lunch hour. They concentrated on those who had been active in the strike. They started the conversation with the most personal topics, and then proceeded to talk about their own departments, about the revolution in Cuba, etc., after which they asked the worker whether he had read what the **Daily Worker** had to say about these things, and gave him or her a copy of the paper. Through such methods, the Party nucleus increased its membership from 13 to 33 members, 30 of whom are working in the shop. In addition a few young workers were turned over to the Y.C.L. unit which was organized in the shop. There was opposition to recruiting so fast, the workers do not know what the Party is, etc., were the remarks. But the new comrades staunchly defended their position in that you must bring the workers first into the Party and then educate them.

Developing the Leadership of the Nucleus

Most of the members in the nucleus were politically and organizationally inexperienced. They did not understand the language in the letters of the higher Party committees. They did not know the structure of the Party. Older Party and Y.C.L. members had to attend every meeting of the nucleus and its buro to give guidance. Special attention was given to individuals in order to develop them for leadership of the nucleus. In the beginning certain older Party and Y.C.L. members hindered instead of helped by talking very much at nucleus and department group meetings and thereby preventing the development of the initiative of the new members. By coming late to nucleus meetings, they also demoralized new members who would come to the meeting from the shop without their supper and who took the discipline of the Party seriously. Due to this latter cause, three new members were lost to the Party. Another promising new member for leadership was lost because of the commandeering attitude of an

older Party member who returned an article which he had written for the shop bulletin and told him to re-write it after he had put the best that he had into that article. Still another new member left the Party because an older Party member, without consulting the nucleus, told him that he should resign as chairman of his department. She thought that he was not fit for the job, although he had been very active in the strike and the workers in the shop liked him very much. The nucleus buro took these questions before the meeting of the nucleus with the result that all but one of those who had left the Party, returned.

Leadership by the new Party members has now been developed to a point where the department groups independently react to even unforeseen spontaneous situations in their departments in the proper political way. Party members talk to the workers in their departments to get their opinions about the **Daily Worker** and the shop bulletin. They bring this to the editorial committee of the bulletin so that the bulletin is able now more than before to reflect the sentiment of the workers in the shop. They induce workers to write for the bulletin and collect workers' correspondence from the workers. The last bulletin was the result of the work of 15 workers. Through the independent leadership of one Party department group, workers who had been influenced by the former Socialist shop chairman to try to bring the A. F. of L. into the shop, openly exposed this Socialist at a shop meeting. The unit buro only meets regularly outside the shop, but whenever necessary, holds a short meeting in the shop and informs Party members what to do in emergency situations.

There is still very much room for strengthening the leadership, as there is for raising the political level of the whole nucleus. One of the chief shortcomings of this nucleus is that it has not yet succeeded in arranging its work so that part of the time of its meetings is used for education around more fundamental questions other than the education derived from discussion of shop problems.

Relation Between the Trade Union Fraction and the Shop Nucleus

Certain Party members, functionaries in the higher trade union committees, do not yet consider the Party nucleus as the leader in the shop, if one is to judge by their acts.

After a discussion of several hours, the shop nucleus decided to recommend to the workers to expel the Socialist former shop chairman for his continued disruptive work. The Party members began to prepare the workers in the shop for the shop meeting. At the shop meeting one of the Party trade union functionaries, without consulting with the nucleus or its organizer, made the proposal to suspend this disrupter for only two months. The act of this comrade was condemned

by non-Party workers in the shop bulletin. A favorable situation to expel this Socialist disrupter was lost. Upon recommendation of Party comrades, functionaries in the higher committee of the trade union, the nucleus decided to recommend to the workers at their next shop meeting to empower the shop committee to suspend this disrupter if he does not stop his disruptive work against the militant trade union. On the same day of the shop meeting, these comrades in the trade union committee called a hurried shop fraction meeting without consulting the nucleus organizer (the shop fraction is the same as the nucleus) and there have a decision carried to recommend the expulsion of the disrupter. At the shop meeting the same day, not one of these comrades raised this question, neither did they tell other Party members to raise the question. (Most all the Party members in the nucleus are less than 6 months in the Party). These comrades acted not like Party leaders in this meeting, but purely as trade union functionaries.

Such juggling with Party nucleus decisions demoralizes the new Party members. This problem was already once taken up by the Section Committee of the Party. The nucleus cannot solve this question alone, because it involves a fraction taking in a larger territory than the nucleus. The nucleus elected a member to attend the fraction meetings. This will probably help, but will not solve the problem. The higher Party committees will have to tackle this problem, and define the proper relationship between shop nuclei and trade union fractions in shops where the militant trade unions are in control.

How the Unemployment Councils Were Built in Lackawana County

By STEVE NELSON (Scranton, Pa.)

AT the outset it should be stated that in the vicinity that we speak of there was absolutely no Party organization, and the work of building the Unemployment Councils was practically in a virgin field. The methods that were used in building the Unemployment Councils were as follows:

Our organizer made contacts with a few workers in one town, workers who were complaining about the relief that they were receiving and the discrimination in handling the relief. Most of these contacts were made at the relief buro. The workers helped to draw up a leaflet, helped to find a hall, and distributed the leaflets. The leaflet was brief and appealed specifically to the unemployed, small home owners, women, and single young workers. At the meeting, no matter how small, we explained the purpose of the meeting and stressed that this work should be done by the local people themselves.

We had prepared petitions of the following kind: (1) One especially raising the problems of those receiving inadequate relief. (2) One specifically written for the women of the unemployed. (3) One written directly for the young and single workers. Each of the above mentioned petitions raised some concrete demands, for each category mentioned, with space below for signatures. We gathered all of the women and gave them the petitions dealing with the women, asking them to get the petitions signed, and to tell every one of them that signed to come to the next meeting of the Council, with definite time and place arranged. The same was done with the young workers, and also with the adult unemployed workers.

This approach meant that we did not simply shower leaflets in the community, but had personal talks with every individual that was asked to sign. This personal approach was a departure from our old usual way of doing things and the workers already had an idea of what the meeting was going to take up. This made them feel more at home at the meeting, and stimulated discussion on various points. This has also overcome the fear of the workers accepting work on various committees. The workers readily accepted to act on committees, and to act as officers of the Unemployment Councils.

Special Organizations Formed

At the second meeting we had three workers assigned to meet with each of the above mentioned groups. The small home owners were called in one corner of the hall and asked to elect their officials, and discuss the grievances of the workers pertaining to the sale of their homes, etc., etc. The same was done with the women, they organized themselves into a Women's League, a part of the Unemployment Council. The young workers organized the same way.

Thus we had three different organizations, appealing to three specific categories of workers, taking up the particular problems of that section of the workers. This created greater interest in the work and struggles of the Unemployment Councils, and brought in new layers of workers that had never been touched by us before through the old methods of work. These new workers, when the question of meeting place was taken up, raised the question: "Why not meet in the School House, or in the Town Hall? We paid taxes in this town, now we are unemployed. We can't afford to pay the rent for halls, why shouldn't we meet in these buildings?" These workers proceeded to elect committees to demand the use of these institutions by the unemployed. It is very interesting to point out that while these new workers considered it absolutely justifiable, the few old Party comrades were the ones that feared to take such action. The workers at the next meeting were able to report that they had secured the school house for the unemployed meetings.

Unemployment Councils and Party Units Organized

In this manner we were able to approach the best kind of workers for the Party. The result of this work is that six Unemployment Councils have been organized in Lackawana County. Two new Party units have been established, and there are prospects for the formation of two more units of the Party in the very near future.

Another interesting thing about these new Councils is, that the workers develop political consciousness very quickly. The first lesson that they get is with the relief officials, school directors, burgesses, etc. The workers learn a practical lesson that these people are a part of the capitalist State, and that this State is against the interest of the workers. They obtain this lesson not through speeches, but through their struggles for bread. In mass struggles in the form of demonstrations, when the relief officials became cocky with our unemployed committees and began to buck them, the workers themselves urged that we must reply to these attacks by mass demonstrations. One of these took place in the City of Scranton, where 1200 workers participated in a march that resulted in gaining all of the four demands that were placed with the relief officials. The women have shown a remarkable interest in the work of the Unemployment Councils, and in most of this work are the driving forces, showing particular interest in organizational matters, by arranging socials and other affairs. This has the effect of drawing the workers closer together in their everyday struggles, and making for a closer personal contact and relationship.

Shall We Split Our Districts and Sections?

By J. PETER

“**T**HE Thirteenth Plenum of the E.C.C.I. sets before all Communist Parties as most important tasks the carrying on of regular and constant check-up on the fulfillment of decisions, especially on mass work, the organizational strengthening of their ranks, of preparing to go underground, of tightening up discipline and fighting fitness of every Party organization and of every member of the Party.”

Let us examine a few organizational problems of our Party in the light of the above decision of the E.C.C.I.

The Open Letter states that “every Party member must now understand that it depends on correct policy and **above all, the execution of the correct policy** whether we will be able to mobilize the masses of workers for struggle and whether our Party in this historically favorable situation will

become the decisive mass Party of the American Proletariat."

The Party, since the Seventh Convention, after cleansing its ranks of the opportunist elements, had the correct policy on all basic questions. The Party adopted good resolutions, such as were adopted at the Fourteenth Plenum of the Central Committee and at the Extraordinary Party Conference. But these resolutions to a certain extent remained the property of the higher committees. There are yet many Section Committees and nuclei where these resolutions have not been thoroughly understood, and many more where these resolutions have not been executed.

Why does this situation exist? Because "the leadership of the Party . . . does not work out carefully with the comrades of the lower organizations ways and means for the carrying through of resolutions and checking up on their executions." —(Open Letter).

Has the leadership of the Party, since the Open Letter, tried to change the old method of work and to get closer to the lower organizations? Yes. There is a much better understanding of this question in the Party. However, there are still many weaknesses, especially in connection with the problem of concentration. We would have had better results in many Districts if we had not allowed ourselves "to be driven by events," if all available forces had been concentrated in the most strategic factories, mines, docks, mills, etc.; if the leading committees had given more guidance to the nuclei in these factories and to the concentration units there. However, there are certain good beginnings.

Large Territories Make Personal Leadership Difficult

What are the reasons for these weaknesses, in addition to an insufficient political understanding, in some cases, of the necessity for strengthening the lower organizations? We will deal in this article with only one of the reasons, and that is the physical possibilities, under the present circumstances, for giving leadership to the lower organizations. Let us assume that every Party committee really wants to "give the members practical assistance in carrying out their tasks and to check up on the carrying out of these tasks." The present organizational structure of our Party, with huge territories containing very important industrial centers, under a District or Section Committee, makes it quite difficult to give personal leadership to the organizations in these centers. A few examples will give more clarity to this problem.

Let us examine the four concentration districts. District 8 is concentrating on steel, packing house, coal mines and railroad. One of the biggest railroad centers in the U.S.A. is in St. Louis. This section is more than 250 miles from Chicago. The coalfields in Southern Illinois are about 200 miles away. The District has two states in its territory—

Illinois and Indiana—covering an area almost twice as big as England. District 6 is only a little smaller in area than England, and contains such important sections as Columbus, Cincinnati, and East Ohio, which can be given regular attention only with great difficulty and expense, because of the great distance involved. District 5 has in its territory the West Virginia coalfields where the miners are ready and anxious for our leadership, but because of the great distance the District Buro cannot pay sufficient attention to this very important mining field. The District Committee of District No. 11 has four states—North Dakota, South Dakota, Montana and Idaho to take care of—a territory which is as big as France and Germany together. The nearest town where we have Party organization is 120 miles away from the city where the District Headquarters is located. The furthest one is 1100 miles from the headquarters, a distance as great as from New York to St. Louis. District 19 has also four states in its territory: Colorado, New Mexico, Utah and Wyoming, almost as great an area as Germany, France, Belgium and Switzerland combined. The important mining sections in Utah and New Mexico are from 700 to 800 miles from Denver where the District Headquarters is located. District 20, a new district, has jurisdiction over the states of Texas and Oklahoma, a territory which is bigger than France and Italy together and six and a half times bigger than England.

The Sections in these Districts are hundreds of miles away from the Headquarters city, requiring much time and money if the members of the District Buro are to visit them.

On a smaller scale, the same situation exists in the Sections, large territories, many important industries, many unions, mass organizations, and last but not least, a large number of nuclei to guide and direct. It is quite difficult in a Section, where at best we have only one comrade who gives his full time to Party work, to pay proper attention to all out of town units. Sometimes weeks and months pass before someone visits these important units. Even when the comrades in the Section Committee make all possible effort (which is not always the case, as for example in Youngstown) to visit these units, stay with the comrades for a while and help them in their work, they still face the problem of the number of available forces and of the lack of sufficient finances.

The Sections in the big cities, like New York and Chicago, do not have the problem of distance, but the other difficulties are there with one additional one, and that is the large number of units in the Section. In New York, for example, we have sections with 35-50 units, with a membership of between 600 and 800, and with 10-15 shop nuclei. In the Section Committees there are only three or four comrades who have time

and are able to give leadership to the units. The rest are leaders of unions, and other mass organizations, and even if each of them were to carry out their task and be responsible for a unit, only a small number of units (8 or 9) would have members of the Section Committee participating in their work.

We could bring forward the argument here that the best solution would be to concentrate on a few sections, on a few units, and let the rest get along as best they can. This is a good argument for continuing the present organizational structure of the Party, but we must also consider one other important problem and that is that even the most important concentration sections cannot be reached and adequately taken care of because of the great distances and the insufficient number of trained forces in the lower organizations. If we permit them to function without personal guidance, there is a danger that the lower organizations and strategic points will disintegrate as has been the case in the past. Besides this, we must consider another important problem, which the Party faces in this period, and that is the absolute necessity of being in personal contact with all organizations. What would happen if in the very near future the Party should have to work in an illegal situation? It would be impossible to send out circular letters to the lower organizations, or to give directives about a certain campaign. We will have to personally guide the lower organizations through members of the Section Committee, the District Committee, and Central Committee by means of an elaborate system of instructors from the higher committee to the lower organizations. All of these considerations argue for splitting the present huge territories of the districts and sections.

What Are the Advantages of Smaller Districts and Sections?

What problem should be considered in splitting the districts and sections?

1. Whether the party organizations will have the proper industrial basis;
2. Close proximity to the lower organizations, — this means, how can we, with the least difficulty, maintain personal contact with the lower organizations;
3. To parallel the electoral districts as far as possible, with state borders for districts; and congressional election districts for the sections;
4. Strengthening of Party organizations (number of units; number of members; mass organization units; influence of Party; **Daily Worker**; circulars, etc.)
5. Last, but not least, the available forces for leadership.

What will be the result of a proper splitting of the districts and sections?

1. We will develop hundreds of new forces for leadership;
2. We will create a basis for more self-initiative;
3. The responsible leading committees will have the possibilities of giving real leadership to the organizations in their territory;
4. It will be easier to react on political problems because a district will cover a state, or the section—a congressional district, and the leadership will be in a position to study and follow very closely the activities of political parties in the given territory. The agitation and propaganda of the Party will be more concrete.
5. The small territories in the districts and in the sections will enable the leading comrades to follow up every decision very closely, and to find out whether the decisions are carried out by the lower organizations.
6. Because of the many more districts in the Party as a whole, the Central Committee will have more direct contact with, and information about the problems of the various factories and territories.
7. The smaller districts and sections will be able to work under conditions of illegality more effectively than big ones.

In the pre-Convention period, the Central Committee is already considering the splitting up of Districts 8 and 11. The comrades in other large districts should think very seriously about the problem of splitting the sections on the basis of the above enumerated points.

Some Experiences in Concentrating on Republic Steel, Youngstown

By J. D.

BECAUSE Republic Steel in Youngstown is one of the few "concentration points" at which there has been some actual concentration, its experiences should be summarized and the lessons digested.

Republic has been in theory at least a "concentration point" since the middle of 1932. At that time there were about 8 Party members working in the mill, who occasionally gave the Party section organizer information on the basis of which he wrote a shop bulletin. There were about 100 workers in the union, but no functioning local. According to reports of our comrades, the union meetings were places where the organizer made a general agitational speech, some dues were paid and invariably a collection was taken. There was little effort to work out the demands in the departments. Naturally no struggles were developed. In spite of this the

union had grown, showing the tremendous will of the workers to organize. Some efforts to develop department form of organization were unsuccessful, primarily because we did not convince the workers that that was the best means of developing struggle and building the union. The result of these methods of work was that the whole organization collapsed following the firing of a few members for union activity.

Following the Warren Strike (Sept. 1932) a "concentration school" was held in Youngstown with a C.C. comrade in charge. But not one student at the school worked in the main concentration point, the Youngstown Republic mill. A splendid young and inexperienced comrade was appointed "concentrator." He was given a \$5 weekly subsidy and told "concentrate on Republic." Neither District or Section Buros seriously took up his work with him. Nor did he receive help from the leading bodies of the union. Party units and language fraction were not mobilized for Republic work. The result was no progress and a badly demoralized comrade. The separation of the Section Buro from Republic can best be seen when we record that the Buro representative strenuously objected to the shop unit taking time at its meeting to discuss the main grievances in the mill as a basis for a first draft of demands around which struggles could be developed.

At the beginning of 1933 we began to help this comrade a little more. There followed months of sporadic activity—quite a few leaflets into the mill, a campaign developed in the chipping department which won the workers' demand for posting of working schedules, but which we conducted so unskillfully that we got nothing out of it organizationally. We made agitation around Republic, but up to July we still had no organization. In the meantime the C.C. "concentration subsidy" stopped, and the "concentrator" was put on other work.

Every Party conference decided to concentrate. Everyone agreed in theory. But we didn't **plan** our work in such a way as to **guarantee** systematic development of a campaign in and around Republic.

Following the Open Letter we made a plan of work to insure concentration involving Party units, fractions, etc. We decided to concentrate first on the chipping department. After many failures we finally got three chippers to a meeting. We drafted tentative department demands and issued simple half-page leaflets inviting the chippers to discuss the demands. We worked systematically, both inside the mill and visiting the chippers at their homes, popularizing the demands and the idea of struggle for them, and our union. In the meantime we were exposing the N.R.A. Steel Code, popu-

larizing our own code, and sharply exposing the A. F. of L. But we found that many of our mass meetings were less successful than the A.A.'s meetings, because we relied entirely upon leaflets while they had committees preparing the meetings inside the mill.

Meanwhile concentration on the chippers began to bear fruit. We got enough chippers interested to hold separate meetings of each of the three shifts. Sometimes we met with them at the union headquarters when they left the mill at 11 at night. Other shifts met at 7 a.m. when they quit work. (The union office is only 3 blocks from the gate). We met at these hours so as to get the men before they scattered to their homes in all parts of town. We were unsuccessful in signing up many for the union (only 20), but developed a strong sentiment for united action for our demands. At least a dozen different leaflets or pluggers went into the mill during August, and a union organizer was at the gate at almost every change of shifts. In addition to this, union and chipper committee members took small typewritten slips into the mill, giving time and place of chipper meetings to those whom they trusted.

Struggle Developed

Sentiment for strike developed very high, but we held back because our union was so weak—only 20 members of 200 in the department. Finally the sentiment for strike was so strong that some action was imperative. We got out petitions with our 5 demands and 189 chippers signed them with their check numbers. These were sent to the company by registered letter with the demand that we get an answer within 48 hours. No answer came. At the meeting called to hear the company's reply only 18 chippers attended, but the sentiment was unanimously for strike and the men reported similar sentiment in the mill. Since we could not stand still, but had to go either forward or backward, the meeting elected a committee of 5 to go to the company. It was arranged that if the committee didn't get out of the company office by 11 a.m., or if the report was unfavorable before then, the day shift would walk out and picket the next turn. In event the demands were granted of course work would go on.

The company refused the demands. The chippers refused to listen to the superintendent's speech telling them to leave "the Bolsheviks" alone and wait. As one man they threw down their chipping hammers and walked out, marching to the union hall where all registered and some 40 signed up for the union. They elected a strike committee representing their turn, sent a committee to the open hearth gate to notify and pull out the open hearth chippers and burners, elected picket captains and then returned in a body to the

Besamer gate to picket the afternoon turn. This turn struck solid, as did the open hearth chippers.

Strike Won

Meanwhile word came that the company was ready to compromise. A committee went down, got the company's offer of a 16 per cent increase, recognition of the chippers committee, equal division of work, etc., reported to the packed strike meeting and, after a lengthy discussion, it was overwhelmingly voted to accept the offer, go back to work, and build the union stronger than ever. The mass meeting called for that night (originally called in support of the strike) was turned into a victory meeting. Enthusiasm was high. Many more chippers joined the union, and some from other departments. The mass meeting voted endorsement of the chippers actions and to prepare similar actions in all departments of the mill.

On the basis of the membership gains, we reorganized the Republic Local, elected new officers, all of whom, by the way, were non-Party workers, and most of whom had taken active part in leading the chippers strike.

Tasks of Union

The tasks before us were clear: (1) Consolidate organization among the chippers. (2) Use the victory, news of which had spread like wild-fire, to conduct a campaign of mass recruiting, and preparation for struggle in all departments of the mill. (3) Establish a strong local leadership in the mill and train it carefully. (4) Rapid scale recruitment of the best of the union members into the Party and Y.C.L. (in the whole campaign up to the strike we only recruited 2 chippers into the Party and both of them had been close to us for years. The shop unit as such played no role at all in the strike.). (5) Popularize the victory in the other mills of the district.

In other words, we recognized that the next period would make or break us. The company was sure to attack us. It was clear that our systematic activity had been the main factor in the success (with all that it was not as systematic as it should have been). But it was precisely at this period, when the previous methods should have been used, **but on a mass scale corresponding with the situation**, that we fell down.

Union Driven By Events

This was the period of rising sentiment everywhere. We got calls from Farrell, Newcastle, Sharon, Sharpsville, Hubbard, Salem, Campbell, Lowellville, Struthers, for speakers and organizers. Our forces were few and overworked. Although we did to a certain extent, draw some of the leading

chippers into activity in other departments and in other mills it was done too slowly and on too small a scale.

We decided to make a job next on the galvanizing department, and got pretty solid, but failed to get any of the 14 Negroes in the department. Still we won demands in that department without a strike. Open hearth department was next on our list, but we failed to give it the systematic leadership required, with the result that the A.A. (which was concentrating there) made considerably more headway in the open hearth than we did.

We were dissipating our forces and energies over too broad an area. Although realizing in the abstract that with our forces we couldn't organize the whole district at once, we were infected with the spontaneity of the workers, we "allowed ourselves to be driven by events," with the result that, in effect, we abandoned our concentration. We tried to answer every call. We recruited 1000 members in 12 different mills in 5-6 weeks. But we couldn't give proper attention to any one mill, and most important of all, it meant neglecting the proper development of the Republic drive to do even what we did elsewhere. We didn't consolidate sufficiently the 200 members in Republic, we didn't spend enough time developing the splendid new forces in Republic, we failed to build the Party and Y.C.L. in Republic (also due to a heavy dose of "Red Scare" in the earlier stages, when we were afraid to bring forward the Party and even the **Daily Worker** openly as a paper supported by our union) and worst of all, when the tempo at Republic should have been faster than ever before, we didn't give the necessary leadership.

The Second Chippers Strike

All this played right into the hands of the company. When the Bessmer department started up after a ten day shutdown, they didn't call back (and in effect locked out) 100 of the most active chippers. The men were furious. Close to 100 chippers met, sent a committee demanding reinstatement of all chippers and equal division of work. They were turned down. The men voted unanimously to strike the department, but, they raised no demands for the men on the job, they didn't organize the strike *inside* the mill, they didn't even consult more than a few handful of the men on the job—the strike vote was taken primarily by layed-off chippers. The whole thing developed so quickly (30 hours) that neither the District Board of the union, the fractions, the shop unit or the Party section committees met to discuss the plans. The District Secretary of the union was away in Weirton when it developed, and only reached Youngstown as the strike vote was being taken, when he allowed himself

to be swept along with the tide. At no time before the strike was there a calm objective analysis made of the situation. From this flowed all the mistakes committed.

The result of the mistakes was the company's success in blocking the effectiveness of the strike in a few days—one group of chippers was turned against another group. When we saw this we withdrew picket lines and adopted a policy (on paper) of working **inside** the mill. But production was low and by then our best forces were considerably demoralized, many of the men on the job who were not against us, but didn't see the possibility of success, were afraid to come to the hall and especially, we, the leadership, failed to personally lead every detail of the reorganization work, visiting the employed chippers at their homes, talking, convincing, etc.

When on top of this the company laid off all our active men in the galvanizing department (primarily the result of a stool-pigeon in the department), terror swept the local and the mill. We were temporarily broken in the two departments were we had been strongest. Just at this period general layoffs took place throughout the mills, leaving most departments with skeleton crews, and we failed to react quickly enough to the changed situation with a broad campaign against layoffs, for dismissal wages, etc. The result was increasing instead of overcoming our isolation from the masses.

The mistakes of the second strike were: (1) violation of all principles of trade union democracy by not consulting the men on the job; (2) going into such an important action hastily, without preparation, yielding before the spontaneity of the workers. Had we built the Party in the preceding period, things could not have happened this way. But our Party unit played no role in either strike. Had we continued to concentrate on Republic (at the expense of some of the work elsewhere), we would have been able to call out other departments in support of the chippers and galvanizing department workers. **But failure to concentrate and to carry out the plans we ourselves had made, allowing ourselves to be driven by events—this put us in the position where the company was able to badly damage our organization in the mill.**

We still have members in all departments of Republic. But complete reorganization of the local is now necessary. Just as we can hold the blacklisted members with us only by fighting for relief, against the grievances on the C.W.A. jobs, and for unemployment insurance, so we can hold our membership in the mill, rebuild our local, win hundreds and thousands of new members only by facing the hard fact—that now we must start all over again, building from the bottom up. But now we have the advantage of more and better forces and experience than we had before. Simul-

taneously we must really commence opposition work in the small A.A. organization in the mill.

To base ourselves in Republic on the blacklisted members of the union would be a suicidal policy (as has been proved repeatedly in mining, textile, etc.). Our Republic Local must and will be rebuilt from the workers inside the mill. That is the test to which we now are put.

On Some Problems of the Harlem Section

By LOUIS SASS, Org. Sec'y, Harlem Section

HARLEM is one of the national concentration points of our Party because of its position as the national center of Negro life. In the past year we have recorded some definite gains in our work in carrying out the Open Letter. This becomes very significant if we realize that Harlem for a long time was one of the sorest points in the work of our Party. These gains, however, do not mean that any one has the idea that all the problems have been solved. But they do mean that as a result of every day work on the part of the comrades involved we were able to improve our work which puts us now in a more favorable position to utilize the opportunities offered to us by the crisis of capitalism.

The most important achievement in the Harlem Section is the consolidation of its leadership. The weakest point in our work has been the inability of the Section Committee to enforce the most elementary discipline on its members. Petty personal questions have been on the order of business at the great majority of our Section Committee meetings. At the present time, however, the Section Committee engages in serious political work at all of its meetings and has assigned all of its members to responsible leading work in the various phases of our Section's activities.

Fluctuation in Membership

The question of membership fluctuation is another very important point in the work of our Section. Whereas the Harlem Section has always recruited more members in comparison to other Sections its fluctuation exceeded all of the Sections in the District. Because of the inability on the part of our Party to understand the Negro question we have lost many sincere revolutionary Negroes who have joined the Party expecting a solution to their problems. Our Section Committee has in a very thorough manner analyzed the reasons for fluctuation and found:

1. Insufficient political life in the units.

2. The lack of proper understanding of the struggle against white chauvinism.

3. Lack of understanding of the national liberation character of our Negro work.

4. The loose organizational form which made check-up practically impossible and finally the liberal attitude adopted by some of our white comrades towards our Negro comrades.

Groups of Five Organized

Realizing the importance of consolidation we have reorganized the units on the basis of groups of five comrades living nearest to one another. This enables the Party not only to maintain a strict check-up over the comrades, but also to stimulate political discussion involving every comrade in the Party. The most effective way to struggle for the unity of Negro and white takes the form of drawing white workers into the struggles of the Negro people—white workers who live in the Negro territory amongst whom we have carried on very little work. The drawing of these white workers in the struggle for Negro liberation does more towards breaking down white chauvinistic as well as bourgeois nationalistic tendencies than the old method of shouting against white chauvinism without giving a serious political explanation of its meaning.

Much has been said about the number of Negroes in the Party. The recent control shows eighty-nine Negro members in the Harlem Section. These figures are incorrect. We are in the process now of re-checking our entire Negro membership on the basis of the Group System, and though the figures are as yet not fully available, it can already be seen that the number is over two hundred. It should be noted here that the Harlem Section has increased its total membership from two hundred to seven hundred in the past year. Of course this is a very small number and emphasizes our weakness in the liberation work. But the fact that such low control was possible can be best explained by the loose manner in which the units have functioned before the reorganization and the loose manner in which the control was carried through.

The Basic Concentration Task

The biggest political task confronting the Harlem Section is to ensure a broad proletarian base in building the liberation movement amongst the Negro masses—that is shop work. We can record some successes in the building of the League of Struggle for Negro Rights. We have organized ten branches, seven well established and the other three in the process of consolidation. We have also established a functioning Harlem Council of the L.S.N.R., composed of all these branches and a few affiliated organizations. The branch meetings are attend-

ed by approximately from twelve to sixty members. However, we must say that to a large extent we have built the L.S.N.R. from the unemployed and the petty bourgeoisie—not yet sufficiently drawing in Negro workers from the big laundries, needle trades shops, etc. These branches were built on a neighborhood basis. The Party units took the initiative, bringing together workers on the basis of local grievances and conditions.

What are the methods used in the building of the L.S.N.R.? The question is asked by many comrades: What will you do in a neighborhood where the most urgent question confronting the workers is high rent and evictions? Will this not turn the L.S.N.R. into an unemployed organization? Will it not take away its national liberation character? The answer is that the more the L.S.N.R. engages in taking up the grievances of the Negro workers in the neighborhood the more rapidly it will be built. The question of high rent is surely a question of national oppression because the Negroes, more than any section of the population, are subjected to unsanitary conditions and high rents. The L.S.N.R. has every reason to take up this struggle as one of its central tasks and at the same time cooperate with the Unemployment Council, etc. Likewise, the L.S.N.R. cooperates with the trade unions when they fight discrimination against Negroes on jobs (Fifth Avenue Bus Company). In other words, the L.S.N.R. in all cases really acts its role as an ally of the working class which at the same time fights for national liberation as its central task.

Space does not permit me to elaborate on the other important concentration activities of the Section such as unemployed work, shop work, and the I.L.D. This we will do at some future time. For the present we can say that the introduction of the Group System in Harlem will not only serve to aid us in our struggle against fluctuation. But it will in every way stimulate the activities of the Party. Recruiting can be carried on on a real proletarian competition basis. The **Harlem Liberator** and the **Daily Worker** sales can be increased tremendously. Functioning fractions can be established in all organizations in the neighborhood and what's most important, these groups are in a position to concentrate on shops, thereby assuring a broad proletarian base in the liberation movement. The tasks of the white workers not only in Harlem, but throughout the Party, must be the most energetic struggle against white chauvinism not only by exposing hidden or open white chauvinists within the Party, but by boldly bringing forward the question of Negro liberation among the broad masses of white workers, convincing them of the undisputable fact "that labor in a white skin cannot be emancipated as long as labor in a black skin is branded."

Open Letter an Instrument for Penetration Into the Basic Industries

By S. YANDRICH, Section Organizer, Sec. No. 1, Dist. No. 8

EXAMINING the work of our six months plan of concentration, we can record that some progress has been made since the Open Letter.

The Open Letter states that the main and most important task of our Party is to root itself in the basic industries, namely, the building of the Party and revolutionary unions of the Trade Union Unity League.

The Open Letter states further, that unless we take most seriously this question, change our methods of work, and in the shortest possible time make a rapid turn, build the Party and revolutionary trade unions in the basic industries, we will not be in a position to lead the working class in decisive class battles.

We decided that our main concentration must be International Harvester Company.

When the Open Letter was issued to every Party member, we may as well be frank and say that we hardly had a Party nucleus in Harvester. This nucleus which was established way back in 1925, was characterized as "no good" and carried on no activity whatever, with the exception of issuing a few bulletins every year and once in a great while a special leaflet. The nucleus seldom met. During the last two years the unit usually met twice a month, and at times every three weeks. There was no life in the nucleus, no perspectives whatsoever. As a result, the unit was losing its members.

Finally the Open Letter was issued to the Party membership. After discussing the importance of the Open Letter, and the importance of concentrating on the International Harvester Company, which is the largest and most important industry in Section No. 1 territory, we began to call meetings of the Harvester unit to get every Party member to attend meetings. At that time we had five Party members working in the plant.

Plan of Work

First, we decided to meet with the comrades every week, to have unit meetings once a week, and the six months plan was adopted.

What was our plan?

- a. To recruit into the Party twenty workers.
- b. To recruit into the Steel and Metal Workers Industrial Union fifty workers, and to build the Young Communist League nucleus.

This plan was adopted unanimously at our Section Conference and at the nucleus meeting, then we began to work.

The first thing we did was to check up whether there were any more Party members working in the plant. We found a few, but these Party members did not belong to the Harvester nucleus at that time, so we immediately assigned these comrades to this Party nucleus.

It is interesting, comrades, to know that these Party members who were considered as no good, an element that is dead, etc., began to revive.

At that time we had an insignificant group of SMWIU consisting of our few Party members. What did we accomplish? Today in International Harvester Company we have two Party nuclei, one in McCormack, consisting of seven Party members, who are working in the plant, and one in the tractor plant, consisting of six Party members. The comrades at the last meeting of McCormack, pledged themselves to build another shop nucleus by the time of our District Convention.

In each of these units we have two comrades who are not working in the plant, two comrades that were working there one time, and another two, one from the District and one from the Section.

Party Recruiting

While discussing the problem of recruiting into the Party with our comrades working in the plant, we met many difficulties and misconceptions as to the role of our Party, and who can be a member of our Party.

Such opinions put forth by some of the comrades, that the bulletins of the Party are too radical; that workers do not understand our program, etc.; that first we must bring workers into the union, and educate them, and then, when they understand our program, bring them into the Party.

However, the District and the Section leadership correctly guided the work of our comrades in the shop and we were able to break such tendencies which existed within the minds of comrades. These tendencies are not eliminated entirely, but progress has been made in this respect.

Building of the union—the SMWIU was built side by side with the building of the Party. In the union we have well over forty workers, and most of the union members are from the tractor plant; the union is being divided into department committees, and the work of our Party and the union is quite effective. We have instances lately where workers filled out application blanks in the Party bulletin, and joined our Party.

Also the activities of the union are very important, and the workers in the plant look to our union for leadership.

As a result of our union activities in the tractor plant, a superintendent and employment manager have been suspended from their positions.

There is another organization known as A.B.C., with which our union is carrying on a united front policy. As a result of this work we have been able to get about fifteen workers into our union so far, and the leadership of the A.B.C. has also joined our union.

Check Up on Decisions and Plans

This work has been carried out because of constant check-up on our plans and decisions. There has been no unit meeting since the Open Letter which has not been attended by comrades from the Section and District. In this respect the District as well as the Section have been able to convince the comrades of the correctness of the Open Letter.

Concentration from the outside consists mainly of the distribution of leaflets, bulletins and the sale of the **Daily Worker**. We sell an average of from eight to nine copies of the **Daily Worker** at the tractor plant. (Why so few?—Ed.).

In the past we got our contacts through some comrades and mass organizations. We usually would send an outsider to visit these contacts, without success; now we send comrades working in the plant to visit these contacts, and we get better results.

As a result of our activities in the plant, our Party has won prestige among the Harvester workers, so much so that the workers are discussing during the lunch hours and asking each other how many Communists we have in the plant. Some would say, "Well about one thousand." Others say, "Every second worker is a Communist." This instance alone shows that the Party units are quite active in the shop.

We also have co-opted on the Section Committee two comrades who are the most active Party members that we have in Harvester. Our Party in Harvester actually discusses the problems of the workers in the plant and links these daily problems with political, national issues and campaigns of our Party.

May First Parades

By SIDNEY BLOOMFIELD

MAY FIRST will soon be upon us and workers' parades and demonstrations must be planned immediately. The effectiveness of our demonstrations can be increased if we pay attention to some important details and the sooner the better. In the feverish days of the last world war, when the streets resounded daily to the tread of marching feet, opposed as one might have been to the flood of patriotism, neverthe-

ness, when a fife and drum corps or military band passed by, the stirring strains went through one's system like an electric current.

In our parades, particularly in New York City, we have several bands, but the line of march is so long that the effect is lost upon the marchers and the bystanders as well. The music cannot be heard beyond four or five blocks down the line. The marchers do not walk in rythm and the effect is a line of stragglers shuffling along like a tired and discouraged army in retreat. The sloppy and slovenly demeanor of the marchers has a very bad effect upon the onlookers. The result is that the value of the demonstration as a means of impressing and winning over or neutralizing hostile people along the line of march is lost.

It should not be necessary to propogandize the value of stirring music. Every two or three hundred marchers should be led by a band, a bugle or fife and drum corps. We need scores of bands, with plenty of brass instruments. It will put a militant and challenging spirit into our parades and in this atmosphere the spirit is caught up by the masses.

The masses feel closer to a movement about which they can feel proud of. Every workers club, every branch of the International Labor Defense, International Workers Order, every trade union and every youth club should make a drive for the collection of funds to outfit a band, to pay for the music instruction for those unable to do so, and to attract such elements to the organization who like music. Many bourgeois organizations attract new members by advertising that they are going to organize a band or orchestra and upon this basis of interest they call for those who can play and those who would like to learn to play.

The Workers Music League can build up its movement upon the basis of a vigorous campaign to organize bands and orchestras in all workers' organizations. Such a campaign should be started at once. The immediate goal should be not less than twenty-five workers' bands in New York City by May First. The appearance of that many more well organized bands will greatly stimulate the entire demonstration and will add prestige to our movement beyond expectation. It can be done with proper organization work and immediately.

The next problem is that of banners and placards. The getting up of banners and slogans is important for the effect they have upon the masses. Many placards are carried on sticks that are too small. The result is that the placard is not raised sufficiently high to be seen or the one carrying it gets tired holding his arm above his head, or the signs are carried in such manner as to be useless for the purpose intended. The committees must not be stingy with the length of sticks.

Another bad practice is the tendency to make fancy letter-

ing on the placards. This is bad and must be stopped. Fancy lettering cannot be read quickly and easily as the marchers pass by and the meaning of the slogans are lost upon the spectators. The most effective is heavy, wide, bold and plain but neat and distinct lettering—and the less words, with good English and logical phrasing, the more effective.

Some slogans are written and composed in such bad English that the meaning is the direct opposite of what was intended. Some slogans are so bad grammatically, that people are amused at seeing them. Slogans should be discussed first, not merely slapped onto cardboard. In many cases the slogans are wrong from the standpoint of political content and meaning. Also it is best to carry a placard on a slight angle, with wording facing the sidewalks. When signs are carried directly forward, those upon the sidewalks and in the tenement windows cannot easily read our message.

The spacing of banners, streamers, placards, etc., should be carefully planned before the parade starts and the leaders or captains must see to it that these are kept sufficiently apart so that the placard or banner in front does not hide the ones behind. Too many in one spot and no signs at another, spoil the effect. When signs are massed, only the first few in front can be read while the many scores of signs that are crammed and hidden behind each other are simply wasted. Proper spacing should be planned so that every sign stands out by itself, is read easily and therefore serves its purpose well.

Finally, the question of making proper use of streamers that are carried by two or more people. Streamers must be watched more carefully than placards, because too much tension on either side of the carriers may rip the banners, or as is most common, too much looseness tends to cause folds in the streamer. Folds cover the lettering, thus making it impossible to read the inscriptions.

These are important matters and should be taken care of by the responsible committees in planning demonstrations.

Shall the Party or the Trade Union Be Organized First?

By **COMRADE ORGWALD**

THE following question and answer is reprinted from the pamphlet "Tactical and Organizational Questions of the Communist Parties of India and Indo-China" by Comrade Orgwald. The questions treated in this pamphlet, while they deal specifically with the problems of Party organization in India and Indo-China, nevertheless are of extreme importance

to us. Every Party functionary should study this pamphlet carefully. It can be obtained from the Central Committee for 10 cents.

QUESTION: Should the trade union or the Party organization be organized first?

ANSWER: I think that no categorical answer can be given to this question. It is necessary to do both. If there is a group, it is necessary to proceed in the way I have indicated, it is necessary to form a Party organization or a small initiative group for the purpose of forming such a Party organization. If a group of comrades arrives in a town and settles there, Party and trade union work should run parallel. If there is no trade union organization, then some comrade should be given the task of organizing a trade union in the trade in which he works.

Let us take the following case. A comrade arrives in some town by himself and succeeds in finding work in some factory in an industry which is not organized. It will be easier for him to start with the organization of a trade union. Since trade unions are not prohibited, he can speak openly about forming a trade union and about the tasks of such a union. He can call a meeting of workers of his factory who wish to join the union, send delegations to other factories working in the same or kindred trades and in the process of forming the trade union organizations he will inevitably come in contact with a number of workers. He will have the opportunity of observing them and is sure to find among them some brave enthusiasts and energetic young men and thus he can get recruits for the forming of a Party organization.

It all depends on the conditions prevailing in the given town. If you put the question theoretically, what is preferable or what is more important—to form first a Party organization or a trade union organization, the answer is of course—the **Party**. Trade unions are proletarian organizations, and very important organizations at that, but nevertheless they are organizations only for the defense of the economic interests of the working class.

Side by side with the trade union organizations there are a number of other working class organizations, such as co-operative, sport, International Labor Defense, International Workers Relief, workers' anti-religious societies, musical and educational organizations. Only the Party organization may give the line of action to the Communists and revolutionary workers who are members of these organizations. The Party organization defends the interests of the working class as a whole, since the Party organization is the vanguard of the working class and guides all the forms of the struggle for the overthrow of the capitalist system, whereas the trade union organization (led by the Party through the trade union

M. 34

Communist fraction) serves as the transmission belt from the Party to the working class masses and leads directly the economic struggle of the workers.

Theoretically, therefore, it is more important to form first of all a Party organization; but if in some places at one time or another it is easier to form a trade union, then the forming of such a union should be taken in hand first of all. It will all depend on local conditions.

The Shop Nucleus At Sparrows Point

TO understand the methods of work of the shop nucleus at Sparrows Point, it is necessary first to get acquainted with the following facts:

The Bethlehem Steel Co. at Sparrows Pt. at present employs about 12,000 people. The plant is running between 50 and 60% capacity. The plant is stretched over a territory of 5 miles and includes the following major mills: blast furnace, open hearth, plate mill, wire mill, pipe mill, sheet mill, tin mill, and shipyards. The composition of the workers in the plant is as follows: 60% American born, 3,000 Negroes, about 35% young workers and several hundred women.

Past Organizational Structure and Work of Nucleus

This Party nucleus is one of the oldest in the country. Ever since the reorganization of the Party, a large Party nucleus as well as a YCL nucleus which was organized some time later, has been in existence in the plant. All the Party members in the mill, regardless of the departments or mills they worked in belonged to the same unit. All but one member were foreign born workers.

The main activity of the unit consisted in issuing a monthly shop paper which was the work of one individual, namely the union organizer in Steel. Outside of this the unit carried on no political activity whatever. The role of the Party unit in building the union in the plant was very insignificant since the entire orientation was to build a "secret union." Workers were split up into small "underground groups," meeting in private homes, and the work was of such a "conspiratorial" nature, that the workers kept from joining the union.

Nevertheless, the propaganda carried on for years, and the maintenance of a small local of the union had its effects and would have resulted in organized struggle. However, at the height of the strike wave last Summer, the organizer was withdrawn, the union collapsed, the shop paper was discontinued and the unit ceased to function.

Reorganization

Two months ago, the District Committee and the Section took steps to reorganize our work in the plant. The nucleus was reorganized on the basis of mills. Comrades working in the same mill were organized into a separate nucleus. A plant buro made up of one or more representatives from the mill nuclei was set up. The plant buro also has a representative from the YCL nucleus. This constitutes the leading political committee of the plant. The reorganization immediately gave the nucleus an opportunity to begin taking up problems facing the workers in each mill. Secondly, it made for greater check up on the activities of each individual member. At present, one third of the Party membership is active in Party or trade union activity in the plant. Under the initiative of the Party nucleus and Party members, several actions were carried through in the mill during the past weeks. These resulted in preventing a wage cut in one case, and securing an hours' pay for workers who report to work and are sent home in another. This helped more than anything else to place the Party and our Union before the workers as an active force.

The methods of work of both the Union and Party were completely changed from an underground secret organization to open activity, both outside and inside the mill. Agitation, discussions, and open recruiting of members on the job into our Union are now carried on, in fact, all the recruiting is done on the job. It is important to point out that the non-Party workers were the ones to break down the fear and the theory that everybody is a stool-pigeon and that nothing can be done. The weekly union bulletin, now issued, has established mass influence and following in the mill. It has helped to expose company agents as well as the A.A. (A. F. of L. union) and the N.R.A.

The Party units now meet regularly every other week. The Party shop paper will again be issued by the first of the month. The **Daily Worker**, which did not have any circulation at all during the past months, has picked up its sale.

With the campaign against the company union, which is now being developed, the Party at Sparrows Point has an opportunity to increase its ranks and to especially recruit Americans into the Party. Since the Lenin Memorial Meeting, six new workers joined the Party and three the Y.C.L. Most of these workers are American born.

The Party nucleus, in connection with the coming Party convention, set itself concrete tasks on recruiting, on the **Daily Worker** circulation, the Y.C.L., and the Union. These tasks can be fulfilled if the entire work at Sparrows Point receives a little attention from the District and the Section Committee of the Party.

— G. P.

The Struggle Against War and Fascism In Our Shop Papers

By Agit Prop Department

UNQUESTIONABLY the struggle against fascism and bosses' war is and remains a basic task of our Party shop papers. In examining how our shop papers are carrying on this fight, however, it is obvious that as yet there are many weaknesses and deficiencies. If we are to ask, in the first place, how much anti-war and anti-fascist material appears in these papers, one would already have to answer that it is insufficient.

Aside from the fact that many Party nuclei in important shops do not even issue shop papers, those that are issued do not contain enough propaganda articles explaining the danger of war and fascism and the methods of struggling against them. More important, however, is the low political quality of many of the articles that do treat of these subjects.

Taking at random shop papers from strategic centers and industries such as coal, steel, aircraft, transport, etc., we note that many of them do not even mention fascism by so much as a word. This, in the present circumstances, is certainly a very serious weakness in our work. Some of those that do mention the danger of fascism and propagandize against it, fail to explain what fascism is, from whence it comes, and especially the close relation between fascism and war. Also, most of the shop papers forget entirely to explain the basic cause of war,—exploitation, the fight for markets, colonies, etc. It is clear that the first preliminary to educating the workers politically to the necessity of struggle against war and fascism is to explain to them the nature and causes of these questions.

Some of the shop papers insert just a line or two about the Leipzig trial, or about a red flag being hoisted in Hamburg; all of which is very interesting. But they do not explain the significance of these events.

A division is apparent, usually, between an article on war and the shop grievances which are discussed. Yet the linking up of these questions is a constant necessity. The *Boeing Worker*, from Seattle, is a good exception, linking well the everyday grievances with war, and explaining the role of the Communist Party. But here also, the question of fascism is omitted entirely.

The increased slavery under the NRA codes is exhibited by most of the shop papers, and occasionally linked up with

the frantic war preparations. However, practically nowhere do we see the many Fascist implications of the NRA explained. The importance of educating the workers politically about this question, explaining the meaning of the terror against the militant unions, the denial of the right to strike, the foisting of company unions upon millions of workers, is obvious.

Most of the shop papers neglect completely such an important issue as the role of the youth in the coming imperialist war. This is part and parcel of the general underestimation of the young workers and their ability to struggle which is apparent in the work of most shop nuclei. The **Stewart Warner Worker**, from District 8, is a good exception, having a clear article on Youth and War, explaining the cause of war and the relation of the young workers to it. At the present time, with the increasing numbers of youth in industry, this takes on a special importance. The Party shop papers, if they will seriously tackle this problem, at the same time taking up the fight for the economic demands of the young workers in their shops, and linking this up with the struggle against the war preparations, will go a long way toward accomplishing the much talked about task,—the building of YCL nuclei side by side with the Party nuclei.

One of the central questions in the whole field of how our shop papers are carrying on the struggle against war and fascism is the answer to the question, for the workers, of concretely how they can struggle against war. The shop papers, as a rule, contain long articles on Roosevelt's war preparations, or on the immanence of war, but when they wind up, they are strangely silent on the tasks of the worker in this fight. We find little or no mention of building anti-war committees in the shops, or even of the basic idea that the best guarantee which the workers can have that they will be able to put up some struggle would be the existence of a militant union in the shop. The average shop paper ends its article on war without any tasks suggested. Certainly we will not teach the workers to struggle against war effectively until we tell them, through our shop papers, as well as in our other agitation, how they can carry on this struggle.

The question of the defense of the Soviet Union is usually brought in very abstractly, often merely as a slogan, without explaining the relation of this question to war and fascism: without explaining that one of the basic reasons for the oncoming imperialist war will be the hatred of the imperialists for the workers' fatherland. If more of the shop papers, when they do mention the Soviet Union would point out the conditions of identical workers there, their benefits, etc., and then explain how this came about, the workers would more easily understand why they must defend the Soviet Union. The

hatred of Fascist Germany for the Soviets, the infamous Hugenberg memorandum are rarely explained, yet they may form the driving wedge in the war.

The Party has done a great deal to help build the American League Against War and Fascism. The Party in its regular press and activities considers this united front organization very important. But do the shop papers reflect this? Not at all. Here we see again this non-bolshevik idea of separation. Is there, perhaps, a division of "spheres of influence?" Certainly, the work of the American League Against War and Fascism must be extended by us beyond halls and the press. It must be brought into the shops, and the major responsibility for explaining the League and fighting for its growth, falls upon the shop papers.

Finally, the role of the Communist Party as the decisive factor in the struggle against war and fascism is not sufficiently brought out. Many of the shop papers raise the slogan of joining the Party in order to fight for better economic conditions, without pointing out how the Party as the vanguard of the working class leads the fight against imperialist war, and brings forward the only solution. The shop papers everywhere must increase their emphasis on this point, making it clear that the only final solution in the fight against war is the overthrow of capitalism and the establishment of a Soviet America.
