

THE TRAINING OF T.U.U.L. FUNCTIONARIES

By WM. Z. FOSTER.

EVER since the organization of our forces in the reformist unions as a left wing, and especially since the formation of the Trade Union Unity League, a year and a half ago, there has been a great shortage of trained trade union workers, those capable of actually taking the leadership of the workers in struggle and leading them to victory. Now, with the building of the revolutionary unions and the consequent greater demands being placed upon us for active workers, this problem of cadres becomes more acute than ever. Its solution becomes a question of the most basic consequences to the whole revolutionary trade union movement.

This is, of course, a question that is not limited to the United States. A similar shortage of forces makes itself felt throughout the revolutionary labor movement internationally. The RILU, realizing this need, has in its various Congresses, laid great stress upon the necessity of the revolutionary union movements in the respective countries taking up the systematic training of capable and militant workers. To give the lead in this work, it has long since established a special department.

Consequently, a substantial beginning has been made in a number of countries. This is particularly the case in Germany. In France, England, etc., also, systematic work has been begun on a small scale. In the United States, however, we have next to nothing to show. In this general respect, the TUUL has been decidedly in the rear of the movement.

But now the TUUL is making a beginning. For the first time it will actually give workers the necessary theoretical and practical training to equip them to play an effective role in the class struggle as trade union organizers and leaders. The National Training School, held in New York,

will open on March 2nd, and will last for three months. There will be 25 students, coming from all the major unions and industries.

The courses will be as comprehensive as possible in this short period. They will cover the whole range of revolutionary theory and practice, especially with regard to the trade union work. There will be courses in Marxism-Leninism, strike strategy, union structure, history, etc. All together, a very valuable series of courses for workers who want to function in the class struggle with the maximum efficiency!

Naturally, in such a course, a good training will be given in the meaning of the decisions of the recent congresses of the RILU, that is, in the living policy of our organizations. Too often, in the practice, we find that comrades, even in responsible union positions, have only the haziest ideas about these decisions and resolutions.

With urgent tasks pressing upon our unions, it will be difficult for them to spare 25 comrades from the active work, even for a period of three months. Also, the financial question is a difficult one. But these problems must be met without hesitation. The school must be made up of the very best and most promising elements, especially the youth, that we have. In training new forces, we are, so to speak, building the heavy industry of our movement. No immediate sacrifice is too great to achieve this end.

Our TUUL unions are actually suffering and are being stunted in their growth, for want of trained forces. We must supply this need at all costs. The TUUL National Training School is a good start. But it is only a beginning. It must be followed by a complete and intensive application of the whole educational program of the RILU. The question of training new strata of trade union workers must be part of the main order of business throughout the TUUL.