

PARTY LIFE

"Work Among the Jobless Must Be Intensified"--Amter

Immediate Protest by Unions, A. F. of L. Rank and File, Needed to Defeat 'Local Wagner Bill'

By I. AMTER

It may seem absurd to ask the question, but the practice of some of the Party districts and sections of leading comrades in unions, makes it necessary to ask the question.

From New Beaver, Pa., comes a letter asking whether it is correct that we do not have to do any unemployed work; that now we are to concentrate only on the shops. We know that in the Pittsburgh District there is not only a good appreciation of the need of unemployed work, but that the work is being done. In Alleghany County (Pittsburgh), the best unemployed work is being done at the present time. But New Beaver is part of the Pittsburgh District. It is in the midst of the steel section. There are tens of thousands of unemployed steel and metal workers in this section of the country. These workers are looking for jobs, for relief. There are tens of thousands of steel workers who work only part-time, who also need supplementary relief. How can we ignore them?

In addition how can we talk about correct shop work, with the intention of organizing the workers and leading them in struggle if we fail to organize also the unemployed and part-time workers? If a strike is to be organized, how can we neglect to organize the unemployed to ensure that they will not scab? **The organization of the unemployed is part of the concentration work, and must be considered in connection with the concentration plan at each shop.**

That this letter is not accidental is shown by the article by Comrade Egan recently printed in the Daily Worker. Comrade Egan dealt with preparation for struggle in the steel industry, and emphasized that we face the biggest struggle in steel since 1919. In steel we are dealing with the **most highly trustified industry in the country**. Wall Street will do everything in its power to prevent a strike and to break it. With the aid of its private police and through control of the municipal authorities, it will not only import thugs and scabs, but will try to intimidate workers into strikebreaking. Through direct intimidation, through the threat of blacklisting, through offers of higher wages, etc., they will try to break strikes. If we do not organize the unemployed as part of every plant, the steel corporations will be able to do considerable damage. In addition we must remember that a large percentage of the steel workers are **foreign-born**, many of them aliens. The threat of deportation will be,

and already has been, held over their heads, if they show any opposition to the bosses.

In the New Jersey and Philadelphia District we find a similar situation. Not only is there opposition to unemployed work, but although there are plans for concentration work, there are none for unemployed work in connection with the concentration work. In all districts there is no conception of unemployed work as a means of getting contacts in important shops.

What is the reason for this situation? "Forces are lacking," "too much other work to do," are some of the excuses and explanations given. To all the districts, sections and units we say: "Shop work comes first, but you should and must work out in connection with your shop concentration work, plans for organizing the unemployed of the particular shop or shops (if the workers can be reached through living in certain parts of the city—as is the case in many localities); and for organizing the unemployed living around the shop of concentration to assist in the shop struggles."

But this is not the only reason. The unemployed are demanding relief; they face evictions; they want unemployment insurance. If they see us organizing and leading them in struggle, they will follow our proposals for cooperation with workers in the shops who go out on strike. They will not be susceptible to the offers of the bosses to break strikes, they will not be driven by hunger to become strikebreakers. In the strike plans, we always consider the possibility of scabs. Let us forestall the possibility by organizing and leading the unemployed.

A short time ago the Central Committee sent a circular to the districts, asking for their plans for unemployed work. This was due to the failure of most districts to carry on systematic work. Although a reply was asked immediately, very few answers have come in. Does this not show that the districts, sections and leading fractions have not comprehended the section of the Thirteenth Plenum Thesis on unemployed work and the Eighth Party Convention Resolution—or if they comprehend them, then in an **opportunistic** manner they are ignoring them? Is it necessary to write more resolutions? We think not—it is now time to **put the resolutions into effect**.

Unemployment is a permanent aspect of capitalism. In the present period of capitalist decay, if unemployment apparently decreases, work takes on the aspect of forced labor. The demand for jobs and for unemployment and social insurance is growing. OUR job is to organize the unemployed and employed for this central struggle.

The districts must work out these plans, explain to the comrades that unemployed work must be intensified, connect it up with shop work, and thus put an end to such questions as are innocently put by the New Beaver comrades, but are in the minds of many comrades throughout the country.

"Five Years Is Long Enough to Starve"

By a Worker Correspondent

CHICAGO, Ill.—I am working on Project 1479 at Palos Park, formerly a C.W.A. project. Now, it is in the hands of the relief. There are 7,000 men on that project. They cut our hours from 24 hours a week to 48 hours a