Gastonia, N.C., June 2,1929.

Robert Minor, Acting Secretary, Communist Party of U.S.A.

Dear Comrade Minor,

SIV grande me Barbonne ne P128 1660

Following is a report on the work among negroes in Bessemer City from the time I was assigned as organizer there ( about a month a go) until Comrade Hall came in last week.

The negro workers in Bessemer City are employed chiefly in one plant, namely the Waste Plant connected with the American #1 Mill owned by Goldburg Bros. Outside of this waste Plant, there are only a few colored workers in Bessemer City - four or five in each of the E 4 mills, in the picking and cloth rooms.

The Waste Plant is run entirely by negroes, with the exception of 6 negro foremen. It employs 160 people (figures given me by strikers, which I have no opportunity of checking.) This includes those who work on the "platform" loading and unloading bales. I would judge from observation that about one third of the employes are women and girls.

The Wast Plant operates as follows: The cotton waste, bought from different mills, and including all sorts of dirty and dusty stuff, is brought in and unbaled. It is then sorted into "beds". After this it is tixis thrown into a machine called "breakers " which rolls it over, removes dust, and curls it. It is used to stuff cushions of automobile seats.

Wages run from \$2 to \$12 a week. The \$2 is for girls on part time work. Most of the girls on full time average \$5 and \$6. No wonder Mr. Goldburg can say that he doesn't care if his whole mill is closed by strike, he can make his money off the Waste Plant just the

Some of these colored workers live in Gastonia, in the Loray mill village. Some live in 8 company houses behind the Waste Plant. The rest live m in a colored colony called Stumptown, located outside of Bessemer City proper. Bessemer City proper. Taxanta Taxanta

Some Negroes were in the strike at the beginning, but when the mills opened up went back to work. There have been one in the strike since I have been there. Some negroes joined the union in the early days of the strike, but how many cannot be told, because of the confusion in the organization there during Pershing's regime. (13 receipt books given out and nobody knows to whom & only 6 returned.) We have a record of about 25, but more may have joined.

When Comrade Weisbord was here an intensive agitation was startedyn the Negro question. Comrade "eisbord spoke on the question in the mass meeting in Bessemer City, and thought he had completely won over the workers. Afk When he left he teld me to take up the question with the strike committee, and if there appeared to be a major ority sentiment for our policy of a joint local, to take a vote on it. I took up the question. I did not take a vote, as there were 20 workers against and only one for it. A few backward workers ( who have have since dropped out ofactivity) put the thing on a personal basis: "I won't never have nothingto do with no niggers nohow, or something to that effect. One woman proposed separate locals and mass

meetings, with joint conferences of black and white from time to time. A few agreed with this proposal. One worker who had been in the soul since said that he personally had no objection at all to "niggers, but that the Southern workers would never stand for it. All others were unqualifiedly and determinedly opposed. They said that it would ruin the union, that we would never get a single worker, either back or white, if we tried to put this into effect.

Since then I believe some progress has been made. There are at least a half desen workers (some of them new elements who were not on the strike committee when we first took up the question) - who appear to be thoroughly in sympathy with our policy and are helping to early it out. I have taken up the question at nearly every meeting of the strike committee and have propagandized it at mass meetings. (Of course we don't reach masses there in Bessemer City, - the "masse meetings consist of 50 workers or less.)

We have a negro committee of three workers. Other/workers help these. They have made personal contacts with quite a number of the colored workers and have signed up some for the union. I have been around the colored workers quite a bit myself. They appear to be very distrustful. The employers have spread the idea that the union is a trap whereby their jobs will be taken away by the whites. Some very good meetings have been held in Stumptown, with an attendance of about 75 colored men and women. Of course all are not textile workers, there are some there who work as laborars, and the women as servants. It seemed to me that the spirit at these meetings was very good, the workers laughed at our jokes, applauded, etc. About a dozen or so of the white workers came up from Bessemer City to attend these meetings. At the beginning of the meeting the colored workers would stand off at a distance of fifty feet or so, but would gradually draw in closer until at the end of the meeting the black and white workers were standing together. These meetings were held in the evening in the dark. We have not yet held any joint meeting of colored and white workers. We had a plan a couple of weeks ago when we held an entertainment to bring them together; - we invited some colored performers and colored workers give to attend, but neither showed up.

Our great difficulty was thenced of a colored organizer.

Comrade Hall then stayed in harlotte and appeared reluctant to come
down here. Final, after some unsuccessful attempts to get him out here
I went down with a car and brought him to Bessemer City. He is now
staying permanently in Gastonia and are our work is making much
better progress.

Comrade Hall tells us however that he gets no financial support, and we certainly can't afford to finance him from the little we get for the union. There is such a wonderful opportunity here for negro work that it appears to the comrades in the field may very strange that Comrade Hall is not given the support he needs.

When Comrade Weisbord was here he intimated - that is, he said to me personally- that since the colored workers in the Waste Plant worked in a separate plant not connected ith the rest of the mill that they could be organized in a separate local. Our fraction took this up and decided to try to have a joint local.

We have no joint local yet - in fact we have no local at all.

We have a large number of white work rs signed up for that mill

(American #1) but none will some out for a local meeting, nor do
any but ahandful turn out for "mass" meetings. The workers there

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have been very much terrorised by the employers and many have turned against the union because the strike has not yet been won. day before the mill opened up has something to do with this.)

Since Comrade Hall is now in the situation I suppose he will keep you informed of what progress is made. I will continue to give him all cooperation within my power.

Fraternally yours,

Vera Buch.

P.S. Sintend byine Ownall Hell q sersion of the organizate class in Berseiner city & tack on the Soviet aming.