

Shop Nucleus Reorganization

THE following communication on shop nucleus reorganization, a reply to the C. I. letter published several days ago, will be of interest to all members of the Workers Party, making available the experiences gained so far for all units of the party.

To the Executive Committee of the Communist International.

Dear Comrades: Your letter of November 22, 1924, on the matter of shop nuclei has been received. Your letter will be most helpful and we hope it will be followed by additional material and suggestions on organization and experiences in carrying on shop nuclei work in the other Communist Parties.

The plan of organization which you outline is the one which we have been working on and which we hope to carry out in due time.

We are enclosing the thesis on reorganization of the party on the basis of shop nuclei which was unanimously adopted by the central executive committee a number of days before receipt of your letter.

We think that you will find it in thoro harmony with the policy on shop nuclei of the Comintern. We have, as you will note, corrected our errors in conception and organization of shop nuclei as contained in the original resolution on factory nuclei adopted at the second convention of our party in January, 1924. Especially as concerned with language organization, dues payments, etc.

Followed Piatnitzky's Articles.

We have followed Comrade Piatnitzky's articles on shop nuclei organization very closely, especially as outlined in his articles in the Communist International No. 4, English edition, which goes into details on the way to carry out the reorganization.

There is not any disagreement between your outline and ours. Yours is a finished form of organization, that is, when shop nuclei organization has proceeded to a very great extent, while we have had to deal with but the preliminaries of the organization and therefore our immediate and practical approaches are variable, but having the same foundation and form. We are even yet in the propaganda stage in many instances of shop nuclei organization. Not all the party units by far, especially the language organizations, understand the necessity of reorganization on the factory nuclei basis.

We suggest to you that you deal in a special communication on this question in a great part with the role of language groups and members or auxiliaries when the party is a party of shop nuclei. This will no doubt go a long way in getting the language federations more energetically behind the reorganization.

At present we are following the plan of organizing shop nuclei in favorable, yet isolated instances, for the purpose of experience and demonstration of the superiority of shop nuclei over the territorial or geographical form of organization. This is on the basis of information gotten thru the industrial registration. We have organized some shop nuclei in the city of Chicago and in Gary. These are in the needle, printing, machine shop and steel industries. They have not been organized within a particular territory or ward, but from locality in general. These are working out fairly well, despite inexperience, and indicate much promise for the future.

We are enclosing copies of material sent to district organizers on experiences to date in organizing shop nuclei which will explain some of the difficulties thus far in the work and some of the benefits.

Work Will Grow.

It must be understood very clearly that it is not our intention to continue for a very long period the method of organizing shop nuclei in isolated instances and places. When these factory nuclei have, among other things, served the purpose of showing to the party units how much better shop nuclei function, we will be in a better position to apply the more systematic plan of reorganization as outlined in your letter, Piatnitzky's articles and as also adopted by our party.

We shall then also take a special territory or ward and try to reorganize that particular territory or work, or working area on a completely shop nuclei basis.

We are clear, we think, on the function of factory nuclei and local branches. Perhaps the confusion between the functions of the local branches and factory nuclei occurs to you because of our method of organizing the nuclei in isolated places. If so, we trust that we have cleared up this point.

Our reading of your letter gave to us the impression, in fact, that our organizational plan and understanding of functions were in complete harmony with yours.

The city committee is the guide of the activity of the party in its respective locality in every phase of the work. The factory nuclei have authority on all the party matters in their respective factories. The superior party committees have authority over the nuclei as such as well as over the individual party members. We believe our thesis makes this, as well as other points, clear.

We have, of course, not yet reached the stage whereby the leading committee of the city organization is elected by a conference of factory representatives of nuclei. When we have organizations functioning upon a ward or district scale, we shall naturally proceed to organize our leading bodies thru such means, and also the higher bodies.

For purposes of clarification, we might say that uses and meaning of terms may lead occasionally to misunderstanding. For instance, your use of the term "district conference" indicates a territory smaller than a city conference, whereas American usage of the "district conference" means a conference larger than a city one, in fact implies numerous cities. Also in America the term "ward" refers to an election area, whereas, it must now be made clear what we refer in our literature and letters to, is a working area.

In smaller localities, we find that all the subdivisions will not be necessary, especially in the mining territory where only one organizational form, a city committee, for example, may be necessary to direct the work.

Industrial Registration.

We are agreed that the industrial registration of members according to factories is irksome and perhaps superfluous. We are making use of that since we are organizing our nuclei at present as mentioned above, in isolated cases which makes this registration necessary for informational and organizational purposes. When we proceed to organizing nuclei thru the ward method, then the registration method will not be required.

Where we have organized nuclei, such as in Chicago and Gary, the city executive organization directs the work and issues the necessary instructions for the nuclei, tho it cannot of course be said that everything is working as smoothly as would be desired. Our enclosed letters speak of some of those experiences, good as well as bad.

We are especially pleased with your statement that "It is absolutely necessary for all the members of the W. P. working in a particular factory regardless of their language group to which they belong to organize themselves into one and the same nucleus." We have also stressed this point, as you have no doubt noted in our discussion and thesis.

Language Federations.

Also your opinion that the future form and development of language federations and the auxiliary organizations of the party of carrying on propagandist, agitational and cultural tasks, etc., is completely in accord with our conception. You have perhaps seen this in our original draft of the thesis which speaks of language federations being formed into language auxiliaries of the party. With this we have not as yet dealt, except in passing, in our press and thesis, since we felt that our first task is propagandizing of the absolute necessity for factory nuclei reorganization and the commencement of the practical

work. In this way we would be transforming the character of our work and thus, naturally, by developing at the same time the new forms of the party, the shop nuclei, changing the role of the language units. We would like more on this question, since especially in America the problem is quite complex and the party and its federations will require all the advice and experience possible.

We also are pointing out, as you do, that the argument of difficulties of open activities as an argument against factory nuclei is quite the contrary; that that is another good reason for the organization of shop nuclei. America with its oppressive methods, its multitude of factory and governmental spies, certainly makes our branches a thousand times more open to attack than our factory nuclei which can closely scrutinize who enters its ranks and as much as possible prevent the entrance of all kinds of spies. You will perhaps recall that we spoke of this in answering the contributor you refer to in the DAILY WORKER supplement. We are taking, of course, all due precautions to safeguard the shop nuclei.

We might add that some of the difficulties in the shop nuclei work is to make the factory nuclei carry on definite political functions. The tendency is toward swerving off onto almost entirely industrial and shop matters, but we have been making headway in this respect. By continued discussion and practice we find that the nuclei thus far organized are beginning to see that they are political units of the party and function accordingly.

Question of Unemployed.

Another point upon which we would like to get more information is that of the unemployed and factory nuclei. First as to the length of time unemployed are to be attached to their factory nuclei, if there are no immediate signs of returning to work in the same factory. Shall we continue to let them be in the branch long, or to stay in the nuclei to which they belonged until they are employed in another factory and then

transfer them to another shop nucleus. transfer them to another shop nucleus?

Also, we have these situations in America to meet in the needle trades; for example, where we have comrades in nuclei who are unemployed for a month or two months and then return to the same factory. It is very hard to make them realize that they are to continue functioning. They seem to feel that, out of a job, out of the nucleus, whereas, of course, this feeling does not exist in the case of a territorial branch. We point out to the comrades that the question of unemployment is one of the problems to discuss and to meet in the cases of the factory nuclei and to make this an agitational and organizational basis for reaching other fellow workers. We hope to remedy this difficulty, but would appreciate suggestions.

Also we have the case where members of a nucleus working on various floors and one floor is employed and the other is unemployed. This is a variation of the previous question (which is not as difficult of solution, we find).

The party is also now proceeding to organize shop nuclei in southern Illinois in the coal mining territory. The reorganization there is meeting with fine results. We hope to be able to write you soon of practical successes. Also in the case of Pittsburgh steel and coal territory. In Cleveland, too, factory nuclei are being established.

We are in the midst of a party discussion and this in part delays practical reorganization, but it will help to clarify the entire question of shop nuclei. We feel thereby that we shall be able to go ahead much faster with reorganization in many parts of the country on the basis of our thesis just adopted and the policy of the Comintern.

With Communist greetings,

Martin Abern,

Director Shop Nucleus

Reorganization,

Earl R. Browder,

Acting Secretary.

ABRAMOVITCH GETS INTO TROUBLE

By JOSEPH BRAHDY.

NEW YORK, Jan. 23.—And now the yellow "socialist" international has sent its emissary to America.

Abramovich stood on the platform in the New Star Casino, New York City, last Sunday waving copies of the "Emes" and the "Pravda" at an incredulous audience and shouting "I prove to you from the Bolshevik press what I am saying." He never read a line from those papers.

Pulls Old Joke.

"The Bolsheviks accomplished the peasant revolution, I admit," he shouted; the audience applauded "but they didn't do it according to Marx." He really said that in the best stupid fashion of the swivel chair philosopher. Tho an old joke the audience acknowledged their pleasure at hearing it again. "The trouble with the Bolsheviks is that they only put into effect the theories of the peasant leaders Stankernazin and Pugatchoff." So the Bolsheviks were too slow for him he said; but they also were too fast for him because Russia wasn't "ripe" for the revolution.

There was several million dollars' worth of "socialists" on the platform, Hillquit, Panken, Vladek, etc.; socialists of smaller denomination, members of the "organization departments" and "entertainment committees" of certain unions were liberally sprinkled thru the audience.

They were auctioning off socialism. Vladek, Hillquit, Oneal were standing on the platform flapping their arms and crying "Order, please. There are only ten disturbers in the hall, don't mind." Later they said there might be as many as 200, but that that was alright, too. They'd be taken care of. As a matter of fact, there were really 2000 "disturbers" there, out of an audience of 3000.

They pleaded with the sympathizers

of Soviet Russia who were in the crowd. "You can applaud whenever you like," they said. The various chairmen, vice-chairmen and super-chairmen took their turn. Finally Hillquit said, "Comrade Abramovitch can take care of any interjection; don't throw them out." But of course, Comrade Abramovitch could do nothing of the kind.

Then the cheka of the S. P. was led into action by his honor, Comrade Judge Panken. "Leave the aisles, committeemen; police, take your post in the aisles." And in the very best socialist fashion every one could see the united front between the millionaire-socialist-lawyers and the Tammany Hall bluecoats. "Here, here, there," the committee men pointed them out and the policemen threw them out, and beat them up, while some of the protesting comrades were carved up by the union gangsters.

When Abramovitch mentioned anything pertaining to the yellow international, the audience booed; when he referred to the Communist International, they applauded vigorously. So he had to talk carefully in between these two; a contradictory, colorless, classless, aimless talk, worthy of the best traditions of the Second International.

One serious mistake he committed. He challenged the Communists. He the compatriot of Noske, Scheidemann, Ebert, Kerensky, is challenging the comrades of Liebknecht, Luxemburg and Lenin.

Abramovitch, we accept your challenge.

"Ido for Workers" (Textbook in German or Russian).....50c
"An Elementary Grammar" (In English).....15c

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