

SHOP NUCLEUS FINDS HEARTY WELCOME AND FERTILE FIELD WITH WESTINGHOUSE WORKERS

By ARNE SWABECK.

PITTSBURGH, Pa., April 28.—In a forceful and effective manner the Workers Party shop nucleus, recently organized in the Pittsburgh district Westinghouse plants, made its appearance to the workers of this modern institution of exploitation thru the publication of the first of its factory paper. It was very favorably received by the workers, because it gave expression of their grievances and aspirations.

One thousand copies of this first issue were distributed to the workers gathering in front of the East Pittsburgh plant during lunch hour, Wednesday, April 22.

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SHOP NUCLEUS GETS WELCOME IN PITTSBURGH

Fertile Field Among the Westinghouse Workers

(Continued from page 1)

The first article on the front page, tersely analyzing the cunning attempts made by the management to institute new wage cuts in the most painless manner, immediately attracted the attention of the workers. Said one of them: "Yes, that is precisely what they are doing, but I'll say if they cut my wages any further there will be nothing left."

Workers Treasure Every Copy.

Others gathered eagerly around the distributors, asking for a few extra copies, if they could be spared, which they intended to give to their fellow workers who were inside the plant. One asked for two extra copies and when being handed a few said, "Please don't waste, it is too good for that, I want no more than I can take care of." Another worker asked for twelve copies saying he knew that many workers inside whom he wanted to read the paper.

Wide distribution was made that same day among these workers of a circular announcing an exhibition by the Westinghouse Technical Night School. But after the whistle blew and the workers had returned to their benches, the street was practically littered with these latter circulars while one office employe, who came out, had to search long and wide before he could find one copy of the shop nucleus factory paper thrown aside which he picked up, carefully brushed off, and placed in his pocket.

Unquestionably the workers recognized in that paper not only an expression of their own sentiment towards the grievous conditions obtaining in the plant but also a guidance and a helper in their struggles. They recognized that as their own paper.

Short and Snappy Articles.

It contained articles, short and snappy, exposing the dope peddled by the factory management of mutual relations and common interests of capital and labor, by reiterating some of the practical experiences of the workers whenever they had attempted to improve their own material well being.

It exposed the so-called joint conference committees, composed jointly of workers and the management, as a tool in the hands of the bosses to help keep the workers contented despite the wage cuts, the speed-up system and the driving foremen.

It introduced the Workers Party as the only party fighting for the interests of the working class. All given in simple terms written by class conscious workers, members of the Workers (Communist) Party, who toil alongside of the other workers in the factory, understand their grievances, feel with them the intensity of the capitalist exploitation and are ready to help give leadership to their struggles for a better day.

Past Struggles.

In 1914 the Westinghouse workers attempted to organize into a union and went on strike when the company discharged their elected committeemen. In 1916 the machinists put on a drive for the eight-hour day and set May first as the date for striking to enforce this demand. A new independent union arose just prior to the strike, seemingly created to break down the force of the drive.

The company thru these experiences learned an important lesson. It

THE UNHOLY ALLIANCE—UNION OFFICIALS AND BOSSES—WORKS EVEN IN CEDAR RAPIDS, IOWA

By TOM MATTHEWS.

In the out-of-way corners of the nation, where small business still enjoys a foothold, even here we find the self-styled "labor leaders" rushing to the defense of the bosses' system and government whenever any real or imagined attack threatens the social structure.

So when Comrades Snyder and Matthews arranged to hold a meeting at the Labor Temple, Cedar Rapids, Iowa, they found that even there the poison of class co-operation is having its effect.

Cedar Rapids labor suffers from a disastrous condition of company-unionism among the workers employed in the packing house, railroad shops, and other industries. Yet when the Workers Party endeavors to point out to these unorganized workers the necessity for unity against the bosses, who raises the cry of "Unpatriotic" against us

The "labor leaders"!

When the majority of packing house workers, unorganized and underpaid, avoid our meetings for fear of the blacklist, who exults over this suppression?

The "labor leaders"!

When the anti-labor daily press runs its diatribes against the Communists (the same sort of attacks it leveled even at Brookhart), who is it that seconds these attacks with shouts of approval?

The "labor leaders"!

The "labor leaders" of Cedar Rapids are opposed to any and all attempts to better the lot of the unskilled workers in their community, just as they oppose any education or solidarity in their own ranks.

That is why such "leaders" in Cedar Rapids and elsewhere, both kluxers and catholics, unite to bar the Workers Party militants from their labor temples, which the rank and file have paid for.

The Bosses' Tools.

Such labor leaders are representative of that aristocratic upper crust of "skilled workers" who work at their trades only when scarcity of political pickings compels them to do so.

Such "leaders" are first of all democrats or republicans, catholics or klansmen. To them the labor movement is only incidental, just a pawn which they willingly trade for anything from an insignia of a secret order to a petty political office.

They are bitterly opposed to the Communists because we recognize only the class struggle, because we uphold the workers' interests at all times regardless of skill, creed, color or craft.

The following conversation with one of these "leaders" is typical of their attitude:

Writer—Is our hall ready?

Labor Leader—What hall?

W.—The one rented by myself for a lecture under the auspices of the Workers Party?

L. L.—Are you the fellows who held that meeting last night? (He had read the capitalist press account.)

introduced the system of "workers' representation" on joint conference committees, which is now being so effectively used as a weapon to prevent organization and keep the workers in submission.

The joint conference committees are now being utilized to help maintain and regulate the existing speed-up system called the "standard time" system. It provides two hourly rates and sets a certain time limit for the production of each piece. If the worker is sufficiently fast to finish the product in less time than the limit set he gets paid by the higher hourly rate not only for the time actually used up but for the total of the time limit set. If he cannot reduce the time limit he receives the lower rate.

Wage Cuts by Speed Up and Piece Work.

Needless to say whenever the company finds it possible for the workers

W.—Yes, we held a meeting last night. We also engaged a hall from your custodian for a meeting here this evening.

L. L.—We don't want any of you fellows meeting here. Wasn't your meeting last night a failure?

W.—Certainly the meeting was a failure, if you look at it that way, because it was held for packing house workers, my own craft.

L. L.—There's no organization of butchers here.

W.—Quite right. That's why we thought it high time that a meeting be called for their benefit.

L. L. (flustered)—Well, I don't know anything about your renting a hall, and whoever rented it to you had no authority to do so.

(The custodian, under pressure, deliberately lied as his part of the conspiracy to bar us.)

W.—A contract apparently doesn't mean much against capitalist newspaper lies.

L. L.—I don't know anything about it. (Walks away, beaten in his own conscience, if he has one.)

Cowardice of Leaders.

The above conversation shows not only the crookedness, but also the cowardice which has permeated the leadership of the organized labor movement in this country. Such leadership is weakening the labor organizations with every day that passes. Such leadership is speeding the growth of the company unions, which already number over a million workers in their ranks.

The Workers Party will meet the attack of these leaders at every point. Where we cannot meet them openly, we must devise ways and means by which we can reach the rank and file despite resistance of this nature.

The Workers Party in Iowa is just beginning to feel the blows of the enemy. We have worked quietly thru-out the state, laying the foundations of a powerful statewide organization in the basic industries. The labor misleaders have just awakened to the fact that we have succeeded in building our movement in Iowa, and so they are rallying their forces for the attack. Because we have selected our forces with care, their attack will fail.

to reduce the time limit and gain the higher rate it introduces some new changes in operation and comes out on top again. One department employing mostly young girls has seen several changes of operation, the sum total of which has amounted to an actual wage cut of 75 per cent.

Grievances in the Westinghouse plants are plenty and the workers have little or no means of expression. It is a rich field for an active party shop nucleus and the reception given by the workers seems favorable indeed.

Difficulties are plenty in the way of this young shop nucleus. Some of the comrades who have not sufficiently recognized the significance of the slogan "to the masses" and "become a party of the masses," are too much dominated by the fear of reprisals by the company, the fear of losing their job, and they become sluggish in carrying out the tasks of the nucleus.

Of course, American labor history shows plenty of instances of ruthless reprisals by the employers, but then, that is a condition which exists, and Communists must find the means of overcoming such obstacles. The work must be so organized that reprisals become impossible or any attempt ineffective. That is the basis upon which the Westinghouse shop nucleus is striving to carry on its work.

Slowly the members will learn how to carry out the manifold functions of a shop nucleus and crystallize the splendid reception given by the workers to the first issue of its paper into a compact force, an integral part of the proletarian revolution. The first steps have been taken.

Genuine Work.

An editorial committee is at work gathering material for publicity to turn over to the editor. Some comrades are beginning to specialize on certain fields, such as studying the various grievances of the workers, starting with the most elementary ones, and finding practical solutions to propose, giving special study to the character and detailed functions of the so-called joint conference committee and how to propose in its place real workers' shop committees on a practical basis, establish the proper connections between the various departments and with the many different nationalities of workers and bring them into closer touch with party literature, etc.

This first little experience by the Westinghouse shop nucleus has helped convince the comrades that they are now starting at the right basis—the place of work and the place of the struggles of the workers.

DETROIT COMMUNIST

MAY DAY MEETING

FRIDAY, MAY 1st, 8 P.M.

to be held at

THE HOUSE OF THE MASSES

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J. W. JOHNSTONE

Assistant National Secretary and National Organizer of the Trade Union Educational League

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