

The Shop Nuclei Branch

By Martin Abern

The relation of the shop nucleus to the territorial branch was taken up in a previous article. The relation between the shop nucleus and the shop nuclei branch is herein briefly touched. This second form is a good deal different and works much more simply and effectively.

The shop nuclei branch is one made up of the shop nuclei existing within a given territory. Naturally, then, both in the shop nucleus and the shop nuclei branch, the members have full powers on all matters.

The branch executive committee of a shop nuclei branch is composed of members elected from the various shop nuclei or at a general shop nuclei branch membership meeting. Sometimes in a shop nuclei branch, there will be members not yet attached to a particular shop nucleus. The branch, in such instances, takes care that there are members on the branch executive committee from every shop nucleus in the branch.

If the shop nucleus members were all attached to a definite shop nucleus then, of course, only work-shop members would be on the shop nucleus branch committee. But there will naturally be party and other workers, very active comrades, etc. not belonging to a particular shop nucleus. They are likely to be wanted and elected on committees. And it is correct that these live-wire comrades shall be placed at the disposal of the shop nuclei. To make certain, however, that members of the shop nucleus proper, that is, those who actually work in the shop, are on the main committees, there is the provision that every shop nucleus shall have its delegate on the shop nuclei branch committee.

Shop Nuclei Branch Survives Work of Nuclei

It is the duty of the shop nuclei branch to lay out and direct the work in the branch and in the various shop nuclei.

The branch or its committee takes up mainly the ways of developing the work of the nuclei. The activity of a shop branch is but the activity of a shop nucleus enlarged and continued. Its work is not different from that of a nucleus. Rather, gathering the experiences of the various nuclei, it makes use of such information to help concretely the work of each of the nuclei.

The work of the shop nuclei branch is both general and specific. It is general in the work laid out for the party shop nuclei branch in a certain locality, unions, etc. It is specific in the work planned out for each nucleus and, if possible, its members.

The branch committee assigns its members to meet with the shop nucleus, to participate actively in the shop nucleus work. This aids in coordinating the work of the nucleus and the branch and developing the activity of the individual members.

The shop branch, or its committee, takes up the general political, educational, economic, trade union and other work in the branch and nuclei. It arranges for public propaganda and educational meetings in order to

attract other elements. Its organizes study classes; it discusses the trade union problems of the nuclei members and the workers, the development of shop committee work. It lends aid to weak nuclei in arranging meetings for the workers. It puts forward a program for the systematic political development and education of the members. The branch aims at the proper training of functionaries, officials, propagandists, etc. The branch distributes the party literature, official organ, the DAILY WORKER, and other information received from higher committees, to the shop nuclei. It receives a share of the dues and other moneys from the nuclei to carry on its work. It institutes the organization of other nuclei and organizes membership campaigns.

The shop nuclei branch, briefly, then, supplements on a larger basis the work and program of the nuclei and the individual members. To make the nuclei members work and to direct that work in every possible field for Communist activity—that is the main function of the shop branch. It is no easy task for it is making the Communist revolution.

Shop Branch Must Get Accurate Knowledge of Working Conditions

The nuclei members must collect data on every matter connected with the work in the shop. All information should be collected for use in their propaganda. Detailed knowledge must be got of the local industrial conditions. The shop branch and the nuclei can lay out work for the individual members in the shop or territory, such as distributing literature, visiting prospective members, trade union work, etc. The more real knowledge of facts and how to use them, the more productive the work. Members should write up notes of their experiences for the benefit of the others. Wall bulletins can serve to this end.

Forward to Shop Nuclei!

These few lines indicate but the outlines of the work, both in the period of transition to shop nuclei and the time when the ideal form, the shop nuclei branch, is developed. It is going to take a long time before the shop nuclei branch becomes commonly prevalent in the Workers Party of America. But we must know what we are aiming for, organizationally

and politically. Hence these lines. Meanwhile, we must take up the immediate steps toward reorganization.

In America we have no shop nuclei experiences of the party; the Young Workers League has had some, but the organizational problem is so much different that the league's experiences in the initial stages cannot help the party very much except in an inspirational way. The party must build its own road. That means to try organization in the most favorable places. The party is laying out a program for that purpose. The various activities of a shop nucleus, such as shop committee work, union activity, literature, finance, and many more matters must be dealt with in detail. However, it will be trying to ORGANIZE SHOP NUCLEI, no matter how difficult, that will give us a clear picture and understanding, instead of a mere formula, of the undoubted superiority of the shop nuclei over the present territorial branch. Then, as in every other country, the membership will enthusiastically respond to the work of making the WORKERS PARTY A PARTY OF SHOP NUCLEI!

Forward to shop nuclei!

Solovetzky, the "Red Hell"

By LUDWIG MAGYAR.

The delegation of menshevik and social-counter-revolutionary emigres have recently instituted a great campaign against the Soviet Union. They wish to arouse the public opinion of the working class and of the bourgeoisie against the Soviet power and, as a pretext, they make use of the alleged heart-rending, terrible fate of political prisoners in the Soviet Union. They are supplying the parties of the Second International with propaganda material on this question and these cronies of the Russian mensheviks are, in the French chamber of deputies and in the columns of the "Vorwärts" and the Vienna "Arbeiterzeitung" shedding crocodile's tears over the martyred, tortured Russian socialists, who—alas!—are languishing in the terrible dungeons of the Tcheka, and are being shot several times every day. The social-counter-revolutionary Suchomlinov is pestering comrades Anatole France and Severin with tedious letters of complaint, while the London and Amsterdam Internationals issue appeals and protests. The anti-Soviet campaign is in full swing. Let us examine the facts a little more closely.

How many political prisoners are there in the Soviet Union? We will not make comparisons. We will not point out how many revolutionary workers and peasants the Bulgarian social democrats, as members of the murderous Zankoff government, have caused to be slaughtered. We will not ask why the social democrats in the Bavarian diet voted against an amnesty for the Niederschönenfeld prisoners. We do not ask how it comes about that, with the consent of

This number includes menshevik, social-counter-revolutionaries, anarchists, monarchists, fascists and all enemies of the proletarian revolution, whatever they may choose to call themselves.

How are the political prisoners treated? What life do they lead in the "Red Hell" as the appeals of the mensheviks so "mildly" describe it.

On the Solovetzky Peninsula, where "the bolsheviks, these hangmen of innocent socialists, act with the greatest cruelty," and over which the greatest outcry has been raised, the political prisoners have complete self-administration. They have absolute freedom of movement the whole day, and the system prevailing in Solovetzky is the wish and the demand of all political prisoners in Russia. Wassiliev, a member of the central bureau of the mensheviks, who is confined at the Susdal camp, proposed to the political prisoners in Susdal to commence a struggle for the improvement of the prison regulations.

"Our general demand is clear: We want the system obtaining in Solovetzky be introduced in Susdal," he writes to one of his comrades.

And the brother of Martov, Zederbaum-Levitzky, stated, that the demand for the introduction of the Solovetzky system was a too far-reaching demand. "This demand can only be regarded as a maximum aim," he writes.

And this is how all prisoners in Susdal write. Their slogan is: The Solovetzky regime in Susdal.

The administration at Solovetzky have allowed the members of the prisoners' families who visit them, to live with the prisoners a whole week. Nowhere in the world do prisoners enjoy such privileges. It is easily understood that this regime is desired by the prisoners in other places. Com-

this is the picture furnished by the "Red Hell."

The prison group of the Georgian mensheviks writes to Wassiliev, member of the central bureau of the mensheviks:

"Regarding the general regime we can only repeat that nobody can consider it a crying evil. If in reply to our hunger-strike there would be admitted, to investigate the conditions, an anti-soviet minded commission, even including European socialists, they would only be able to report that the Soviet system and its justice are not the pleasantest institutions, but that there is nothing to complain about regarding the prison regime in Susdal."

In Susdal therefore the prison regime is quite satisfactory. In Solovetzky it is still better and therefore, prisoners at the former wish to obtain the Solovetzky regime.

We could publish hundreds of quotations from, or facsimiles of such letters.

There are therefore only five hundred prisoners in the Soviet Union. These are given humane treatment, as the prison regulations in the Soviet Union are of a remarkably mild character. The prisoners themselves recognize that even the sworn enemies of the Soviet power would have to admit them to be thoroughly satisfactory. And the mensheviks and the social counter-revolutionaries in emigration, who during the civil war have rivalled the bands of Kolchak and Denikin in acts of bestial cruelty, work up a spurious indignation over this regime. And the heroes of the Second International, who persecute revolutionary workers, issue appeals, pass resolutions of protest and relate lying stories to the workers as to the "Red Hell."