

# THE PARTY BUILDER

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## TRADE UNION REPORT

(Plenum, May 12-14, 1945)

By M. Stein

We placed the trade union question at the top of the agenda for this Plenum. We have done this because the trade union question is once more acquiring primary importance for our party.

The trade union question has more real meaning to us today than it ever had before. It has more meaning not merely because of the more favorable objective situation, but because our forces in the unions have grown, our political influence is stronger.

After the outbreak of this war we knew that revolutionists would find it extremely difficult to hold on to important trade union posts. We knew that the government and the trade union bureaucracy, completely subordinated to the government -- would bring all their power to bear on the crushing of any opposition, to their regimentation of the unions.

Our Minneapolis experience provided the proof for anyone who needed proof. After Minneapolis we had other evidence that caution was the better part of wisdom. We had such experiences in Buffalo and other places. Our decision for caution in the unions represented the unanimous opinion of the party leadership, and it wasn't long before the party membership as a whole became convinced of the correctness of this decision. But caution never meant inactivity as some tried to interpret it. On the contrary, we utilized this period for intensified political activity in the plants. This work brought us great dividends.

Our campaigns around the Minneapolis case, our Militant subscription campaigns, gained us many new recruits. They came primarily from among the trade union militants. And today, with the change in the objective situation, with the end of the war in Europe, and the militancy of the workers growing we find ourselves with substantial forces who will play an important role in the coming struggles in the trade union arena.

Many of our comrades are even today leaders in their plants, and many of them, even though recent recruits, are men of great ability, wielding substantial influence in their unions.

We published in advance of this Plenum the P.C. Memorandum on Trade Union Policy, together with a number of comments on the Memorandum. This should prove helpful in the discussion here. I hope you had a chance to read this material, to reflect on it, to formulate

opinions. I am especially glad that criticisms were put down in writing. We are thus able to deal with them from the outset. This will help us clarify our own viewpoint and bring out in bolder relief the important problem of our perspectives and tasks in the trade unions.

My report may appear somewhat polemical. I want you, comrades to understand that it is because in refuting the critics, I hope to bring out my own views more clearly.

The articles of Comrades Goldman, Williams and Winters are confined to a criticism of our past conduct. This is important, of course. But only if the criticism is correct and could teach us something for the future. I propose to demonstrate that this is not the case, that the criticism is largely sterile.

Comrade Goldman, and by some coincidence, also Williams and Winters, accuse us of tail-ending, or as the Russians would call it, "chvostism". The proposals contained in the Memorandum, according to these comrades, should have been made earlier. For argument sake let us grant that the Memorandum is belated -- that this or a similar document should have been presented at the last convention, or perhaps even earlier. Does this prove that we were tail-ending? As far as I can see, it would only prove literary tail-ending. It would prove that we lagged in recording on paper those changes in the objective situation which necessitated a change in tactics. But does this prove that we tail-ended in real life -- that we tail-ended in our trade union work? Not at all! To prove this, these comrades would have to adduce examples from life. They would have to show where, in what industry, in what trade union situation we were not alert to the real possibilities offered us by the situation. They would have to name the fractions and the places guilty of tail-ending.

Let Goldman and Winters concretize their criticism so we can really have a fruitful discussion. The truth is always concrete. Where is the concrete situation in which we have been tail-ending? Was it in the UAW? And where are the guilty comrades? Are they in Detroit? In Toledo? In Buffalo? In Chicago? But our comrades in the UAW tell us that they were the spear-head in the organization of the "rank and file" caucus which took shape at the UAW convention last September prior to our party convention.

Where, tell us please, have we been tail-ending? Was it in the United Rubber Workers' Union? As far back as October 1944 we had an exchange of correspondence with Comrade Andrews. The essence of the Memorandum now before the Plenum was outlined in the letters seven months ago, and he has been proceeding along these lines.

Were we tail-ending in the shipyards in Bayonne? If anyone said this our Bayonne comrades would stand up and denounce it as a slander.

I repeat: Where, in what situation have we been guilty of tail-ending? Give us a bill of particulars.

The truth is I am being unfair to Goldman. For him to give us a bill of particulars would require an intimate knowledge of our trade union work -- a knowledge he does not possess, I can't blame him for it. Sandstone is hardly the best vantage point for observing our trade union activity. But is it any fairer on his part to plunge into a polemic on this matter not having a full view of the trade union picture?

I always thought that legal training teaches a man to get at the bottom of a case. Imagine a defense lawyer -- or a prosecutor, which is more correct in this case -- appearing in the courtroom without a bill of particulars, without a clear knowledge of the case he is presenting? Such a prosecutor would be laughed out of court, wouldn't he? His case wouldn't even get a hearing.

It appears that facts are not of much consequence when Goldman presents a case for the judgment of the party. Before he wrote his article for the Party Builder I handed him a sheaf of correspondence from the field with comments on the trade union Memorandum. I don't believe he even looked at it. He read the Bayonne pre-convention discussion article, and evidently with this as his source he was ready without hesitation, to conclude that we were tail-ending. Why does Goldman take the word of Comrade Winters as against all the other comrades? Especially when Winters himself admits that he is not familiar with the picture of the party trade union work nationally. If Goldman had at least half an eye or half an ear for the party field workers, if he had some regard for their reports and opinions he might have arrived at a balanced judgment.

If Winters listened more attentively to the reports made by our fractions at the last convention, he wouldn't be complaining today about lack of information. If he listened and learned at the last convention he would not present us today the Bayonne trade union experiences as the model for our other fractions. We have a number of far better models in Detroit, Toledo, Buffalo, Chicago and other places. The Toledo branch, for example, increased its membership almost four-fold in a little over a year; they have well functioning fractions in the important plants.

I could go on and elaborate on the work of the various fractions in the various localities. But I will leave this to the speakers to follow. I would advise Comrade Winters to pay more attention this time. The convention seems to have had no effect on him. But this wasn't the convention's fault, it was his own.

Objective truth demands that I take up at least some of the contentions of the Bayonne comrades in detail. In their article they refer to a letter they sent the P.C. in February 1944. In that letter they say that they "saw a do-nothing policy being followed by the party in most trade union situations and to remedy this" they say that they "proposed a conference of trade union activists to study the new developments and to work out a new tactical program." I take it that they are reporting the essence of that letter correctly. I have no way of checking because that letter is not in our possession. It was withdrawn by these same comrades. I received the letter and following that a visit from Comrades Winters and Williams. They came to the

National Office to discuss the contents of this letter.

I told them then it was obvious from the letter that they didn't know what work the party nationally was doing in the trade unions and that they misunderstood our policy. I gave them a picture of activities in various localities. From all indications, they were impressed. They decided then and there to withdraw the letter. All they asked was that the National Office send a speaker who would give their branch a picture of the party's trade union work just as I had done in my conversation with them. Comrades Art Preis and Grant went to Bayonne with such a report.

They now claim that "we rejected", their proposal for a national conference of trade union activists, and when they proposed a trade union discussion bulletin this too, was "rejected". But the truth is that their proposals never came up for consideration. After that discussion Winters and Williams withdrew the proposals together with the letter. What was withdrawn couldn't be "rejected".

There is yet another point I wish to make in this connection: the Bayonne comrades say that we "rejected" their proposal for a trade union discussion bulletin "for security reasons". They put quotation marks around security reasons. I can't understand why they use this term and why they put quotes around it. It couldn't be a direct quote. We never used this terminology. It is the war terminology of the imperialists with which they cover up their press censorship and suppression of free speech. The impression created is that we resort to the same fake arguments. Is this their intent? Now, why did we prevail on Winters and Williams to withdraw their letter and their proposals?

In a letter discussing the question of party regime Comrade Trotsky remarked "the maturity of each member of the party expresses itself particularly in the fact that he does not demand from the party regime more than it can give."

The letter of February 1944 and the proposals of these comrades demanded more than we could give at that time. Let us recall for a moment the situation in February 1944. They came with proposals for a national conference or a trade union discussion bulletin one month after the imprisonment of the 18. I have had occasion to speak of this before, but I must repeat it here because it doesn't seem to register with some comrades. At the time of the imprisonment we did not know and couldn't possibly know whether the government would confine itself at the time to this severe blow at the party, or whether there would be more similar blows descending on us. There were several indications justifying apprehensions that there would be more repressions against us. Let me recall in addition that the substitute leadership had only been in office for a month, or so, and hardly had time to pick up the various threads of party activity. Remember also that the same comrade who was the Acting National Secretary, was also the Acting Labor Secretary and that all of the other party departments similarly had to function shorthanded. Add all this up and you will understand why Winters and Williams, when confronted with these arguments in February 1944, withdrew their proposals.

But why do they forget all this in retrospect? What was true then should be true also today. If the comrades wish to refer to the past, let them refer to all of it, let them give us the whole picture, not one corner.

These comrades seem to have a convenient memory. They remember their own arguments, but they forget the arguments of others even though these arguments appeared to them at the time weighty enough to accept. We had the same display at the convention. What happened essentially was the following: In their great anxiety to "activize" the party trade unionists, they overlooked one simple detail, that our party trade unionists have been active, that they have been doing splendid work and in most cases they were far ahead of Bayonne. The convention delegates made it a point to demonstrate this fact to Comrade Winters and the other Bayonne comrades. Here again the Bayonne comrades who brag about having "thick skin," in reality show super sensitivity to a fillip on the nose they received from the convention delegates. It is quite possible that some of the comrades who spoke at the convention went to some excesses but none of these excesses compare to those of the Bayonne comrades.

The criticisms of the Memorandum made by the Bayonne comrades show in addition a trait that is peculiar to scholastics. They quote a word here and there out of context and make this word the point of a polemic. They quote for example, a phrase in the Memorandum which says: "our cautious methods were dictated by the situation that existed until recently . . ." then they seize hold of the word "recently" this, you see, is ambiguous. They would like us to set a specific date. In bookkeeping there is such a thing as a fiscal year, an arbitrarily set date when the balance sheet for one period is drawn and a new set of entries started. We do not have any such fiscal years in our trade union work.

In the living movement we can speak of dates only in conjunction with great events that leave their indelible imprint on history.

The P.C. Memorandum is not pegged to any such date. If we should indulge in the idle pastime of setting precise dates, we would find that even the Bayonne comrades and Goldman who apparently see eye to eye on this and other questions don't agree among themselves. Goldman said we should have had a change of line at the convention, i.e. last November. The Bayonne comrades go all the way back to February 1944. Which should it be -- February or November? After all there is a difference here of nine months.

The proposals presented in the Memorandum did not come to me like a revelation on a given date. For a long time I have been aware, just as the party leadership nationally has been aware of the changing situation. We have done this to one degree or another wherever we have forces in the unions. We have done it not only since our last convention, but even prior to our last convention. The Memorandum reflects in summary the generalization of our work done in reorienting the party in one industry after another.

If the Memorandum was intended as a guide to our press agitation, I would readily admit that it comes late in recognizing the

growing restiveness of the workers. But our press, we are told by the Bayonne comrades, followed a correct line. I take it to mean that it reflected correctly the changing moods of the masses and advanced the proper slogans. If we accept this proposition, if we recognize that we have estimated correctly the objective situation long before this Memorandum, then why were we late in producing it?

The answer is a simple one. The Memorandum makes no pretense at originality in the estimate of the objective situation. It merely records what all of us have known for some time. What is new in it, is the generalization and the proposal for a bold, aggressive campaign directed by the center, the object of which is the crystallization of a left wing in the unions. When we presented the Memorandum to the P.C. we knew that the war was coming to an end in Europe. This is now a reality. What we have done in stepping up our tempo in some unions, we feel can be safely generalized as a national policy. There are other contributing factors in the timing of the Memorandum.

The objective situation is nothing more than raw material. The party is the machine that must be set into motion to produce the product. It is this machine which wasn't quite ready. Its productive capacity was claimed by other more urgent tasks. People who have no eye and no feel for party organization, may find it difficult to understand this. But I'll try to explain it.

The magnificent campaign the party carried out in mobilizing support against the imprisonment of its leaders did not come easy. It wasn't done merely through articles and speeches. It required the maximum mobilization of the party's energy, its concentration for this specific task.

We are great believers in the campaign method. In the method of concentrated effort for the achievement of the main task at hand. This method has proved its worth and we are determined to continue it. But this method also means that secondary tasks are often neglected.

There is yet another element in the timing of the Memorandum. We speak in the Memorandum of the need for centralized planning and direction of our union work. This requires the personnel -- someone who would make this his primary job. We have the person who is eminently qualified but who, through no fault of his own, wasn't available until now. I am of course referring to Vincent. If what was involved was merely a literary turn such a thing as personnel would not matter. But when there is a job to be done manpower is decisive, especially when the job requires great skill and special qualification.

We have so far demonstrated that our critics are (1) unaware of the party's position in the trade unions, of its work and its influence and (2) they don't understand organization and campaign methods of functioning. But there is yet another flaw in their reasoning. They fail to grasp the real meaning of our proposals. They tell us, for example, that the Memorandum has no real application in Bayonne. They, you see, are way ahead of us. No, comrades, we are not satisfied with the work in Bayonne nor anywhere else, not even with the so-called rank-and-file caucus in the UAW. This is the real

meaning of the Memorandum. The outline of party objectives in the trade unions as presented by Winters and Williams is yet another indication that they do not comprehend our perspectives and tasks in the unions. Permit me to outline briefly what we are aiming at.

In the Memorandum we are projecting the perspective for the building of a trade union left wing, supplying it leadership and direction. This is a tremendous enterprise requiring long persistent and patient work. Our objective will not be realized through such hot-house formations as the "rank-and-file" caucus in the UAW which represents in reality a block of various political groupings with no mass base. Included in this block are the Shachtmanites, the Oehlerites, the S.P. and ourselves. But where are the masses? Where are those countless militants who have shown great fighting capacity and who are as a result in conflict with the union bureaucracy? They are not there. But they are the ones we must reach -- they are the ones who will determine our success or failure.

Comrade Goldman presents a motion that, "The party should formally propose to the Workers' Party the formation of a bloc between the members of both parties, working together in the same unions, for the purpose of building left wing organizations on the trade union field."

This proposal would mean in reality that we take the UAW "rank and file" caucus as our model for the building of the left wing, he narrows this down for some reason by excluding the Oehlerites and the S.P.

Goldman's proposal could only be motivated by political considerations. For example: when we were oriented towards fusion with the Muste group in 1934 one of our steps in that direction was the formation of a bloc with them in the trade unions. I don't believe this is the party's perspective in relation to the Shachtmanites. We have functioned with their members in various groupings in the unions, I may add we found them quite troublesome. They aren't in the unions for their health and neither are we. We are trying to recruit for our party, they for their own. There is consequently a conflict of interests, regardless of trade union program.

We and the Musteites formed a bloc at a time when the conflict of party interests was disappearing. We were heading towards a fusion of the two organizations. Therefore, what is involved is the question of political perspective. I will state mine -- let Goldman give his.

In my report at the last convention I referred to the main stages in the development of our party. Comrade Cannon explained this elaborately in his book, "The History of American Trotskyism". All these stages in the history of our movement, the five years of our existence as a faction of the C.P., the merger with the AWP, the entry into the S.P., were in reality preparatory stages for the next task: that of grappling with the trade union bureaucracy. Our party will grow, will develop, in the struggle we wage against this imperialist minded bureaucracy. We wage this struggle in the name of the masses and in order to attract them to our side. So far we have

succeeded in assembling a revolutionary cadre, in hardening this cadre, in disciplining its members, in hammering out a program and clear objectives. We have succeeded in establishing our superiority over centrist pretenders. Trotskyism is today the recognized revolutionary force. These are all notable achievements, but the real struggles are yet to come.

If I were asked what was the main lever which lifted our movement to the position it occupies today I would answer without hesitation; Minneapolis! The role Minneapolis played in our movement has been recorded only in part, it was recorded by Cannon in the chapters on the great strike struggles. He recorded the effect these struggles had on fusion with the AWP and on our entry into the S.P. Minneapolis demonstrated that the Trotskyists are not mere theorists; they are men of action, men who know how to organize workers and lead them in successful struggles.

When the powerful bureaucracy of the Teamsters Union and the mighty government machine opened their blitzkrieg against our Minneapolis fortress they could destroy it only partially. Yes, Tobin's goons forced the truck drivers to sign up with his union; the government imprisoned the leaders of the union and of our party; but they failed because Minneapolis had already made its great contribution to our party nationally.

As I pointed out in my convention report, Minneapolis symbolized our party banner, it was under this banner that we made our gains since the imprisonment. I mention all this to indicate the real meaning of Bolshevik trade union work. If we want a model for trade union activity, then this is our model. It should be carefully studied and all its lessons properly absorbed. Our party can become the revolutionary party of the American workers only if we learn how to repeat the Minneapolis experiences. If we learn how to multiply these experiences.

We knew we couldn't do this during the years of war-time reaction. For this reason we did not try to do it. We directed our activities into other, more profitable channels and set ourselves only limited objectives in the trade unions. This was in brief the meaning of our "caution".

I will now proceed to the question of perspectives: the harnessing of the unions to the state, which is indispensable to capitalism in decay, was accelerated immeasurably during the war. The unions have become the agencies of the imperialist state charged with the special task of policing the workers. The trade union bureaucracy, doing the bidding of their capitalist masters, have incurred the hatred of the best militants in the unions. The militants in conflict with their employers invariably found their own officialdom lined up against them. This has led to a sharp antagonism between the bureaucrats and the ranks.

It is this sharpening of the antagonisms between the local militants and the top bureaucrats which presents us with our opportunities. Having become more and more dependent on the government, the trade union bureaucrats are now attempting to continue their police

role into the "post war" period. This can only sharpen the conflict in the unions.

Even with the pressure of the war favoring them, their success was not complete. The number of militants who have taken up the demand for the freeing of the unions from the grip of the state, is growing.

Our party fractions are in contact with a good section of these militants. Our agitation for the repeal of the no-strike pledge, for the withdrawal of union representatives from the WLB, for the Independent Labor Party; our agitation around the Minneapolis case; our campaign in behalf of the 18; the Militant Subscription campaigns, have already brought a number of these militants into the party. In addition, our press is growing in popularity and influence in the plants. This makes it possible for us to speak now of taking the lead in the organization of a left wing capable of wresting the unions from the iron grip of the bureaucracy and the state. This will be a tremendous job. It will try our resources as well as our abilities.

I would like to speak about this task in connection with the specific problems of the UAW.

1. The ranks in this union are imbued with a militant spirit which stems from a fighting tradition that built this union into the biggest in the country. This fighting tradition is deeply imbedded in the consciousness of its members.

2. The auto magnates have never made peace with the union. They are now in the van of the union smashing campaign. The union will be compelled to fight for its very life. This will bring to the fore the best, the most courageous fighters.

3. The UAW is still the most democratic union. The grip of the bureaucracy is more tenuous than in any other union and the bureaucracy is itself split several ways.

4. The UAW is where we have our biggest national fraction, comprising the proletarian backbone of our branches in Detroit, Toledo, Buffalo, Chicago, Los Angeles, Allentown, etc.

The rank-and-file caucus in the UAW as it is now constituted has many faults. It is too narrow, too limited. It attempts to function now, as a fully developed movement, while in reality its base is narrow.

The "rank-and-file" caucus played a progressive role at the last convention of the UAW in leading the fight for the revocation of the no-strike pledge. In this sense it represented the first crystallization of left wing forces. But it is my impression that since then it has become reduced to a propaganda group largely composed of members of various political tendencies.

This caucus was born in the struggle for the revocation of the no-strike pledge. This slogan itself may recede into the background. In most cases the locals will assert their right to strike before the

pledge is formally rescinded. The no-strike pledge will, most likely be broken on the picket lines before a formal convention decision does away with it.

One of the lessons to learn from Minneapolis is how to work with non-political militants; how to raise their consciousness in the process of struggle. The left wing will not be built the way the UAW rank-and-file caucus has proceeded; that is, by confronting the militants with a ready made program and caucus, on a take it or leave it basis. It will be built in the important plants by close collaboration over a period of time with the best militants; by participation in the daily tasks of the union; by entering the existing caucus formations and influencing the militants from within, rather than organizing an independent rank-and-file caucus, and issuing ultimatums to the workers. I have noticed a certain impatience among some of our comrades in setting up so-called rank-and-file groups. Such impatience can only lead to premature formations and to isolation. The building of the left wing depends on the consolidation of militant workers coming to our program. The consolidation of such groups in the various locals will provide the necessary structure of the national left wing.

Not the least of the faults of the rank-and-file caucus is its name. We have refrained advisedly from using this name in the Memorandum. We speak of organizing a left wing. The name "rank-and-file caucus" is an outgrowth of anti-leadership prejudices and we are against catering to them. We are not against leadership, on the contrary, we are for leadership, provided it's good leadership. There is a contradiction in terms to speak of a rank-and-file caucus fighting for leadership.

The UAW rank-and-file caucus has set itself up in business with a paper "The Rank and Filer". This publication is, in appearance and even in its line, in many ways inferior to a number of official local and shop papers. It was inevitable that the group should issue a publication since it functions largely as a propaganda group. The paper has no real role to play, yet it presents a challenge to the officialdom. If it comes to a showdown, the group has neither the strength nor the organization to defend itself.

To organize an effective left wing it is not sufficient to have good will and a program. It is necessary to assemble a responsible leadership capable of winning the confidence of the workers. Time and again the UAW leadership has been overruled by the delegates at conventions. Yet essentially the same people are returned to office. Why? Because no other leadership has yet come to the fore -- a leadership to whom the ranks would entrust the affairs of the union.

How will a genuine left wing leadership in the UAW develop? It will develop when we build up local leadership on par with Minneapolis. This is a process. To achieve it the militant forces must be properly organized, acquire experience and prestige in struggle and win leadership in the locals. This will form the firm foundation for a national left wing.

This is why our comrades should place all emphasis on the

plants. The maneuvers between the SP'ers, Shachtmanites, Oehlerites and ourselves at the meetings of the rank-and-file caucus will never build anything. If we concentrate our forces, and attention even on one plant and make this plant our Trotskyist stronghold, then we'll have something.

If we follow a correct course in the crystallization of a left wing, I am confident that we will find a base of support even among the officialdom of the UAW. The struggle that is going on in the officialdom is not purely a clique fight. It reflects the pressure of the ranks. The secondary leaders are especially sensitive to this pressure. We have had some proof of this. Some of them even took the initiative in approaching us. We have to some extent fallen into the habit of lumping all the officials together and denouncing them as a solid reactionary block. Our task is rather to take advantage of the differences among them and utilize them for our own purposes.

Let me refer to Minneapolis once more. Our comrades there started as a small isolated group. Had they entered the trade union with a finished program, had they entered and started out by battling the union leadership from the word go, they might have picked up a few recruits here and there in this fight, but they would have never developed a movement of great magnitude. It is precisely because they knew how to work with types like Bill Brown, Pat Corcoran and others that our Minneapolis comrades proved themselves good organizers and the best defenders of the workers' interests.

Most of our fractions today are far bigger than what we started out with in Minneapolis. Their composition is excellent. During the past period we strengthened our fractions considerably by the recruitment of excellent militants. Capable men, some of them leaders in their plants.

In this discussion of perspectives, I confined myself to the UAW, taking it as an example. But the UAW is not the only union offering us opportunities. Our fractions have grown in the Railroad Union, in steel, in maritime, etc. The supplementary reports and the discussion should round out the picture of our party's trade union work.

In most places our problem is not one of colonizing but of properly utilizing the forces we have, giving them proper direction. There are no lack of militants in the unions. It is our task to learn how to work with them as we find them, and not get impatient if they don't swallow all our ideas in one gulp. We must not isolate ourselves in a small rank-and-file caucus; on the contrary, we must teach the militants how to unite, how to overcome their petty conflicts and jealousies. Thus and only thus will an effective left wing be born.

After the last war the Communist Party, starting in the unions practically from scratch, and despite inexperience and blunders, welded together a left wing that has given it the power it has today. Yes, it had the banner of the Russian Revolution -- no small matter. This is why our task is so much harder. But we are not starting from scratch. We have experienced cadres, we have a favorable situation. We will not accomplish miracles all at once. But if we carry on our work patiently, persistently and intelligently, we are bound to become a power in the unions.

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## ON THE VETERANS

By George Storen

Each week as I receive the Militant I first quickly scan the headlines, turning to each page to note the emphasis placed upon the various subjects in the week's news. The variety of columns and topics covered by the paper has expanded so much in the last year that a cursory examination of the paper reveals the change which has taken place in the Party over that period. Truly, the paper is becoming more and more a mass organ, reflecting the variety of subjects workers are interested in and critically analyzing and bringing to them the important news concerning their class interests. It is further expected that with the 8-page Militant all this will be expanded still more. It is with this in mind that I am sending you some suggestions.

There are approximately 16 million men and women in the armed forces in the U.S. The great majority of these are workers in uniform. These millions have no organs of propoganda, no "mouthpiece" to defend their rights, no newspaper to speak out and defend their interests. The official military magazines and newspapers, published under the thumb of and watched closely by the military general staff, are not and cannot be called defenders of the interests of the rank and file soldier, sailor and marine. They cannot speak out against Jim Crowism, anti-Semitism, injustice or discrimination of any kind. They cannot really discuss vital topics, social, political or economic, from the point of view of the worker-soldier. The attitude of these organs and their "line" is easily discernible by their comments toward the working class in general and especially when the workers attempt to struggle for better wages and conditions. The cry of "No politics in the Armed Forces" means to the capitalist class: No politics except our kind of politics. The systematic fostering of the belief that there is a division of class interests between the worker in a factory and a worker in the Army and the pitting of one against the other (the old tactic of divide and rule) by the bourgeoisie is not only cultivated by the domestic bourgeois press but is, also, part of the military press. We have many examples of this but it is not necessary for me to cite them here. They are too numerous and have been ballyhoo-ed extensively by the capitalist press. Doubtless every comrade has read them in one form or another.

It is my belief that the Militant should actively and firmly take up this fight and devote space and time to it. About 30,000 men are being discharged from the armed forces every month. The majority of these re-enter the ranks of the working class and the main problems of the workers become their problems. There is an important difference however. They have spent some time away from the workers, have undergone some military training and, perhaps, actual battle, and have special problems facing them. I will attempt to outline a few of these generally,

### 1. The so-called "G.I. Bill of Rights".

An analysis of this from a Marxian standpoint is badly needed. The fakery of this piece of legislation has to be exposed and re-exposed in more than one article and should be done in a sympathetic

vein from the point of view of the soldier.

2. The Veteran's Administration.

This organization is undergoing investigation by a Congressional Committee right now. Some of the revelations as to how wounded soldiers have been treated have even caused outcries in the bourgeois press. Brigadier General Frank T. Hines, who has headed this administration for over 22 years has been attacked by such organizations as the American Medical Association, Metropolitan Life Insurance Co. They, of course, have their own axe to grind. Dissatisfaction has penetrated so deep as to cause individual soldiers to write to "Yank", the Army weekly. Exposés have appeared in Cosmopolitan Magazine, PM and the Scripps-Howard press. The importance of this Administration to the soldier is immediately apparent for it handles not only medical care for wounded and disabled veterans, but also rehabilitation, pensions, family insurance if the vet is killed in action, and interpretation and execution of the G.I. Bill of Rights. When Representative Phillip J. Philbin of Massachusetts called for a congressional investigation of the Veteran's Administration early in March, his speech brought over 1,000 letters of eyewitness evidence. Our "good friend", Representative Rankin is in charge of the Veteran's Committee and is engaged in a whitewash.

3. The feeling expressed by a great many men in the armed forces that "We're going to run things after the war" is an attitude fostered by the capitalists and directed against the workers. We must come forward with our answer to this sort of propaganda. For all the millions of workers at home and in the armed forces and their families, our paper must hurl back the lies, the slanders and the distortions of the capitalist press, and it must thunder forth in the name and in the interests of the working class and their class brothers in the Army and Navy. A gigantic job for our small weekly, but the truth shall make us large. Every soldier and sailor home on leave, or in correspondence with a reader of our press, noting our defense of his rights and interests in a fighting Marxist way, cannot fail to remember. It is our responsibility.

4. The type of organization which will be organized by the returning service men is extremely important to the working class and its organizations. The history of the American Legion can serve as an example to us. We can begin to push forward the slogan of Trade Union Veteran's organization right now. Such organization can serve as a class rallying point for veterans already discharged and can handle problems of their members and the families of soldiers now in the armed forces. The bourgeoisie has begun its propaganda for the type of veterans organization they want; we must begin ours for the type we want.

What I am suggesting, therefore, is an emphasis in the Militant toward servicemen's problems and the consistent devotion of space to that. We can begin to broaden point number 3 of our transitional program which is published in the Militant -- our military policy. To a large extent this point has been lying dormant for quite a while. Agitation for a trade union veteran's organization will put a little flesh upon its skeleton.

April 24, 1945.

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## PARTY SOCIALS

By R.K.

We who live in the Party have no social life outside of it. For us, Party affairs are one of the means of meeting each other, getting better acquainted and bringing closer to the Party friends of the movement. For that reason it is very important that Party socials should be consciously planned in every detail so as to be made attractive. Comrades should not come to them out of duty as they so often do, and they should not hesitate to bring their contacts to them. Toward this end, a good time must be assured in advance.

How can this be done? Not by conducting this phase of our activity in routine fashion, as most Party Branches do.

Every Social Committee should have one executive committee member on it, or one who is eligible for that committee, to help plan a program for the entire season. The program should be submitted to the branch members and they should be given an opportunity to criticize and make suggestions.

Each separate social should then be planned in every detail by the Social Committee and run in campaign manner.

In New York we have made some improvements in this work though we still have many shortcomings. We began by assigning a member of the City Committee to sit with the Social Committee. Within two months the character of our Party socials improved and the Party netted a profit of close to \$700.

Drawing upon this experience, I would say that some of the most important things to watch in the planning of a social are:

- 1) Theme, or "motif".
- 2) Quality of food and refreshments.
- 3) Hall decorations.
- 4) Advance publicity.
- 5) Organization of the machinery to run the social so that everything runs smoothly and all confusion is obviated.

To illustrate: Our New Year's Eve Dance.

- a) Theme - a gala, festive atmosphere.

To accomplish this, the Social Committee decided to decorate the hall in bright pastel tones plus a few Christmas tree branches here and there. Crepe paper streamers were suspended between the lights forming a canopy. Large dancing cut-out figures were thumb-tacked on the walls while two or three smaller ones were pinned on the drawn window-shades. A sponge, dipped in pastel water colors

was used to mottle the white lamp shades or globes where there were no shades. This gave a pleasant glow to the room and washed off easily later. Table covers, waitresses' aprons and all other minor decorations were carried out in the same multi-color pastel scheme.

b) Quality of food, etc.

Elsa Maxwell, once famous for the parties she organized for the rich, now runs a column in a New York paper. She wrote recently: "a party means food. For no matter how enthralling the conversation, a delectable dish and a cheering cup never go amiss. And while some people may be interested in art, others in politics, science, music... everyone -- even the strictest vegetarian -- is interested in food." And she added, food that is "delectable to the palate" is "stimulating of conversation", and interesting conversation is the backbone of social intercourse.

This makes good sense. We based ourselves on this theory and prepared good food -- not the traditional dry sandwich. We added the cost per plate to the admission fee and each person could eat as much as he or she wanted. We arrived at this figure by approximating the number of people expected and the total expense for the food. Coffee etc. was sold.

c) Hall decorations.

A special comrade was placed in charge of this work and it was her duty to get as many assistants as she needed.

d) Advance publicity.

Another comrade was placed in charge of this work. In addition to the Militant advertising, this department got out colorful folders which were handed out to the comrades two weeks in advance and mailed to the close contacts and friends. Attractive posters were made for the headquarters.

e) Organization.

Every detail of running the affair was planned in advance. Special people were chosen as directors and each one of them got the necessary assistance so that no one comrade was overworked. Each was given a specific hour to report for duty. No one had to work longer than a one to two hour stretch at the affair. The Social Director's duty was to see that all the departments were functioning and kept circulating throughout the evening tying loose ends together. A numbered check system was used at the door and for the sale of refreshments. The Social Committee Treasurer collected all the funds and checked against the numbered stubs.

These are some of the ideas extracted from our New York experience in the past three months. Comrades in other branches may be able to add to them. If we pool our ideas we may be able to eventually work out a general pattern for Party socials and lift them out of the drab routinism they seem to be in. When we do, comrades will look forward to coming to our socials and bring their friends and contacts.

The Social Committee will assume an important role in our activity; comrades will feel honored to serve on it. The Party will make financial, organizational and political gains from this work.

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REPORT ON THE NEW YORK FORUMS

The Sunday Night Forums are drawing to a close. I want to summarize our experiences since September 24, 1944 when the Forum started.

All the forums were held in the Hall of the New York School of Social Science which seats close to 100 people. The topics for the forums were mostly on current events. These topics were reported regularly in The Militant and need not be enumerated here. The forums were held every Sunday with the exception of Christmas, New Years and the convention week-end.

The forum attendance was greater during the above period than it was during the previous year. It fluctuated between 45 and 90 with 12 to 18 outsiders. The increase in the number of Militant readers was not fully reflected in attendance at the forums. We drew an overflow crowd on one occasion, when Comrade Jackson spoke on The Struggle for Negro Equality. His meeting drew an attendance of 180 people (160 paid admissions). We expected such a turn-out and equipped another room in the same building with loud-speaker attachments. For the Jackson forum we made special preparations; we circularized all Militant readers; visited the better contacts both Negro and white and advertized in the Negro press.

Even though the forums were held weekly, each one required the most careful preparation. Announcements were placed regularly in the Militant and followed up with a report after every forum; a weekly letter was sent well in advance to a selected group of contacts; the speakers were selected with as much care as was possible under the circumstances; refreshments (coffee and cake) were served after the forum to give the comrades a chance to discuss with the contacts; the hall was always cleaned and arranged at least a half hour before the first arrival; the forums began at 8:15 and ended at 10:15. This gave us two hours -- one for the presentation and the rest for questions and discussion. On numerous occasions we had groups of contacts remain long after the conclusion of the forum to discuss with our comrades.

We were never entirely satisfied with the condition of the hall, and constantly looked for ways and means to improve things. Every now and then we changed the posters to suit the occasion and bring in variety. Thus for the commemoration of the Paris Commune

we had four posters depicting events from 1871 to the present struggle for a Socialist United States of Europe. Our contacts and comrades were delighted with those posters. One composed of the quotation from Karl Marx, which is printed above the Negro Struggle column in the Militant, and his picture we retained in the hall all the time.

The literature was prominently displayed and arranged in advance, with a competent comrade in charge to help the contacts select material. Different books and pamphlets were featured every week. The chairman announced the title, the price and briefly indicated the contents. The literature featured naturally coincided with the topic of the evening.

Chairmanship at the forums is of great importance. Both the speaker and the chairman are in the public eye throughout the evening. We have therefore paid special attention to the training of chairmen and the method of chairing. Women comrades predominated in chairing the forums. I have always felt that the platform is more colorful when shared by men and women. And the forums were a good training ground. Every forum had a new chairman. To insure stability and continuity, every comrade assigned to chair the forum received in advance a written list of instructions on the method of procedure, introductory remarks, general and special announcements, and the literature featured. In addition the Education Director would go over the instructions with the prospective chairman prior to the forum. The majority of comrades chairing these forums did so for the first time.

The change of speakers and chairladies (only very few chairmen) brought in the needed variety. Even when the attendance was not great the spirit was good.

The auspices of the forum was a handicap to us. New York School of Social Science meant nothing to a worker. It suggested little to the new Militant reader. I felt all along that there was no tie between the paper and the School. But the City Committee favored the retention of the School auspices rather than a change to Party auspices. We simplified it somewhat by the title -- Sunday Night Forum.

The forums were worthwhile for a number of reasons. First of all it became a regular institution. Some of the contacts who attended the forums regularly came closer to the Party. We sold a considerable amount of literature and secured many Militant subs. The New York Local benefited financially. The weekly admissions more than covered the rent of the hall. Through the medium of the forum a number of comrades made their debut as public speakers. A fairly large group of comrades were trained to chair the forums. The conduct of the forums was systematized. This will serve the Party in good stead in the future.

For the City Educational Committee,  
S. Stein, Director.

COMMENTS ON THE BASIC TRAINING COURSE

By Sam Ryan

I would like to make some comments and suggestions on the use of the questions for the basic training course.

The course as outlined in the questions is fairly comprehensive and cannot possibly be covered in nine lessons to conform with the formal plan of the course. The New York basic training class, just concluding, lasted 19 weeks, and the last three lessons were hurried. Each question was taken up and discussed, besides many other questions which were not found in the prepared list. The interest of the students remained high throughout the course, primarily because great care was taken to encourage questions, answers and discussion by the students.

It would be wrong, in my opinion, to try to squeeze the whole course into nine sessions either by hurrying through the questions or by resorting to lectures instead of the question and discussion method. Every question taken up should be thoroughly discussed by both students and the instructor. It would be far better to skip half the course if necessary than to take up the whole course in a hurried and superficial manner. If time is short, my suggestion would be to take up Lessons I (first five questions), II, V and X.

It is not the main purpose of the basic training class to give new comrades an outline of our program on the major questions. If that were the case a series of lectures would be sufficient and save a lot of time.

The main purpose of the basic training course is to introduce the newcomer to the Marxist approach to all questions, to the scientific method of thought, to show him how our program is derived. The instructor should direct all his efforts at inculcating in his students the habit of approaching all questions not in a superficial or one-sided but in an all-sided manner, to substitute for the "common-sense" approach of formal logic and the bourgeois world, the historical approach of Marxism. Every question should be taken up with the conscious aim of showing the material roots, the foundation in the class struggle, of all ideas, programs, and institutions.

The second aim of the basic training course, related to the first, is to introduce the newcomer to Marxist literature and to awaken and encourage a thirst for knowledge of Marxist theory and practice.

One method which was found especially fruitful was that of asking, in addition to the prepared questions which call for direct knowledge and reading, problem questions, whose answer requires a correct application of the principles learned in the class. Such questions have the added merit of concretizing the principles and exposing any one-sidedness in teaching them. The question was asked, "Why did we support Ethiopia against Italy?" One student thought we should have supported Italy, because Capitalism is progressive as

against feudalism. Another thought we were neutral. A third was sure we supported Ethiopia but didn't know why.

Another question, "If Coughlinites threatened a Henry Wallace rally what would our attitude be?" One student thought we would be neutral, another thought we would demand police protection.

Such questions can also provoke great interest and much discussion, besides clarifying our program in the minds of the students.

Some suggested problem questions:

On Lesson I: Doesn't more fertile farmland produce more than poorer land with the same amount of labor? Then isn't it the land and not labor that produces surplus value?

On Lesson VII: If the state is an instrument for the suppression of one class by another, what class does the Soviet state suppress, and what class does it serve?

These are only a few of the many problems and questions that were used and many more that can rise in the course of a discussion.

There is one strict rule that must be followed. No general reply can answer a specific question. Concrete questions require the concrete application of general principles. Always frame your answer to a concrete question with the aim of convincing someone who does not agree with our general principles.

One final word. Most comrades approach the idea of teaching a class with fear and trembling. An attitude which is completely unjustified! There is nothing easier than to teach a basic training class. The only real requirement is some experience in presenting our program to workers, something all our comrades do every day. I speak from experience when I say that the one who derives the most benefit from the basic training class, who learns most and is most encouraged to study, is the instructor of the class himself.

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RECRUITING AND TRAINING PARTY MEMBERS IN TOLEDO

By M. Ingersoll

In Toledo we were very interested in the report from the Los Angeles Local on recruiting. We had, like most branches, let recruiting take care of itself to a large extent. If we got hold of an especially good contact we would go after him and get him into the party. However, after reading the L.A. report we decided to give their methods a try. We started in the Executive Committee and assigned the best contacts on the party's list to members of the board. Every week we had a report from the comrades. Gradually some progress was made and it was evident that the method of assigning one comrade to make it his job to work on a single contact had advantages over everybody working on everybody. Expanding a little from the Executive Committee itself, we soon had about eight members of the branch with a special contact. From the reports that were made we saw after about four weeks that we had five contacts about to become members of the party. We decided to take them all in the same week. Since then we have been continuing with the same method. We have only recruited one member since then but we did not expect to have such good success every week. Due to the pressure of other work we have not been able to expand our planning to the rest of the branch. That we shall do in the near future and are confident that we shall benefit from the Los Angeles Plan of recruitment.

\* \* \*

In Toledo we were faced with a practical problem involving the editing of a union paper. Most of the work fell on the shoulders of one comrade and he was overworked even without his editorial duties. It was in the solution of this practical problem that we initiated something we believe could be of benefit to other branches. The problem was to get more copy for the union paper in order to relieve the editor and also to be able to get something in to The Militant. Everything that we wrote went to fill a space in the union paper, consequently, little was sent to The Militant.

So we decided to organize a class in journalism for the members of the branch. Every interested comrade received assignments and turned in his stories. These were corrected, revised and edited and then published in the union paper. Often they were sent in to The Militant. In addition to the preparation of copy we offered a course on the editorial aspects of putting out a paper. Comrades who wished could get practical experience, under the guidance of a qualified editor, in format, make-up, and the technical aspects of putting out a paper.

The reception given the course by the comrades has not been remarkable but several have taken assignments and turned in copy. The number of comrades who are undertaking this course has increased constantly since it started and we feel that before long we should have a surplus of material turned in by our new correspondents. At present there are seven who do something regularly for the paper. There are four in the branch who are competent to take over editorial

duties on a paper and handle all ends of it. We feel that as a minimum, in a branch of our size, we should have ten capable editors. That is a realistic goal and we are working toward it.

Some comrades, when they turned in copy for the first time, really had a lot to learn. However, by patient assistance and perseverance we now have six comrades who can write for the paper and whose material needs very little, if any, revision. One comrade in particular -- when first starting to write, turned in articles that were harder to rewrite than it would have been to start from scratch. Now he turns in copy that can be used almost without correction.

If this report sounds optimistic, it is because numbers when used in reference to people are sometimes misleading. If these six or seven editors did nothing but edit, then we could put out a daily, but as is to be expected, these same people sell the most subs and do most of the other party work, so we still haven't enough people to do the work on the paper. However, we expect to expand our class enough so that we will be able in the near future to send a steady flow of correspondence to The Militant, in addition to putting out the union paper without so much wear and tear on a few comrades.

\* \* \*

Inasmuch as we were a comparatively new branch, we suffered especially from a lack of experienced and capable speakers. To remedy this lack we undertook to train some. It was possible to get a few comrades who had never spoken before to accept assignments to speak and those who did that acquitted themselves very well.

However, we had some members who were too scared to second a motion in a branch meeting. For these it was necessary to use a different method. So we decided to organize a class in public speaking -- for beginners only. At the first session one of the comrades broke out crying while trying to read a nursery rhyme. Another shook like a leaf in a storm and got so dry that he couldn't speak above a whisper. However, we stuck with it and determined to make speakers out of some of these people. Not all of those who started out stayed with it but about half of them did. Some dropped out for good reasons. Those who stayed have prepared and delivered before the class about six different talks each. One of them has spoken before a Sunday Night Forum and did very well. The others have accepted assignments to give educational talks before the branch and have already prepared their material.

We are now combining the speaking class and the journalism class. Each member of the class will write an article once a week and at the class will speak extemporaneously on the subject of their journalistic effort. We are now planning to enlarge the class under the new program and attempt to draw more people into this class hitherto confined to neophytes.

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PROMOTING THE MILITANT IN CHICAGO

By Bernard Forrest

The Chicago local of the Party has concentrated its major effort in the distribution of The Militant on a few select plants, primarily those in which Party fractions exist. We have distributed between 1000 and 1200 papers weekly at these plants for the past two years.

Two months ago we decided to test the response of the workers to the paper by stapling return cards on which workers could request that the paper be mailed each week to their homes. Since that time, we conducted six distributions with the cards attached. The results are as follows:

1st Distribution	-	1000	papers	--	11	cards	returned.
2nd	"	-	700	"	--	7	" "
3rd	"	-	500	"	--	12	" "
4th	"	-	300	"	--	2	" "
5th	"	-	700	"	--	6	" "
6th	"	-	200	"	--	9	" "

Forty-seven cards were returned from a total of 3400 papers distributed. This averages about 50% better than we expected. All of the above distributions were carried out at auto and aircraft plants with the exception of the 3rd distribution which was held at a large steel plant in which we have no fraction and where the average return was the best for plant distributions. This may be accounted for by the traditions existing in this industry coupled with the failure of the latest wage campaign.

The last distribution listed was conducted at a union meeting. This would seem to indicate that it's possible to get a better response at a union meeting because more of the militants who are interested in problems of the labor movement can be reached in proportion to the number of papers distributed. We are conducting our last distribution this week at another plant with the cards attached, and will then follow up the replies in person for full subscriptions.

For the information of the other branches who may want to use this method, it is necessary merely to go to the local post-office and ask for first-class permit under section 510 of the Postal Laws & Regulations covering business reply cards. The permit is free. We pay 2¢ for each card returned. We printed 5000 cards at a cost of \$20.00.

We think that forty-seven new contacts for the party and probably sure subs for the Militant are worth the time and effort involved. Two copies of the card are enclosed for your use.

(Sample of return card used by Chicago)

You have received THE MILITANT at various times. We cannot distribute this paper regularly at your plant. If you are interested in having us send you the best paper in the Labor Movement every week just put your name and address on this card and drop it in the mail box. This puts you under no obligation.

NAME.....ADDRESS.....

CITY.....ZONE No.....

THE SUB CAMPAIGN IN MINNEAPOLIS

By A. Fields

One month of our subscription campaign is over and we have two-thirds of our quota. Our goal now is not just to fill our quota but rather to double it.

In organizing our campaign here locally we decided to have teams again as we did in other campaigns. Only formerly we divided the branch into four and five teams, but in this campaign we have just two teams. We decided that this would be better because, as one of our comrades put it "when we had four and five teams there was always one team in the lead and the others were behind." Now we have just one team in the lead and one team usually following very closely.

The branch nominated two energetic captains for the teams who keep a record of the scores and get the comrades to go out on mobilizations. Two lieutenants were also nominated to assist the captains.

The reward for the winning team will be a party sponsored by the losing team.

At the beginning of the campaign the weather here in Minnesota was a handicap to us. The Sunday set for the first national mobilization was a cold, sleety, icy day, but the comrades came back after an hour and a half with 46 new subs.

We have had three Sunday mobilizations so far and they have all brought fruitful results.

Although we had never had any discussion as to whether one should try to sell a one year sub before selling a trial sub, the experience of one of our comrades proved that it is most advisable to try to sell the trial sub first, especially in door to door work. On the first Sunday mobilization this comrade tried to sell the one year sub to the people in the first block which he covered, but he had no success. In the second block he concentrated on the trial subs and returned with five new subscriptions.

Our people have been doing a good job at getting subs from people they work with and other contacts they have. Last week one comrade turned in 20 subs which he had obtained from people with whom he worked. Another comrade brought in three which she had obtained in between transfers while coming down town to a meeting. Our railroad comrades are doing fine work; they usually bring in one year subs. Their work is especially good because they reach people in small towns in many parts of Minnesota and bordering states. A short time ago one of them brought in six one-year subs at one time. He explained that several of them had been obtained by a person to whom he had sold a sub previously.

Another of our comrades who because of his work travels through many of the Southern states has been sending in subs from various states -- Texas, Kansas, etc.

A campaign such as this is what we need especially for times like this. It has awakened many comrades to the real importance of getting our paper into the hands of the workers. It has made many people realize that doing this is one of the most important tasks they can perform in the Party.

March 28, 1945.

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A LETTER FROM LOS ANGELES

By Al Lynn

March 23, 1945

At a meeting of the East Side Branch following the initial mobilization of the current sub campaign, the educational program consisted of a discussion on the results and the techniques used. I have gathered together this material and added to it comments by some of the members of the Central Branch and a Southside comrade who turned in a brief resume of his method.

At the end of this campaign all such material ought to be gathered together for discussions by the comrades all over the country. In addition to preparing for still further campaigns it will provide an excellent over-all observation of the political moods of the

working class of this country. The Gallup Poll is sheer amateurism compared to this method of observation which utilizes trained political analysts (as every one of our comrades is), who are able to penetrate the thoughts of every section of the working population.

Besides opportunities for observing the reactions of the workers at the benches in the factories, we come to them not with simple yes or no questions, but with a program, to which they can react negatively, or positively.

We don't have to confine ourselves to adding long columns of figures only to get a numerical result. We can record moods, reactions, and arrive at a qualitative analysis.

Yes, in this our party possesses a greater instrument than the thousands of census takers that the capitalists must rely upon. Nor will we underestimate or fail to fully utilize this.

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REMARKS MADE BY SOME OF THE LOS ANGELES COMRADES  
ON THE CURRENT SUB DRIVE

B. Lens: My most effective approach was to immediately open the Militant to the columns. I also referred to exceptionally good articles in the various issues. I don't stop until I am sure that they know what the paper is, and stress the fact that the subscription is a bargain.

I met many who were taking at least one labor paper or more including their union paper. Then I ask them to compare an article or two in the Militant and the other papers.

Another point I want to make is that it often is well worthwhile to put out a quarter for a sub when someone is broke. I made at least one good contact in that way who later sold 5 subs to friends. You should be able to figure out if it is worthwhile in the particular case.

Paul P: (A Filipino Comrade) I explained to everyone that I was fighting for their rights as well as my own. I show them that this is the only paper which really fights for full equality.

Josh T: Everyone that bought a sub felt that they were getting a bargain. I found that the election and sub campaign went well together as the election literature gave me an opening wedge until I was able to open up The Militant and point a few things out to them.

In one house I met three fellows who asked me in as soon as they heard "labor candidate for Mayor". They agreed enthusiastically with our slogan "for an Independent Labor Party," and all three bought subs.

In one case a Negro woman who had been reading the People's World (Stalinist Daily) said that she couldn't go for the pro-war line and support of the labor draft any more.

Many people tell me that they expect to move soon but I tell them that the Militant will be forwarded to them no matter where they move.

Leo F: I work quickly without spending much time in any one house. After a few words I can tell whether they are going to buy a sub or not. If I think they will I point out that it is a working class paper. "Look for advertisements" I say. When they observe that there aren't any I explain that it is a paper published by workers in their own interests and is not controlled by any capitalists through advertisements. When I meet a Negro I stress our fight against Jim-Crow and the system which breeds it.

Jovie S: I want to make one point, but one which I think is extremely important. That is -- speed. Get the sub and go on to the next house. We'll do the contacting on another visit.

An interesting way in which I got some of my subs was as follows. I noticed that after 3:30 on Sundays some of the men take a few shots. I point out that a sub costs only a quarter as against half a buck for a shot. And the sub lasts for 6 months too.

If we are positive about getting the sub we have a better chance than if we put it to the prospective subscriber questioningly, as if we weren't sure they were going to subscribe.

Abe B: I give them a copy of our election platform. A usual answer is "Oh, they all have a good program before the elections." Then I point out the Minneapolis Trials. "Do you think that the 18 went to jail over a program if they weren't serious about it?" Usually they subscribe. The Trials have that effect on almost everyone who knows about it.

Willie K: I went to one door and met a cop who kept fidgeting around because he was afraid his wife would come out after him. He wanted to know what was wrong with Bowron, the present Mayor. I said "Bowron, he's no good." "I know, but I make a living out of him. You can't bite the hand that feeds you." Then I said "but the master is only throwing you a bone after taking all the meat off it." He subscribed.

Then I met a drunk crawling down the street with a bible in one hand. I asked him for a sub (I don't skip anybody). He replied, "Shh! My preacher might see me." He didn't subscribe.

Bea: One man had heard about the Militant from the pastor of his (Negro) church. Another had heard about it in his CIO local. When a woman doesn't subscribe I tell her that her husband would surely want to read it, and that she would be making a great mistake if she passed it by. If a man doesn't want to buy it I tell him that his wife would like it very much.

Mit: I find that the reception to the party press in this period is much better than it was even 8 months ago at the time of the last sub drive.

Julie M: I found it very easy to start out by showing them our election platform and saying "we're running a socialist candidate for Mayor." I find that the mood today is much better than it was at the time of our last campaign.

Hale: In one case I found a woman who called me a fascist before I had a chance to explain anything to her. Before I left, however, I sold her two subs by opening up a copy of the election platform and elaborating on the various points.

Nathan: I had no idea before I went out on one of the sub mobilizations that the women especially, were so receptive to our ideas. I also sold a sub to a Negro preacher.

Dan R: I found the following line to be most effective: "How do you do. I am from The Militant, a socialist anti-war paper. We have a special subscription offer of six months for 25¢. Twenty-five cents for the whole six months. The party that puts out this paper is the Socialist Workers Party -- a party of white and colored workers. This party is running a candidate for Mayor in the coming city elections (here I show them the article in The Militant). She is running on a working class program of fighting discrimination against all races. She fights against the low wages the working class is getting. Against the high prices and the high taxes on workers earnings and against the huge profits the bosses are making out of the war. I would like to sell you a subscription to our paper and to sell you the idea of voting for your candidate."

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#### A LETTER FROM MILWAUKEE

By Jack O'Connell

March 20, 1945

In view of the criticisms I made at the 1944 Party Convention of our tactic in the presidential elections, I would like to submit for the Educational Bulletin, the following observations upon two events which represent a favorable development within the party.

1) The publication of the "Labor Party" pamphlet by Joseph Hansen focuses attention upon the concrete aspects of political activity for the workers. Structurally, that pamphlet is probably the best piece of propaganda and educational material available to the politicalized workers in the American labor movement today. We can put that view to the pragmatic test by asking any of the "practical" politicians, or better, critics, if Hansen's pamphlet or book is in the worker's language. No one can deny that the workers will understand it, and read it. If we ask workers who complain about the "abstractness" of our political literature, they agree by pushing the book that it fills the bill. This observation is not intended as a criticism of the Party's past literature which is of a different character and belongs to an earlier level of our development.

For the Party, however, this pamphlet must show that we cannot, in the future, if otherwise possible, "participate" in electoral struggles by wishing for a vehicle, that is, by supporting a labor party if it existed. The Labor Party pamphlet says that we will have

to speak to the workers on certain questions and propose steps toward a solution of their immediate problems, through a labor party of course.

2) That is exactly what we are doing in Los Angeles where from what we gather an excellent electoral campaign is in progress. I am very sorry that we cannot do that here where we work against a past in which the workers have seen two parties, the SP and FLPP, through which they had already expressed their majority, fail, and for well known reasons.

In the Educational Bulletin a thorough analysis and description of our campaign, from the task of getting on the ballot through the co-ordination of campaign work with our normal activities, press, etc., should be made available for the education of all comrades.

By making a strong showing in those localities where we have the forces, I should imagine that if it is necessary to face future national elections without a labor party, we might very well supersede on the electoral field the SP which fortunately evinced a demoralizing decline and the SLP which picked up a symptomatic socialist vote that is unwise to ignore. History is pointing the finger at us, now that we not only have a paper with the best program for the workers but a paper which is fast becoming the most popular one in the labor movement.

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#### A LETTER FROM SANTA MONICA

By Rose Cappy

We have recruited 13 members since January 15 and have about 15 very close contacts and a periphery of about 50. Most of these people are working for the same company. In addition, they brought us contacts in other plants.

Let me begin by giving you a little of our background: Four years ago we came to California with the intention of going into basic industry. We soon found that it was the word of the skilled worker that carried most weight. Cappy set himself the task of becoming a skilled worker. This was not easy. There were four years of constantly fighting various machines, going to school, night shift and long hours. Finally he got his diploma, he was declared a class "A" tool and die maker.

Meanwhile we had moved into the neighborhood of the plant. Our home was quite a distance from the center and since we had no car, we were just about on our own. We made friends with workers in the shop. We visited each other's homes.

However, in spite of all this, we were not able to recruit. The end of the war seemed a long way off. The workers were satisfied with things as they were and didn't care too much about looking into the future. If we did interest anyone in the party, the draft board got to him first.

Then came the last few months of 1944 and talk about the end of the war. Plants all over the country began to lay off men. Again that ugly word began to rear its head -- Unemployment! And it was in this period that we felt a more responsive mood on the part of people we had known. We began to look for the proper opening for the party and found it.

One day Cappy was approached by an organizer for the Technocrats. He asked Cappy to buy a copy of the Technocratic magazine. On further investigation, it was discovered that they were selling as many as 40 magazines of each issue. Also there seemed to be quite a unit in the plant and in this unit were highly skilled and intelligent workers all around the age of 30. Cappy became friendly with the organizer and since he lead him to believe he was just another worker looking for a way out with a lot of questions to ask, he was instrumental in arranging a discussion in one of the workers homes. No women were invited. This was to be strictly a man's affair.

First the organizer spoke. He talked about the distant future. He drew out all the graphs he had, to prove how the Technocratic system would work. Nothing about the war, no mention of present day issues.

Then Cappy spoke. He raised the question of the war, the mysterious Technocratic leadership, and the problem of taking over industry, which the organizer had of course left hanging in the air. Cappy traced the parallel between European fascism and the fascist character of the Technocrats. By this time, as you can well imagine, the discussion had become quite heated. Most of the men in the room were agreeing with Cappy, first because he raised issues that had been troubling them and second because by this time the organizer could not answer any of the questions that had been asked him.

The meeting was a huge success. In the plant the next day, the Technocratic buttons began to disappear. Workers from all departments came over to Cappy to ask what happened. The local newspaper, which writes up all news of the plant had a little article about the meeting. It did not, however, mention what the discussion was about. Cappy took advantage of this publicity to arrange another meeting. The topic of this discussion was to be "Fascism". Cappy was to be the speaker. It was to be held in another workers home, and this time women were invited.

To this meeting the Technocrats sent one of their most skilled people. The meeting turned into a debate. However, it settled the question of Technocracy in the plant. Most of the people were drawn closer to us and what was left, folded up like a broken accordion. Instead of Technocracy as a way out, the people in the group began to look to Socialism.

During this period the name of the S.W.P. had begun to take hold. Cappy was able to sell 30 subs and 19 Trial Pamphlet Sets in his department alone.

We had about 20 contacts and for just the two of us to get around to all of them would be impossible. So we did the next best thing. We organized a class of the 8 most promising people. This meant 4 of the workers and their wives. We arranged it so that we held each session in a different home. The hostess served beer during the meeting, and afterwards we had coffee and sandwiches. (We have since cut this out. It proved to be too expensive).

We held 2 more sessions of a more or less agitational nature and when we felt that the group was ready for it, we proposed a 16 week study course. The topic to be The Evolution of Man. The intent of this was to give them historical materialism. Here is a list of topics in the order that we studied them.

1. Primitive Communism.
2. The Slaveholding System.
3. Feudal Society.
4. Capitalism.
5. Socialism and the Need for the Party.

I only mention 5 topics and yet this was to be a 16 week study course. You see, 6 people joined after the 5th lesson and the other 2 joined a few weeks later. The group is still studying. But of that later. We interrupted our class only twice. Once for a report of the S.W.P. Convention by a returned delegate, and again for a lecture on India by one of our comrades who had just returned from there.

While all this was going on, Cappy was transferred to another plant of the same company in a different part of town. Here he has made new contacts, sold more subs and was able to fill his petition with 50 signatures for the support of Myra Tanner Weiss for Mayor. (He was aided in this by one of our newly recruited comrades).

To bring this group and the party together and also to integrate these people we arranged car parties. Arranging transportation is a very important factor for we live quite a distance from the center. We got these people down to our mass meetings and they also attended a CRDC Christmas party.

They helped the party by selling subs and making contributions. Every sub they got and every dollar they donated brought them closer to the party.

During these few months Cappy and I just about lived with these people. We went out as a group to the theater. We visited them individually in their homes. They visited us. Not a day passed without us seeing one of the group. We became accustomed to them dropping in at any time to ask a question that was bothering them. We were invited to their homes to talk to some friend or relative about Socialism.

My particular job was with the women. To recruit the man and not his wife would mean that he would be only a half-hearted member. The problems of the women were more complex, but under the pressure of constant political discussion they blossomed out, and now are certainly equal to any man in the group.

Now that these people are recruited, we have given their class over to another comrade leaving us free to continue our work with other contacts. We have found the method of having a group meet in one another's homes very successful and will continue using it. At present we have another contact group of 6 people, which we turned over to another comrade, and we are planning to start 2 more contact classes in a few weeks.

A branch has now been started in our area. Six of the older comrades have been added. With a correct line and great enthusiasm our possibilities are limitless.

Before I conclude this report, I would like to tell you what this work has done to me personally. There was a time when I was satisfied to sit back and let others more capable than I express my point of view. That is all changed now. Questions were put directly to me and I had to answer. I never realized how much I really knew until I had to convince people of Socialism and the party. I have gone back and reread many of our basic works and this time with the intention of using my knowledge.

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#### COMMENTS ON THE PARTY BUILDER

The fourth issue of the Party Builder just came and I read the whole thing right through. It's swell! As usual, it inspires and teaches at the same time. I really think it fills a vital need in the party -- helping us exchange ideas with other comrades and learn from their experience.

I really could rave about it! ---

P. Martin

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On the Party Builder. Excellent! The article by Martin gives us a great deal to think about. For example, I felt that he posed in the correct light a question which had been bothering me very much. I can see very clearly the need to simplify and brighten up the paper, but as the question had been posed before, it would have meant that we give up the paper as far as the advanced workers and party members are concerned. I look forward very much to each issue of The Militant as it comes in, and read it very thoroughly.

The article on the Party Press is a step forward in the building of our press. It is the first time that I have ever seen a rounded analysis of this question, its historical development and perspectives. I also observe that it brings to the attention of all the comrades the different aspects of the question and does away with many of the old observations that we ought to do something but not defining the something.

Another point I want to make is that the Party Builder generally fills a great gap in our organizational theory. If the article on the press, and the article on educational work in the first issue, alone did not necessitate it, it would still perform an essential function in the discussions on the campaigns that the Party carries on.

Al Lynn, Los Angeles

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The last Party Builder was a real tonic. They have all been excellent, but the program of expansion and popularization of The Militant, already taking form concretely, is a huge step forward for our party.

B. Bruce, Minneapolis

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SOCIALIST WORKERS PARTY  
116 University Place  
New York 3, N. Y.

May 28, 1945

TO ALL LOCALS AND BRANCHES;

Dear Comrades,

THE CONCLUSION OF THE MILITANT SUB CAMPAIGN  
AND OUR IMMEDIATE TASKS

The Militant subscription campaign has been concluded. The score so far is 22,179. These figures are the most eloquent testimony to our hard-working party members, to their devotion and self-sacrifice.

This campaign represents a gigantic leap forward for our movement. In the course of three months we have achieved more than a three-fold increase in the number of Militant subscriptions. This is especially significant since a great number of these subs were procured in the plants through the efforts of our fractions.

We must now outline a program of action that would consolidate the gains made in this campaign, draw the Militant readers closer to the party, broaden the financial base of our party structure and strengthen the party by intensifying our recruitment efforts.

These problems were discussed thoroughly at our May Plenum and are presented here in the light of that discussion.

1. Finances: The increase in the size of The Militant to eight pages, increased publishing costs, the great increase in circulation, and the technical improvements in the paper have put a heavy strain on our party finances. But at the same time, our party, through The Militant, established intimate contact with many thousands of workers who will find in The Militant, week-in and week-out, the explanation for the many complex problems confronting the working class. They will appreciate our forthright answer at the very moment when they are desperately seeking an answer to the problems growing out of the devastating war. We are confident that every week The Militant reaches the new reader, his appreciation for the paper will grow.

We propose to follow up the subscription campaign with the type of activities that are politically necessary and that would, at the same time, strengthen the party financially, thus preparing for the campaigns to follow.

Our job is to make every Militant reader a Militant supporter. To the extent that we succeed in getting financial aid from our readers, to that extent will we bring them closer to our party. It is for this reason that approaching workers for financial support has deep political significance. This job should be undertaken in an organized, systematic manner.

We list some of the methods by which this can be done: Most of our subscriptions come from plants or housing projects. The fractions in the plants, and special committees designated for work in the housing projects or sections of towns where we have a substantial number of subscribers, should undertake the task of approaching our readers for financial aid. In this work, we can well utilize the experiences of our comrades in raising funds for the 18. We can approach individual workers for donations, and can also do it by organizing house-parties, special affairs of Militant readers in a plant or in a housing project.

Wherever feasible we should try to organize Militant discussion groups or "Friends of The Militant" clubs, based on readers in the plants and projects.

In addition to the above proposals, we have made the following decisions as a result of the strained financial situation and the need of increasing the revenue of The Militant:

(1) Cancel the 25¢ subscription with the conclusion of the campaign. Henceforth all new subs will have to be sold at the regular rate of \$1.00 a year, 50¢ for six months. All unused trial sub cards are to be returned to the National Office at once.

(2) All bundle orders are to be sold to the branches at the flat price of 3¢ per copy, regardless of the size of the bundle.

(3) We have a list of over 3,000 expired subs acquired during last year's campaign. Because of their failure to renew their subs these subscribers are no longer receiving the paper. Through experience we have found that even those subscribers who would not renew their subs in response to a letter from the Business Manager, will often renew it when they are visited by comrades. We are sending you a tape with the names of the expired subs in your locality. These subscribers should be visited as soon as possible, and reports on the renewals or cancellations should be sent to the Militant office.

2. Recruitment: In visiting workers for sub renewals, approaching our Militant readers for financial contributions, organizing social affairs and discussion groups with the participation of the Militant readers, we will find many workers prepared to join the party. Here we want to urge the comrades once more not to hesitate in recruiting politically inexperienced workers to the party. Most of our recruits in the next period will come through activity and action, and the task of educating the new members must be tackled after they have joined the party. Any class conscious worker willing to join us, should be welcomed into the party and recruited without hesitation.

Branch organizers and branch members should send regular reports to the National Office of their experiences in the work we have outlined. This will be carried in The Militant or in the Party Builder, depending on the subject matter, and thus become the common property of the party as a whole. Such an exchange of experiences will help us in improving our organizational methods.

Fraternally yours,

M. Stein

Organization Secretary

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PHOTOGRAPHY FOR "THE MILITANT"

By Joseph Hansen

Pictorial journalism has evolved into a distinct field of increasing importance in the world press. It began as an adjunct to verbal description. Editors discovered that newspapers carrying illustrations sold better than those without. At first these illustrations were wood cuts or line drawings -- artists' sketches or impressions of events. With the development of film and the modern camera, photographs superseded them. For years, however, photography played a quite subordinate role. It was considered simply a means of "brightening up" the paper, or of appealing to the less cultured layers of the public.

But the intrinsic merits of visual images assured this means of reporting events a brilliant future. It would have been sufficient to observe the rise of Hollywood and the camera fan to conclude that photography had great implicit possibilities. However, despite these two extremely significant developments, newspapers were relatively slow in developing the full potentialities of their photographic departments. The conservatism of staffs trained in verbal reporting, the lack of incentive to change technique and make-up in the face of an already profitable circulation contributed in holding back pictorial journalism.

The phenomenal success of Life magazine finally definitively indicated the wide future of the new field. Here the photograph became the principal medium, verbal description the adjunct. Even the backers of Life were utterly astounded at the tremendous popularity of their venture. The entire magazine field was shaken to the bottom. Survival depended on due recognition of the new trend.

The capitalist press of course has converted pictorial journalism -- as it tries to do with all scientific and cultural advances -- into a means of bolstering its class position. It ignores or suppresses photo coverage that would advance the labor movement, and utilizes the new medium as one of its sharpest propaganda weapons against working class revolution. This, however, is not the fault of news photography as such. It is wholly the fault of the class which controls and subverts it.

Slow as was the capitalist press to realize the possibilities of pictorial journalism, the radical press has been still slower. On top of the same general causes of conservatism which afflicted the capitalist press -- training in verbal reportage, traditional make-up, etc. -- other causes reinforced this tendency. Not least has been the higher cost of this medium. Another is the distaste of serious revolutionaries to become branded as innovators in fields of secondary interest. Having as their task the changing of the structure of society, they are quite content to leave other less important innovations to those directly concerned, and to even appear as conservative in all other fields. There is definite political advantage in this attitude. It is only necessary to guard against its becoming a source of weakness; to exercise good judgment in keeping up with the times and to accept a change when it is no longer an innovation but an accepted standard. These are not all the inhibiting factors. The

general task of a revolutionary political paper is to interpret events. With limited funds it must necessarily place interpretation first on the agenda even if its pictorial side suffers a great deal. Limited circulation adds another contributing cause. A narrow circle of loyal supporters maintain the paper; they subscribe to it for its interpretation of events; they are little interested in graphic presentations; and even come to love the gray, conservative, dull and abstract character of their paper.

A viable party, however, cannot permit its press to retain such a character. Otherwise it risks becoming a sect. As the revolutionary party grows in size, as its cadres become leaders of wide sections of the masses and interpretation nears its goal of changing society, the press must expand and become more graphic. This means concretely today that it must give increasing consideration to pictorial journalism. It means, for instance, that photography in The Militant will become less an occasional means of "brightening up" the pages and more of a direct medium of agitation with rights of its own.

Despite temporary retreats necessitated by lack of finances, pictorial journalism will inevitably receive greater attention in The Militant. Not only will the staff in New York become more conscious of reporting news by means of pictures -- but readers of The Militant will begin thinking of sending in reports from their localities through photographs as well as letters.

Since the foundation of Marxism, great stress has been laid by our teachers on making the revolutionary press a medium through which workers express themselves. Field correspondents, worker-writers, factory reporters have always played a leading role in building up a revolutionary newspaper. The importance of this correspondence is just as great today as ever. But the revolutionary press of our times enjoys a great advantage over previous periods. We have more than one medium of expression. Besides the written word, our correspondents -- and this is especially true in the United States -- have the camera.

Up to now, however, our party has not even explored its resources in this field. On the contrary, the camera fan has been regarded a bit disapprovingly or at best tolerantly. In no case has an attempt been made to mobilize and direct the efforts of party members interested in photography. Yet for every person inclined to write for The Militant many more would undoubtedly find it much easier to send in snap shots of subjects vital to our coverage of events. A single good picture can often tell more than thousands of words. It's a short-cut to understanding what has happened. Thus a picture of sit-in strikers waving from factory windows is just as inspiring as the most vivid verbal description and drives the point home a lot quicker.

The big metropolitan papers organize their sources of photographs along two lines. First, they have trained professionals on their staffs. Some of these newspapers even count airplanes as part of their equipment in order to make sure they get adequate photo coverage of important events. Besides this they have services specializing in photography such as the Associated Press News Photo Service, Acme, etc. who sell wire-photos from all over the world. Secondly, they build up a network of freelance photo-reporters. They depend

on these freelances to cover events in their neighborhood that might otherwise be missed. Some papers depend to a large degree on freelances.

Naturally, we cannot hope to out-do the big newspapers in this field, but we can learn a great deal from their experiences and their methods. We too can secure many excellent photographs from professional sources, especially as our financial resources grow stronger. But the freelance field can become even more important for our press than it is for the capitalist press. Our task is to encourage comrades who like to handle cameras and to direct their efforts into channels productive to the party. An excellent beginning would be to assign at least one comrade in each branch to devoting part of his activities to this field.

When an important event occurs in your vicinity, along with the verbal report, include photographs. Photographs for The Militant can be obtained in a number of ways. A local commercial photographer may be available for special shots. If the local newspapers have taken pictures, a visit to their photo morgue is often worth-while. Sometimes mats can be obtained. If friendly relations have been established, the cost can become a minor item. A sympathizer in the right spot can even secure them free or in return for a guarantee of a credit line. The professional news photo services are also sources. Quite frequently some of the very best photographs -- from our point of view -- have not been used by the capitalist press at all because they reveal the class struggle in a light they consider unfavorable. Such pictures can prove of high value to The Militant. Still another source remains to be tapped. Literally thousands of camera clubs have been organized throughout the country; many of them meet and work under union auspices. Exploration in such clubs can turn up invaluable photographs -- and contacts -- for The Militant.

Besides the pictures taken by party members, some of the most striking photographs of our 18 comrades going to prison in Minneapolis were obtained by The Militant staff through means mentioned above.

More important than depending on outside sources, is the development of Trotskyist photo-reporters. This means a body of reporters able to take pictures themselves. Our comrades enjoy unusual advantages in this field. First of all they have a clear understanding of the class struggle and its more dramatic aspects. Next they very often have inside information in advance of a given action and can prepare accordingly. Finally the fact that The Militant is the outstanding champion of labor's cause makes workers extraordinarily cooperative. One of the largest news photo services in the country has found it unnecessary to give its photographers credentials. Camera and energy are enough. They rarely encounter any difficulties. This holds true all the more for representatives of The Militant who send in news and pictures of picket lines and demonstrations.

Photo-reporting can be divided into the technique of getting the picture and the technique of getting good prints for newspaper reproduction. A number of excellent books on these techniques can be obtained in most public libraries. A good text covering all

aspects, including the relation of photographs to newspaper make-up, is Pictorial Journalism, by L. Vitray, J. Mills, and R.B. Ellard, published by McGraw Hill. A good condensed, low-priced handbook for the camera reporter is Press Photography for the Freelance, by Kip Ross published by Ziff-Davis in The Little Technical Series.

If any party members have had experience in this field, they should send in their views, experiences and suggestions for publication in the Party Builder.

To start the ball rolling here are a few suggestions in getting photographs for The Militant.

Most important in pictures are people. A photograph without people must have extraordinary value in other respects to deserve publication; whereas a lot of photographic sins can be forgiven in a good live picture of people. Most important feature about people is action -- what they are doing. Two people shaking hands, or just talking to each other are much more interesting than a pair of dead pans staring at the camera with the sun in their eyes. The center of interest is generally their faces. Action in faces registers the play of emotions. And emotions move people sympathetically.

Thus in selecting pictures to send The Militant make sure people are in them doing something. The more their faces show up, the better. For instance, if you send in a picture of your new headquarters, don't just take a snap of an empty room. It's pretty dull, even if it is clean and well lighted. Better to get a close-up of the easy chair with a worker reading the latest issue of The Militant. Snap it when he's absorbed in the paper, not after he's frozen up for a "portrait." If you must have someone pose, give him a chance to relax, to really become interested in what he's supposed to be doing. Take an extra unexpected snap. Such a picture advertises your headquarters far better than four empty walls. A reader seeing someone seriously studying The Militant tends to feel the same way about the paper. This is the idea in Laura Gray's famous drawing of a worker reading The Militant. You also get across the idea that your headquarters is a place where workers come to learn. Other possibilities might be a close-up of a group singing revolutionary songs. Or the organizer delivering a talk to an intently listening group. But make sure it is all right to print these pictures in The Militant. Some people object to seeing themselves in print and very often for valid reasons.

I mention pictures of headquarters only to illustrate the point about getting people in action in your pictures. A better instance might be a fire-trap that has burned down in the slum district. Don't just show blackened ruins. If you can't do better, at least get a picture of the neighborhood children, or a few individuals, or a girl looking at the scene. Naturally, if you can get there while it's still burning, all the better. Then you won't have to worry about people or a good graphic shot to persuade Militant readers they should do something to remedy bad housing.

A picket line is easier. You can't miss the people. But you can miss their faces. You can miss a dramatic placard. You can miss the war veteran on the line, the mother of a large family, or the policeman standing by with his club. You would thereby miss getting a picture with a lot of punch.

The Militant wants pictures not of people in general but of people divided into classes. It is not necessary, however, to confine yourself wholly to the working class, the slums, segregated areas, the bitter struggle of the poor for a living, although these are by far the most important for our press. If you can get a good picture of a boss there is no reason why it shouldn't appear in The Militant -- especially if it hasn't been retouched and prettied up. The capitalist press often takes pictures of labor leaders and retouches them to make them look like rats. It is our job to counteract such propaganda by showing the bosses as they really are -- we don't have to retouch their photographs to show their anti-social character. A picture of the boss in his limousine in front of his mansion would make an excellent contrast to a photograph of under-nourished children playing in the garbage-strewn street of a slum district.

As for prints. They should have a glossy finish for best reproduction. High contrast is likewise advisable (black and white contrasting masses) with good separation in the grays.

Don't send films. Send the finished print. And make it large enough to reproduce well.

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## ORGANIZATION OF PUBLIC MEETINGS

By Carol Lynn

The following is a report on the meeting organized by the New York Local initiating the National Tour of Grace Carlson speaking on the topic "Women in Prison". The report is to be used as a basis for the organization of subsequent mass meetings to aid us in improving our efficiency by noting all of the many details which must be taken into consideration in order to organize successful meetings.

### A. Mailings

1. Militant Readers: 4100 special letters directed to our subscribers were sent out inviting them to the meeting and enclosing 2 complimentary tickets. Each ticket carried the name and address of the reader. Included in the mailing was a special notice on the report to be given on the Patterson case which only the Militant has featured. To minimize the expense of the mailing a one cent pre-cancelled stamp was used which can be obtained at the Post Office for all mailings over 200. This requires a P.L.R. permit Section 562. An important labor saving point to be remembered on large mailings is to use a long envelope which costs only a few cents more than the 6 inch size, but saves time in folding the enclosures.

2. CRDC List: A special letter, signed by Grace Carlson was sent to our CRDC list of 350 enclosing 2 pay-at-door tickets. The same one cent mailing was used and the Patterson Bulletin enclosed.

3. Trade Unions and Other Labor Organizations: The topic selected for the National Tour gave us an opportunity to appeal to those Trade Unions and organizations which had contributed to the Minneapolis Labor Case. A special trade union letter was directed to these organizations enclosing 8 complimentary tickets requesting that they be distributed to their members.

4. Contacts and Sympathizers: A leaflet and 2 pay-at-door tickets were sent to our regular mailing list and in cases of close contacts a special letter addressed to them personally was enclosed. This mailing was followed up by a personal visit or telephone call.

### B. Other Publicity

1. Press Releases: Two weeks ahead of the Mass Meeting a Press Release was sent to all union papers, Negro and Jewish press and to all weekly periodicals and neighborhood papers.

The daily papers were mailed a special News Release one week before the meeting, announcing that our candidates in the city election would appear for the first time at the Carlson Meeting. Three days before the meeting a news release on Grace Carlson and the meeting was again sent out.

2. Leaflet Distributions: 10,000 leaflets were distributed throughout the city. All of the garment areas were covered, including Fur, Millinery, Suit and Cloak, Dressmakers, Leather Goods.

Distributions were also made at key subway entrances, Union Square, at union meetings, etc.

C. Organization of Meeting:

1. A special committee for Hall arrangements was set up including ushers, decorations, literature.
2. Ushers held one preparatory meeting a week in advance of the Carlson Meeting. They were provided with red arm bands with SWP insignia and instructions as to their duties which are: 1- To see that all early arrivals are directed to the front of the hall, allowing space in the rear for late comers. 2- That all new people are seated and not left to wander aimlessly around. 3- That interest cards are given personally to every one. 4- That the collection is taken in a lively manner.
3. Pledge cards, interest cards and pencils were provided to the ushers and thus made available to everyone.
4. Special attention was given to the Hall decorations. A sketch of the hall was made up giving wall space suitable for banners. Careful consideration was given to the character of the slogans which were developed around the topic of the evening and utilizing the meeting to bring forward the slogans of the New York Election Campaign. This copy should be turned over to a sign painter with all the needed instructions well in advance of the meeting.
5. Interest cards with the information we wish to get from new people should be available and arrangements should be made to have an announcement regarding them from the platform.
6. Contact Committee: The Grace Carlson Meeting which attracted so many new workers revealed to us, the importance of a contact committee, prepared to approach our new friends and to get the information we wish, to place in their hands literature important to their development, to welcome them to our meetings and to facilitate their recruitment.
7. Press Table: A table close to the speakers platform should be set up for the Press and for stenographers taking down speeches. Mimeographed copies of the speeches should be on the table to be given to any press correspondent present. Literature applicable to the topic under discussion should also be on the press table.
8. A prominent space in the hall should be provided for an adequate display of our literature with special emphasis on popular pamphlets.
9. Ticket table to receive admissions and tickets should be at the door with a prominent admission sign. Here too, interest cards should be available.
10. When a large hall is used it is essential that speakers whose voices are not loud enough to carry should come early enough to test their voices over the microphone.

11. Photographer: A check should be made to ascertain whether we can photograph everyone on the platform and a photographer should be present to obtain action pictures of the speakers.

12. Hall Arrangements: It is our experience that the arranging of the chairs in the meeting hall can make or break a meeting. At this period when we are more or less shooting in the dark as to attendance, it is essential that careful attention be given to the placing of chairs in the hall. With proper distribution of the chairs a hall with a seating capacity of 600 can look full with an attendance of 300.

D. Results:

1. Approximately 200 non-party people were present.
2. From the Militant readers, 31 tickets with the name of the reader stamped on the back were turned in. We know of a number of others who did not use their stamped complimentary ticket but paid at the door.
3. Something, I believe unprecedented in the history of our Party was the response we received from the unions. Two ILGWU unions sent us checks for the "complimentary" tickets we had sent them, Local #62 and #38. Our councilmanic candidate is a member of Local #38 and this initial contact with the local is fortunate. One branch of the Workmens Circle, the largest fraternal organization of Jewish workers in the country, also sent us a check. These checks were made out to the Socialist Workers Party.
4. From the leaflet distributions we drew a number of needle trades workers and contacted a woman who was interested in joining the Party.
5. Two union militants in the U.A.W. were contacted who asked the party to help them with their union problems.
6. Last, but not least, a group of Needle Trades workers, some of them old-time members of the party, all of them supporters of our program, agreed to form a group to work with the party in the industry and in the Jewish community.

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Just as our Militant subscription campaign proved the receptivity to our ideas by broad sections of the working class, the experience of the Carlson meeting indicates 1 - that the politically awakening workers are moving in our direction, and 2 - that many of the old-time militants who were discouraged by the defeats of the working class and by the isolation of our small party, are beginning to recognize the great possibilities of our movement, and are gaining courage and confidence from our modest successes.

This is a good omen for the future. Our Party is on the way to becoming a real mass movement.

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