

(FOR MEMBERS ONLY)

Party

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OF THE WORKERS PARTY

WE MUST EXPECT TO LOSE RECRUITS

By Stanley Grey (Detroit)

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More than one speech has been made on the urgency of recruitment and not a few sentences have been written on the matter. If there are any comrades who have not yet gotten the point it must be those few who are still wrapped up in the necessities of yesterday and continue to cherish the branch as an intimate circle of kindred minds which occasionally tingle in enlightening discussion or righteous speeches. There cannot be very many such insulated comrades left. But in problems of recruitment, as in educational matters, the "answers" are usually those obvious truths which are as quickly assented to in discussion as they are ignored in practice. The task is to accomplish the leap from paper to life, to deepen the consciousness of the necessity of recruitment, to acquire a new audacity and persistence in our work which will bear the live fruit of new members. Like any other vital organism, and unlike mystic cells and sectarian scraplets which embalm themselves in ecstatic contemplation or messianic visions, the party will grow or decay. It cannot forever feed on its self without gnawing out its own vitals. And growth is the very prosaic matter of recruitment, as prosaic, in fact, as breathing.

And there will be growth! There will be recruits! If it is not the mark of the seer to point out that every new recruit is immediately a possible party loss, the complexity and consequences of that problem can be ignored only at great peril. The party must prepare itself for the shocks and trials of handling the new recruits, of its organizational puberty. An influx of new recruits brings in its wake enough problems to deluge the branch and drown it in a sea of hyperanxiety, bafflement and desperation. "The party crisis" couched in the question "Is the party capable(!) of holding new members?" will find itself on the agenda as regularly as the minutes of the last meeting. And whereas the demoralization spawned by a failure to grow is modified by the everpresent possibility of growth and the opening of new perspectives, the letdown of morale at "failures" of integration can only be many times more acute for here it might seem is the dead end. We took in members, we recruited them but we lost them. Is there not something basically wrong? And comrades begin to soak themselves in moods and trail off into all kinds of theories.

It is not the intention here to go into detail on the manifold problems of integrating and educating new members. That deserves its own treatment and will no doubt get what it deserves. What is posed here is the central problem of a proper orientation to the new members as a whole and an appreciation in proper perspective of the relation between new recruits and a party of our size. At the heart of the problem is the question of an attitude that must be adopted towards these new recruits and the problem of their integration or de-integration.

The notion that every worker recruited to the party will be integrated and kept is either naive or illusory. As naive it will be corrected by experience; as illusion it may lead to demoralization when the bubble is pricked. The fact is that the more we learn how to recruit, the greater our successes, the more we must learn how to absorb inevitable losses in the course of growth. Especially in the

present stage of the party's size and growth, namely, near the beginning of the climb, when each new gain is cherished and nourished as a first-born child, with all the attendant ailments of anxiety and desperation in the care and despair at the loss, especially now must the process of growth be seen as a very broken and zig-zagged line, with its peaks of gains and losses.

Not everybody with a LABOR ACTION sub is contacted; a rapid selection takes place and effort is concentrated on the result. Not all those contacted are recruited; there is a second elimination, either by us or the contact, and those successfully contacted become recruits. Recruitment is the last stage of this progressive distillation of our "raw material." If it is the end of the process of getting members it is only the beginning of the process of integrating members and the two are NOT NECESSARILY connected. All the eagerness and understanding in the world on the part of the excellent contact does not guarantee his becoming a "real party person." The real test, of course, is the actual joining, the litmus of life. And if recruitment proves to be the first step in the process which eliminates recruits, it may be saddening but it should not be startling. There are substantial objective reasons for such a situation. The opposite indeed would be more of a surprise.

The Detroit Clinic

If the Detroit branch is today not overrich with new members, it is certainly not poor in lessons and experiences. Had the branch kept all the people who were once party members, it would now have a membership of over fifty as against its current (approximate) 30. The present mark is still a few paces ahead of the starting line even if it is discouragingly distant from the point that the size of our recruitment indicated as its position. Detroit may not have run the gamut of every integration problem, but it could not have missed very many. The measure of gain in these losses is that at least it provided us with some basis for understanding their reasons and thus serve as a rough guide for the future...and for other branches. This discussion of losses may appear theoretical and oversanguine to branches which have not yet had the opportunity to lose members, but noting that such opportunities have not been muffed only too often in the past, it might aid these branches to get a measure of the problems to be expected. The following will deal with some of Detroit's experiences and some generalizations on them.

"Comrade L.", a Case of Panic:

L. did not remain with us in the flesh but his ghost enters every discussion of recruitment as a model lesson of panic salesmanship. A Negro worker, L. was contacted in the shop, heard one or two of our agitationals, thought we had a "fine concern," was asked to join by a few people and obligingly complied. He entered one week and exited the next. And the branch "lost" a member. In the haste and anxiety to recruit him, in the overpowering desire to get a new face, a new voice into the party, little time was taken to explain the nature of the "concern" he was joining and less care to see whether he had any glimmer of an idea about it. The generally correct approach of recruit them first and teach them afterwards was carried to its absurd extreme. Almost nothing was done before he joined and exactly nothing was reaped after he joined.

We Must Learn to Expect Losses

The case of L. was a fairly obvious one. It had no consequences in the branch or in the morale of the comrades. The loss was understood as never really having been a gain, the matter was written off as faulty judgment and a little more discrimination was voted for. But this was only one case. What about the other fifteen Negroes and eight white members we lost? How is that explained? Maybe we have the wrong kind of party, one that can't hold members? Haven't we been one momentous failure? Such questions and more become the notes of an elaborate requiem, sung not only by those with factional vocal cords.

It is the contention here that most of the losses sustained were almost inevitable. Given the size and composition of our party, in age, social background and temperament, given the objective limitations imposed upon the party by its smallness and by the particular positions and situations we were in in the shops, and this GIVEN is always with us at this stage, then most of these losses if not absolutely rooted in the nature of things were at least almost to be expected.

Were no mistakes made? Of course not, nor was integration planned and carried out with the energy and ingenuity that the situation warranted. But these errors and lapses were not decisive in most cases even if they may have accelerated the process or provided the last straw in any single case. What is of the essence of the matter is that with a few exceptions, most of those we lost fall into a certain category of recruits which are rather easily gained and almost as easily lost, a type of recruit which the party cannot absorb and integrate in any natural and normal way but only, where it should succeed, by dint of preternatural wisdom and fortuitous circumstances.

"Life!"

Before grappling with this "category" it is important to state what is an obvious but crucial aspect of the problem of losses, namely, the factor of domestic difficulties and personal problems. There was one member we had for many months who was developing into a party person in the fullest sense. Recruited from the shop by one of the comrades who worked by his side, he was kept in intimate contact with all party developments and activity. He attended meetings regularly, participated to the full of his abilities, criticized aspects of branch activities as one who was with us and not as an observer, in a word, was steadily growing into the very tissue of branch life. Intelligent, middle-aged, good-humored, alert, he was an invaluable addition to the branch. But there was one insuperable obstacle, the "accident" of his being married to a very religious wife. Her early critical tolerance of his attending meetings and reading literature on the Index Expurgatorum developed into a ferocious opposition in the same degree that he was developing into an excellent member. The friction soon reached the point of crucial choice, party or wife. It should surprise no one that some months of interesting meetings and excellent literature did not weigh more in the choice than about twenty years of married life.

And there was the case of another splendid recruit and agonizing loss, that of a twenty year old worker, unmarried (here, per-

haps unfortunately), with a lively mind and grasping intelligence. In the year or more he was in, he showed the makings of genuine membership. But, alas, even that year, superficially so splendid from the party point of view was fraught with all the agonies and writhings of an adolescent, young spirit trying to break through various complicated frustrations. The irrepressible urge to break loose, to try to get into professional ball playing, to soak himself in experiences with girls finally wrenched him away from the party. That was a real loss and although Solomonic wisdom and perfect integration might have saved the day, these are as rare as our friend's misery was acute.

More cases could be adduced but are not necessary. The obvious consideration is that when a man joins the party, there is no magical metamorphosis into a professional revolutionist. The storehouse of his past is not suddenly evacuated by the act of joining nor is his personality transfigured. And if the initial enthusiasm and expectations upon joining, based often enough on misconceptions, are great enough to overbalance other factors which objectively oppose his full participation, then the dwindling of this initial excitement is often caught up and drowned by the resurgence of past habits. Careful integration, the tactful and intelligent weaving in of the new recruit's social life into the pattern of party life, the nourishing of a sense of belonging can in some cases offset a meager past and build the basis for a rich future. But where there is an especially aggravated problem, it is important to appreciate the probabilities of loss. This should not diminish, of course, efforts of integration though it should prepare comrades for the collapse and banish groundless demoralization or wild-eyed speculation. The party has responsibilities enough without being "indicted" for the crushing personal problems bred by the society we live in,

Organic and Inorganic Recruits

To return to the non-absorbable category of recruits... The goal of recruitment and integration should be the discovery and molding of organic members, workers who will enter the life of the party, absorb its ideas, feel an expansion of personality and an opening of new vistas as a result of the rich ideas, the warm comradeship, the luminous ideal. They become part of the party's organism. At the core of this organic relationship must be the welding of the kind of bond between recruit and party wherein there is a mutual satisfaction of needs, the party becoming indispensable to the personal economy of the new recruit, and he in turn finding his position in the pattern of party life and activity. Without the satisfaction of some need of the new recruit, membership can only remain a nominal, artificial affair, easily disrupted at the first shock.

The orientation of the party is toward the militant workers. The intellectual is no longer the bull's eye and though we may hit one now and then in the course of regular shooting that is not the direction of the most meaningful score. Workers have no intellectual idealistic need for the party. The organic bond that can be created with worker-militants will not be founded on the party's unique and superior bibliography. This is not to say that the worker will not read, will not absorb some of our ideas, will not be curious. But it would require a complete unacquaintance with workers to think that classes, discussions and reading lists can indefinitely sustain them. The worker's non-intellectual past, the

complex of his personal life, the enervating effects of labor, the lack of time (a detail!) militate against any such passion or absorption. Classes or reading will be incidental to the main development. His integration, the development of an organic relationship will be a function of the degree to which the party's activities or ideas dovetail with something he was already doing or thinking in his life BEFORE he joined the party.

"In the Beginning Was the Deed."

Though we recruit whom we can, we should try to recruit whom we choose. The first principle of selection should be the prospect's degree of participation in any form of progressive struggle. Does he or she display any initiative, an active interest in any organization or movement, NAACP, unions, veterans, it matters not. For such people, LABOR ACTION, the ideas of the party and the party itself serve as new and potent instruments for the activity they were already engaged in. The transfer of activity from one organization to another, or the joining of another organization, is no abrupt revolution in their lives but an intensification of that which they were already doing, a deepening and strengthening of traits already present in their personalities. The party catches them in motion, so to speak, and merely changes the direction of travel and accelerates the pace. It's a simple law of physics that it is easier to change the path of a moving body than it is to set into motion a body that is inert. Naturally, here too there is no guaranteed integration; there is the affliction of personal problems, intervention of other important factors, but at least here there is a logical, organic basis on which to build.

There is a danger in accepting such a guide too mechanically. Anyone who has worked in the shop even a short time has met the intelligent and disillusioned worker. He may have been active in his union at one time but has surrendered to the superiority of forces of the local bureaucrats and the "general impossible situation." He has retired into a passive cynicism which extends beyond the hope of any cure for union bureaucratism and conservatism to the "dreams" and "ideals" of LABOR ACTION. Superficially, his passivity is non-distinguishable from the worker who attends no union meetings and lives a mulc-like existence in the shop. Only superficially, however, for such a worker can be moved into action again, not by words, but by the demonstration of effective action on the part of the party fraction in the local. Open the door of hope and he'll come in, and once he is woven into the life of the fraction, party membership will develop automatically.

These observations on the "preferred" recruit may appear obvious, but they are as obvious as the Purloined Letter." What is requisite is not any verbal assent, but an alert sensitivity to such prospects and a consequently proportional allocation of party time and energy. Otherwise the poor platitude goes off wringing its hands wishing it were less obvious in theory and more attended to in life. When a branch unearths this type of organic ore, like a battle fleet spotting its major target, all guns must be trained in that direction. He must not be put on one of those interminable and inevitable lists of names which usually represent more the party hopes than the sober reality. His recruitment is not a casual one among many others. For the measure in which we recruit this type of member is the measure of real organic growth of the party.

The Clinical Case of K.

Detroit's repository provides us with a perfect illustration. K. was a (chief?) steward in his shop, one in which we had no fraction. We learned about him by way of the Cape of Good Hope. Some girl who had a sub to LABOR ACTION sent in a change of address. The National Office notified the branch. The girl was visited. The girl informed her visitor she had gotten her sub from K. in the shop. It developed that K. had sold about 20 subs in his shop (without party permission!). He was hot for the Labor Party and liked the paper in general. The paper was doing its "own" work and in a model way. Here was a worker, active in his own union who found he could use the paper to serve his own ideas and his own activity in the shop. The paper filled a need of his and in satisfying this need, he was unwittingly doing the work of a party comrade. Although restraint is not something to lose entirely, it can be understood that there was no little enthusiasm about such a prospect.

The tale unfolds and nobody lived happily ever after. K. became a routine assignment for one comrade to visit. The first week, this comrade couldn't make it for legitimate reasons. Be sure to get him next week! Visited next week, not home. Try the following week and so on and on. The failure to get to SEE K. was put down in the books as quickly and as easily as the failure to see X. about whom all that was known was that he had for some reason probably irrelevant, kicked in two bits for a sub. If the consciousness for organic prospects had been as keen and as preeminent as it should be, a host of trivial detail would have been sidetracked and getting to see him and work on him would have been THE task of the moment. He should have become some qualified comrade's ONLY assignment and his complete responsibility. "Legitimate" reasons for not seeing him should have been ruled out in advance. There are seven nights in the average week and chances of seeing anybody in one week are very good when it is necessary. Progress or its lack on his recruitment should be on every executive committee's agenda.

At long last K. was brought down to a forum. In this respect too the casual attitude persisted for this particular forum was poorly planned and worse attended by the comrades. No special thought or care was given to make K.'s introduction to the party as fair as possible to the party itself. This is not a request for Potemkin meetings for each prospect but merely to give the party a break.

It is irrelevant, however true, that K. would not have joined anyway for personal reasons, as many comrades believed. Our best energies must be summoned to win this type over. And not only with those whom Fortune strews in our path. We must try to pick them out, sniper fashion. It would help to strip ourselves of our shackling self-consciousness as radicals and encourage a persistent audacity and ingenuity. If some militant rank-and-filer or secondary leader gets into the paper for some action of his, e.g., leading a wildcat, as happened often enough in Detroit, he should be visited by the organizer of the party as quickly and as persistently (if it is warranted) as a baby-insurance salesman visits new parents on a hot tip from the hospital. It was the organizer's doing this a while back that netted us one of our most active and

prominent youth comrades.*

Inorganic Recruits and Detroit's Losses

It would be rash and inaccurate to sum up all of Detroit's losses in one facile generalization. It has already been indicated how the unique personal difficulties were decisive in some cases. The case of L. illustrated another group of which he was the most glaring example. Even for the remainder of the losses, many factors operated all the time to produce the final result, not the least of which were personality traits on the part of the recruit and integration mistakes on the part of the branch. It would be false and foolish to overlook the mistakes that were made. It would be ten times more false to believe these mistakes were THE cause and represent a fundamentally erroneous procedure by the branch. It's not always necessary to probe deeply for "fundamentals" when the explanations that are correct even if not so "fundamental" are easily at hand.

The crude fact is that the majority of those recruits we lost were inorganic recruits. This is no post facto taxonomy, legitimizing a loss by naming it. It is not our losing them that makes them inorganic recruits. The contrary, their personalities, their habits, their manner of living and thinking before they joined earns them the label. Taken as a whole this group is characterized by the fact that there was nothing they needed the party for and consequently after a while there was nothing they wanted the party for. Before joining, they had shown no kind of initiative or engaged in no activity that was not of a fraternal sort, e.g., Masons or social clubs. It should surprise no one that they carried their same personalities with them into the party. Entirely passive before they joined, they remained that way after they joined.

The inevitable question is why did they join in the first place? Was not this in and of itself an action of a very high or-

*The theme of this document is the nature of recruits in the most general terms and the particular reasons for Detroit's losses. The organic prospect, the union militant, as the main goal of activity is brought in mainly as contrast to the relatively inert, inorganic workers whom we did win. It is important to indicate, even in passing the profound and complicated qualifications to the notion of organic prospect, for if winning inorganic recruits is not preferable it is a life-or-death question for us whether winning the active trade union militant in any numbers is possible for us in the next period. It would be valuable to devote some serious thinking to this problem for it is the root of all problems. Such factors in Detroit as the fully satisfying political life of militants in the political factions within the UAW, the progressive program and viability of the Reuther caucus, etc., weigh heavy against any militant spending any spare moments left him after these time consuming occupations for participation in party activity. The party has nothing to offer him, in terms of personal satisfaction that he does not get out of the union movement. This comment is added to restore some perspective on the question of active militants. Actually the layer of workers in the shop which would prove most fertile today would be that somewhere between the inactive rank-and-file and the secondary leadership of the local, workers interested in union matters or social questions but not yet active or drawn into the local's or international's factions. 50

der? This appears to be so to comrades who project their own concept of the nature and meaning of the party to those who join the party from the outside. For older comrades, party life and ideals are the center of existence. For these new recruits it was the most casual of additions to the way in which they were already living, an addition usually tacked on at the end of the list. They enter the party not with our conception of the party but with their own conception of parties in general and a nominal understanding of some talks comrades give them of our party in particular.

Many of these comrades were Negroes. More conscious of their multiple oppression by the constant social persecution they endure, they were more readily attracted to the forthright and aggressive ideas of LABOR ACTION. They responded more enthusiastically and warmly to the "messages" of the party than white workers. This "lack of resistance," however, is not a token of acceptance of the party organizationally. It is no more than an embracing of our ideals with little conception of our practices.

Most of these comrades lost had a concept of membership which came from their experience in the NAACP or the unions where meetings and education are hardly urged, not to mention being mandatory and where the organizations are involved in some sort of practical work, work that can be seen and touched, so to speak. Quite naturally they don't appreciate the fact that we are a "party" in intention only, that we are a "sect striving to become a party." Actions are expected more in line with our intentions than our capacities. Not being active people organizationally in the first place, not being intellectuals, their dissatisfaction with the practical ineffectuality of the party, especially on the Negro question, soon wears off whatever enthusiasm there was originally and the party becomes meaningless to them. In the case of some of these recruits who were in the shops with us, it was equally impossible to integrate them fully into fraction work due primarily (not exclusively!) to the fact that they would never attend union or fraction meetings. (Our fraction meetings may not have been perfect, but some of them never came down to find out how "bad" they were!) These comrades were real rebels, they hated this society with all their might, they had only scorn for the toadying worker or the bullying cop, they had courage and audacity, but they were personal individual rebels, those who will be in the first line of fire in any mass action but who will not build the small revolutionary vanguard party.

One of the most complicated and delicate aspects of the integration of these Negro comrades is the matter of creating some kind of social bond between them and the party. In this sphere we have much to learn and no few mistakes were committed. The absence of such a cordial relationship contributed, of course, to the final result, but a social relationship cannot be constructed out of air. For it to be healthy and in some cases for it to come into being at all, it must be based on some common work and interest of both parties. As for the recruit who joins us primarily for social reasons (and we had our quota of those) the party will soon give way to what are much more satisfying arenas for such urges. And the party on its part cannot expect to substitute a social life for the new recruit in the place of party activity. That is both a mistake for us and an insult to the comrade who joins for more "legitimate" reasons.

Why Take Them In?

If there is such a distinction to be made between organic and

inorganic party material, why then should we accept the latter for membership? If it is likely that we will lose them why bother in the first place and suffer the sorrows of loss? We are after all the revolutionary vanguard party of professional revolutionists and on pain of losing our purity we must not loosen our party. We must not permit any such notion as an expected turn-over of membership to invade the solid concepts we have of our party. If we are going to lose them, let's not take them in! If we take them in and we lose them, then it is "our" fault, "our" failure!

This is a point of view that has been expressed on this question. Now it is absolutely true that the iron-clad guarantee against losses is to close the doors of membership to any possibilities of loss; this is as sure-fire a guarantee as death is a cure for the common-cold. If it is feared that a turn-over of members will result in demoralization, then it is precisely the hope of this analysis to give some objective reasons for such a turn over, put the losses in proper perspective and thus relegate party "crises" on this question to factional dispositions. And if despite the best explanations there remain those everready to deplore and weep over any loss, then the party should not punish itself for the tender morale of some of the comrades. It is without question a blow to lose a member, but that should not keep us from taking him in. As Samuel Johnson said in another connection, "Marriage has many pains, but celibacy has no pleasures."

We should search out the organic prospects! Agreed. But they are not provided for us as we would like, they are not always in the shops where we are or are not so easily contacted and worked on. One does not then retire into the comfort of the classification and twirl thumbs waiting for him to show up. One does the best one can and that best is often enough the other kind of recruit. The logic of shop work, participation in union activity, serving as stewards and committeemen will earn the respect of many people in the shop for the courage and sagacity of the particular comrade. Some of these people will be invited to party forums. And the irony of the situation is that it is precisely those who have less understanding of the nature of organizations and the importance of joining the party who will more readily join. For them what is so easily done will be as easily undone if necessary. The contact who deliberates, who pauses, who appreciates the dimensions of the step he is taking will more likely develop into a better member. So then, the simple logic of party work whether we concentrate on one type of recruit or not, will lead to all types gathering around us. Should we take them in. Absolutely!

In the first place, it is only the actual recruitment which is the final test. Personality estimates and the gauging of temperaments cannot be conclusive in all cases. And who can argue against the arithmetic of winning three and losing twelve by offering to prevent the loss of twelve by barring them all? Joining and participation is the real measure of the contacts potentialities. It might clarify things to insert another stage of development between party prospect and party member. It could be called party recruit. The recruit is the prospect who has finally said "yes." The member is the recruit who is fairly well integrated. And the recruitment stage is itself a sifting stage where not only is the party tested by the recruit but the recruit by the party.

In the second place, however a turn over may seem to mar the

purity and sanctity of the revolutionary elite ("People can't just come and go in OUR party!") the entry into the party of workers, whether they will stick or not, in and of itself is salutary. It helps circulate the discussion-laden atmosphere of the headquarters. It imposes in life and not in party documents the necessity of learning to explain our ideas in simple terms, to conduct popular forums and classes, of understanding the "problems of life" and the complex attitudes of the average worker. The mere presence of the workers in the branch transforms the branch orientation, alerts it to new opportunities, challenges the branch leaders to create fields of activity in which to integrate the newcomers. In addition, when these members drop away, it is as casual a matter as their joining it. There is no rupture in any sense, there are no political documents or critiques. There is simply the consistent non-attendance at meetings. After they leave they remain friendly to the party and its comrades, aid in some of its work where feasible, e.g., sub-drives, socials, etc. and constitute a sort of periphery, not of the petty bourgeois, money-donating kind of New York but the kind which is outside the "sect" of today and inside the mass party of tomorrow.

The Constitution! The Constitution!

The integration of these inorganic recruits requires a more generous and comprehensive approach than is the case where a natural bond exists. Take the constitution for example. It goes without saying that it ought to be lived up to. Its framing was no mere legal exercise. It would be a mistake, however, to permit any clause or comma to shackle party development in any particular case. This is no argument for the conscientious violation of the constitution. It is an argument for greater flexibility and wider interpretations in connection with new members. In a sense corollary to the notion that we are in the present state a "party" in intention only is the thought that the constitution is in a measure a declaration of intentions. In many cases, were the constitution to be adhered to to the letter, we would be forced to drop new members while we were in the very process of grappling with the problem of their integration. The exigencies of any particular case cannot be properly covered by some general ruling, e.g., absolute requirements on number of meetings attended. Applying the constitution off-handedly, as some strict constructionists have urged, would be tantamount to burying the body before the patient is dead. The rules in the constitution establish a relatively ideal norm and as such are correct for our party. Correctly used, however, it is necessary that they sometimes be judiciously violated.

Combined with a greater legal flexibility goes a relaxation of attitude towards these new members, an easing off of the sense of desperation which some comrades suffer with new recruits. The anxiety sometimes amounts to parental pitch. Is the recruit getting the proper formula? Is there enough social life? Or may be a little too much education? Was that a frown or a cough at the last meeting? How did he like this and how did he like that? He wasn't down to the last meeting !!! And so on into the jitters. If this is nerve wracking for the branch executive, it is often enough to break the recruit. In fact, as we know, children sometimes run away from home for analogous reasons.

Bolsheviks All... or Nothing!

It has been said in jest that the recruitment of a contact is more reason for lamentation than for joy. In the status of contact, this prospective member represented a party hope, an activity, a potential, something living and promising for the future. As a recruit, he becomes a party fear, a source of perpetual anxiety, a disturber of the previous inclosed and ingrown equilibrium, a problem. Though a jest (and it is not proposed to prolong indefinitely the period of courtship to stave off the headaches of the final "step"), there is much psychological truth in it. Its logical absurdity is apparent but that does not hinder its devil's work. A major cause for this ridiculous state of mind is the tendency to expect from or to impose upon virgin revolutionists the attitudes, patterns of thought, and manner of living of those who have been conditioned by the movement over a period of years. The quality of the new recruit's membership is measured by a standard whose level is the product of years of participation. To each new comrade his own good time, from each according to his personality.

There is no need, even if it were possible, to force the recruit against the grain of his character and interests into the pattern of professional revolutionist with the passion for meetings, discussions and political education. Integration does not mean making the worker-recruit "like one of us". Even when integrated in a party sense he may not live the way we do. The degree to which this simple truth is ignored in practice is the measure of the persistence of the notion that the party is a large family with all the domestic mutual responsibilities, affections (and disaffections) and lack of privacy that it entails. Not all the new comrades will be model "children of the family" nor hardened Bolsheviks. There must be an area of greater leniency in the party immediately surrounding the old and trained cadre in which a wide variety of individuals who come to the party can find a congenial and not too demanding spot for themselves. Time alone, and not measured in weeks, will indicate whether the comrade will move from the soft outer layer into the hardened center. Any conception of the party as composed of solid, hardened, Bolshevik members exclusively is either a self-deception with cruel consequences or can be realized in life by confining it to pebble size, hard and small. With judgment and discretion, always bearing in mind the larger goal of expanding the trained cadres, the party must not shy away from putting on some flabby, "non-Bolshevik" fat upon its skeleton, and this is primarily a matter of developing a proper orientation towards the obligations of inorganic recruits and their role in the party.

August, 1946.

SEATTLE BRANCH ACTIVITY IN CONSUMERS PRICE CONTROL
COMMITTEE

By Jesse Simons (Seattle)

* * * *

For the last six weeks the Seattle branch has been involved in an attempt to organize and carry through actions by consumers in connection with the high price of milk. The following is reported so that the comrades throughout the Party may learn what we have learned and by letter or further discussion articles teach us in Seattle what we have failed to learn.

Early in October it was observed in the daily newspaper that some kind of demonstration over the two cent per quart increase in milk prices took place. Our organizer contacted directly the two women involved. He remained anonymous to them. It seems that one of them started calling by phone all her friends and allocated to each of them a section in the phone book to be phoned, all people being asked to curtail or cease milk purchases. One of the girls called, later to become one of the leaders of the organization and a leader at the time of the demonstration, was a sister of a Stalinist who turned over to her the name of a woman active in a CP union and previously active in CP dominated OPA campaigns. The latter advised the originator and the other leader and brought them to the point of the demonstration.

The evening of the first contact with these ladies a meeting was arranged with them and five other WP members. It was decided that night to take a name for the organization, call a mass meeting to set up a permanent organization, publish four thousand leaflets announcing the meeting. In addition, more petitions to President Truman asking for relief were to be published, publicity to the papers sent out, procurement of a sound truck arranged. It was also agreed that a letter be sent to seventy odd unions asking for support and assistance. Finally a file system was set up based on the names signed to the petition as of that date and more petitions mailed to them.

At that time we recognized that the Stalinists had a finger in this but we were convinced that the two leaders were innocent.

On Thursday, two days after this meeting we dragged the SWP in and tried to involve the SP and the American Socialist Party but with no success.

On Sunday, October 20, a meeting was held at the house of one of the leaders and all the active people in the movement so far were present. The purpose of the meeting was to make preparations for the mass meeting to be held on the 23rd. We came with a complete set of plans and all of our proposals carried. Helen Burns was suggested as chairman and the program suggested was as follows: "The purpose of the organization is to lower prices on foodstuffs through (1) action through the city, state and governmental agencies; (2) action in connection with milk companies; (3) consumers boycott."

It should be noted the vague formulation here was no accidental. It was our intention not to precipitate a programmatic dispute with

the Stalinists but rather to lay the groundwork for an arena in which we could operate. The SWP representative at this meeting nearly shocked the innocents out of their boots and, of course, incited the Stalinists no end, by coming out flatfootedly for a simple campaign of demanding that the books be opened. She, it might be added, had no organizational proposals to make either as to how the movement should be built or how the books were to be opened. She merely said that that was the main slogan around which the movement had to revolve. Our comrade, by some quick and smooth talking, took the formulation in the bald and brazen form it was presented and by explaining it sought to make it more palatable and understandable to those present.

We proposed at this meeting, which was the twentieth, a strategy committee of at least fifteen to run the organization, the committee to be obtained through volunteers from the mass meeting. In addition, we proposed organizational steps in the direction of getting union support, support from women's clubs and the setting up of neighborhood groups in the projects and elsewhere.

From the amount of newspaper publicity, telephone calls and letters received, plus the response to the loud-speaker truck in the projects, we felt that sufficient interest in the issue existed to warrant our expecting some 500 women at the meeting. We were wrong as only some 200 showed up.

On Monday, the day following the arrangements meeting, the women went to the newspapers, saw the editors and complained about the fact that they were not receiving sufficient publicity.

On Tuesday, a press release was gotten out following the appearance the day previously of an ad purchased by DeLacey announcing DeLacey's support of the milk strike and the forthcoming meeting. The nature of the press release was that of a statement of political independence. We asked that all candidates for office express themselves on the milk strike. We stated that the organization was "not a tail to anybody's political kite." We were in a difficult position. DeLacey is (now was) a United States Congressman and his ad and daily radio propaganda in support of the movement could not be repudiated nor, on the other hand, could we accept his embrace as the entire city was being subjected to a red-baiting campaign against him. We sought to accept the publicity and at the same time indicate our independence. Naturally, this release was played up by the reactionary newspapers who quoted only what they wanted. The Stalinists were, of course, in a fury but could not say too much for, after all, all we were doing was stating that we were independent.

On Tuesday, we arranged via phone with Portland that the woman in charge of a similar milk protest movement come up to Seattle, by plane, and speak at the meeting. The meeting, that is, the mass meeting, had 200 present, 70-100 were Stalinists, Stalinist stooges of all sorts, sizes and descriptions. The other 100 were genuine housewives. At this meeting a strategy board of 32 was elected and the program indicated above was adopted. On the floor of the meeting only one dispute took place. It had been recommended that a caravan to city hall be organized. One of the Stalinists, a leader of the CIO, tried to amend the motion so that the caravan would be hooked in and absorbed by a housing demonstration planned by them to take place three days later. We were suc-

cessful in resisting this move only by the skin of our teeth.

Comrade Burns had her first experience chairing a meeting, and though she was completely inexperienced, did an excellent job. Fortunately, the Stalinists were not out for blood -- if they had been they would have smeared us all over the wall.

On Friday we finally arranged a meeting with Roberts, the SWP organizer. After listening to a lecture from him on the programmatic inadequacies of the WP in this affair, we got down to discussing next steps. We proposed that the city hall caravan present to the City Council the demand for an ordinance setting the price of milk at thirteen cents per quart, that this ordinance was imperative because of the emergency nature of the situation, and that said law be enforced by the housewives. This he agreed to, and we of the WP were going to press in the first meeting of the strategy committee for this policy. We then presented a resolution outlining strategy for visiting the milk company. This he agreed to and we agreed that the SWP would carry that ball.

The November 18 issue of LABOR ACTION should carry in it a full account of the meeting between the City Council and the committee from the Homemakers Price Control League.

The demand was presented for an ordinance. However, the Stalinists had written a letter to the Council which at the last moment was handed to the co-chairman to read and copies of which were given to each council member, in which they failed to mention the ordinance but asked for the passage of a resolution by the Council favoring the re-control of milk prices. Comrade Burns adjusted herself to the situation and on the one hand tried to make it appear that there was no real division in the League and on the other hand persisted in reading the motion adopted at the Board of Strategy meeting. We should have been prepared for this audacious trick of the Stalinists. However, we were not. The leading SWP'er there failed to appreciate the significance of what had happened and what was being done to our program.

The Council, on its part had the girls out-manuevered by only listening to them informally, having officially adjourned before giving them the floor.

The night after the visit to city hall, Helen and Don Burns went to visit with one of the co-chairmen of the League and discovered that there was impending an open attack on us in the strategy board organized and prepared by the CP. This attack was to be confined exclusively to an effort to demonstrate that the Trotskyists were sabotaging the movement. The Stalinists had woven an incredible and thoroughly fictional web of deceit around all the activities of Comrade Burns, interpreting her every act as stemming from an effort to destroy. It sounded like the ravings of a paranoic.

The next day we insisted and obtained a meeting with the SWP again. This time we discussed the impending attack on us by the Stalinists. Despite their calm urbanity, we discussed the details of how to meet this situation.

The meeting Wednesday night of the strategy board found the Stalinists in a difficult position because all of the slander

they had been pumping into the heads of the two co-chairmen of the organization had been undone by Helen the night before the meeting. At the committee meeting our comrades asked polite questions as to who wrote the letter, who authorized it, etc. After letting the Stalinists stew a little bit we proposed that a letter be sent asking that both the ordinance and the resolution be considered by the City Council.

Soon after this a visit was made to the Milk Drivers Union but no action was taken by that union. The visit to the Boilermakers Union was successful in that a motion to support the movement was passed. The CIO Council had already issued support, and the support of Lumber and Sawmill Workers Union was obtained, plus \$18.50, by an appeal made to them by our Comrade Jeannie, her first public appearance, but despite that an excellent job.

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ADDENDA ON SWP

(1) Throughout this entire experience we have forced the SWP to meet with us and collaborate in our activities, despite specific instructions to the local SWP branch to the contrary.

(2) The SWP has demonstrated on a local scale that it is fundamentally a very sectarian organization. They are not interested in, will not think about or discuss how to apply their policy or how to build an organization. To them it is sufficient if they merely advance a program -- after that, everything will take care of itself.

(3) Their leading comrade has demonstrated on three separate occasions a capacity to commit blunders that is amazing. It is obvious from the nature of her errors that she is inexperienced and in addition has not come prepared with detailed and well thought-out plans of operations.

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ADDENDA ON THE CP

(1) It was observed in the beginning of this movement that the comrades involved drew back from active participation because of the presence of the Stalinists. This was due in part to their inexperience. For them Stalinists were hermetically sealed, iron-cased monsters. They felt reluctant to rally support to the movement out of fear that it would become a battleground of WP vs. CP. Part of this feeling undoubtedly comes from the general educational material of the Party in which great stress is laid on the crimes of Stalinism and little attention paid to the individual CP members in the United States.

(2) The CP'ers, when confronted with specific and concrete proposals flowing from our basic analysis, found it impossible to either speak against or vote against them. This cannot be over-emphasized. Again and Again we counterposed to their vague and fuzzy make-a-loud-noise proposals a specific, concrete class proposal which had the double virtue of being effective in achieving our goal and which would raise the consciousness of those participating in the struggle, to find the CP voting with us and bo-

ing forced at a later date to try to make up for their shortcomings.

(3) While we may never know specifically how we have affected the Stalinists it does not seem unreasonable to assume that they have learned that Trotskyists are not wreckers and scum of the earth. Except for one or two old party-liners, the others are civil and open to our ideas. They do want to do something for the masses; they do want to organize and participate in struggles. They simply do not have any political training or clear direction.

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ADDENDA ON PERSPECTIVES

(1) It is our opinion that the splutter of mass indignation and mass response to the increasing milk prices which existed some six weeks ago is now at a lower level. Women, because they have so many daily household problems keeping them at home and because they are inexperienced in mass action, present in general a very difficult problem in organization. It is only when the pressure is at an extremely high level that one can expect that they, as a group, will actively enter the spheres of direct struggle. We do not believe that we can ORGANIZE a mass organization at the present date. This does not mean that the League dies. Rather, it continues on waiting for the next wave of resentment and indignation. It is a question of tens of thousands of women, not a question of a bloc of politicians.

(2) Despite the above observation we are proceeding directly to visiting of women in their homes to make contact with them, and to obtain their reaction to the whole movement, thus preparing ourselves for tomorrow. We have been and are on the lookout for any possible recruits, prospect or LABOR ACTION subscribers.

(3) It is a fact that the masses of women are continuing to hold their milk purchases at the lowest point possible. For the most part this is an action brought about by economic necessity. The actions of the League have had an effect throughout the city in stimulating that curtailment. However, the women have definitely not responded en masse to the action proposals of the League.

(4) None of the above is to be interpreted as meaning that the action as a whole of the branch is considered an error. We seek to act to whatever extent possible as a catalyst; stimulating, pushing, giving advice and leadership to whatever movement actually arises. We have not any illusions about our being a mass party of action; however, we do feel that we must participate in our modest way wherever we can, to push a movement forward. The branch has learned a whole series of things by its effort to grapple with all of these problems. The comrades involved have learned and have advanced themselves immeasurably, both as to the nature of our Party's program and how to apply it. That alone justifies our participation. It is our hope that this whole action will be a means whereby some of our branch members, who are and have always been isolated from the mass movement, will have direct ties amongst the masses.

REPORT ON THE NEW YORK ELECTION CAMPAIGN

By Abe Victor

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1. For a tiny party such as the New York section, the purpose of an election campaign must be primarily to reach a wider audience of people than we ordinarily reach with the routine paper-selling, contacting and recruiting activities of the Party. The purpose must also be to show our own members in which (1) neighborhoods, (2) mass organizations (non-labor), (3) labor unions the Party has already obtained some kind of political following. The campaign must then have the effect of correcting the lack of influence in important neighborhoods, mass organizations (non-labor) and in labor unions.

2. The experience of our own Party, as well as others, proves that the best trade union work must in the long run prove only partly effective if the Party does not take part in the regular political life of the masses. The Party, for example, ran no election campaigns in New York from November 1941 until June 1945. There was much trade union work. A great deal of it was excellent in the best political sense. Comrades advanced the Party's labor party slogan as well as other transitional slogans on the union floor and in the shop. Because of the four-year abstention from election campaigns, however, the Party was able to poll only an average of 50 votes in New York's twenty-old Congressional districts in the 1945 elections. Compare this with the vote for Shachtman in the 1941 mayoralty campaign when he received an average of 100 votes per Congressional district.

3. Political activity and political interest among the masses is at its highest pitch during gubernatorial and presidential election years. For a party like ours to abstain from participating in at least these elections (1948, 1950, etc.) would be to act in a most conservative manner. The difficulties involved in getting on the ballot are great but not insurmountable.

4. We decided to run Congressional candidates in 1946 because it was the most nearly realizable goal for a Party of our size. We selected two out of all of New York's Congressional districts, Harlem and Brownsville, because we decided to run a campaign in a Negro and a Jewish area, and because we wanted to build a local branch in a Jewish neighborhood in which no branch of the Party had functioned for four years. An important additional factor was the fact that in those two districts the ALP did not run independent candidates - they supported the candidates of the Democratic Party.

5. Our selection was supported by the fact that without an excessive number of mobilizations (5 Saturdays and 4 weekdays in all) and with some 65 Party members actually on the street soliciting, we gathered over 13,000 signatures (only 11,400 of which were within the two districts).

6. In the pre-campaign period, like the other workingclass parties we were immediately challenged by the Democratic Party managers who feared even the small margin of votes they might lose to us. One of our two candidates, McKinney, was removed from the ballot on a technicality. We fought the best possible legal campaign to get on the ballot (at only a nominal cost) with the same result experi-

enced by the SP, SLP and SWP. The New York election laws are rigged against any minority candidate to which one of the two major parties file an objection.

7. In spite of the fact that we were removed from the ballot (or because of it) we achieved the major aim of our campaign in Harlem. Two leading articles in the Amsterdam News (one of them front page) and a third in the New York Age made the name of E. R. McKinney and the name of the Workers Party known to tens of thousands of Harlem people, a far wider audience than we ordinarily reach with the routine paper-selling, contacting and recruiting activities of the Party. The distribution of thousands of Party pamphlets and leaflets (the make-up, the content and attractiveness of our printed material was superior to anything achieved before by our Party, and superior to anything printed by all other parties in the New York elections) made our program known to a large portion of those who read about us in the papers. The printed material was supplemented by an open air meeting with rented sound equipment and with McKinney as the main speaker; the excellent thing about this meeting was the use of completely new comrades as speakers.

8. Nevertheless, our two attempted indoor meetings in Harlem proved that the Harlem Branch, after five years of activity, is not at all rooted in the district, is not really active in the mass organizations in the Harlem area and could not take proper advantage of the issue created by our removal from the ballot. One of the first lessons of the campaign must be the correction of our work in Harlem. In a sense, all of our work in mass organizations for two years preceding an election campaign is the preparation for our campaign. In this case our preparation was poor. What the possibilities are is indicated by the fact that one Harlem Branch member through a personal contact was able to get McKinney invited to a neighborhood forum at which he spoke against the Republican candidate and a representative of the Democratic candidate (who ducked all debates and forums in the entire campaign).

9. Our campaign in Brownsville did not receive as much publicity in the bourgeois press as in Harlem; but our own agitation and propaganda were better. Our printed material, as in Harlem, was of high caliber; but it was supplemented with regular open-air meetings almost every week on two busy corners, the last open-air meeting being with rented sound equipment and with Shachtman as the main speaker. Our open air meetings in Brownsville attracted audiences of 200, 300 and 400 people.

10. The Brownsville Branch, although it was in existence for only several weeks, at the time the campaign began already showed that the Branch was better rooted in the area. Shachtman debated Congressman Emanuel Celler at the invitation of an American Veterans Committee Brownsville Chapter (reported in Labor Action of October 28). The indoor meeting held in Brownsville with Shachtman and McKinney as the speakers, furthermore, was attended by some sixty outsiders who asked questions and participated in a lively discussion from the floor on the Workers Party position on the question of the homeless Jews of Europe.

11. We used rented loudspeaker equipment, stickers, printed pamphlets, leaflets, and a small amount of radio time in our agitational campaign. We allotted our funds in the following proportions:

Printed matter: pamphlets, leaflets	50%
Meetings with loudspeaker equipment	12%
Mailings	9%

The rest of our funds were used for the purely technical implements of the campaign, petitions, stationery, press release forms, petition boards, binding, notaries, lawyers, witnesses. We used free radio time only and succeeded in getting a total of about fifteen minutes of time divided between two stations. The New York Party successfully raised and paid back \$1400 for the purposes of the election campaign.

12. One of the errors we made was the use of a 32 page pamphlet (given our funds), a pamphlet which had to be sold, rather than a greater number of leaflets like the four page leaflets for Harlem and for Brooklyn which we could distribute free. The sale of this pamphlet did not arouse any real spirit among our comrades. It was a discouraging form of activity and detracted from what energy we might have expended in contacting and in getting out the vote.

13. The results of the campaign are to be seen in the effect it has had on the perspectives and influence of the Harlem and Brownsville branches and, of course, in the vote in Brownsville, as compared with last year's vote in the same districts. Our horrible lack of influence in Harlem can be corrected within two years, given the present core of the Harlem branch which spoke in the streets of Harlem for the first time in years and which also for the first time really knows the neighborhood and the organizations.

Our campaign had its most effective result in Brownsville, where the Workers Party is once more established as a political force. The 23rd Assembly District which embraces 75% of Brownsville, gave Shachtman 20 votes in 1945. The same district gave Shachtman 150 votes in 1946 (15 votes came from the Canarsie, Brighton Beach area where we did not campaign as against 3 votes from that district in 1945). Of the 150 votes we received in Brownsville, perhaps 50 can be said to represent simple protest votes, accidents, etc. The remainder, 100 votes, can be counted from among the people who attended our meeting on "Open the Doors to the Jews", people who attended our open air meetings and people who bought or received free our printed election material. In short, they are Workers Party sympathizers. Considering the fact that in 1945 the Workers Party concentrated the activities of people equivalent to two branches in the Brownsville area, the increase of votes by 130 over 1945 is no mean accomplishment.

To people who have had little experience with small Socialist parties like ours, the Cannonites and the SP (since 1937), our total vote in Brownsville of 165 votes would appear unimpressive and even ridiculous. But to anyone who compares it with the Cannonite vote in that district in 1945 (60 votes) and to anyone who gauges it as a sign of the growing influence of a tiny party, it is a good token of the possibilities which Brownsville offers for election campaign activity.

WHY OUR CAMPAIGNS FAIL

By Leon Shields (Chicago)

* * *

During the last several months, the Workers Party has concentrated its energies primarily upon two campaigns: the housing shortage and the inflationary rise in prices. The issues were current, the mood of the masses over the failure to solve these problems was an angry one, and our program was unquestionably popular, and should have served as an impetus for action on the part of a large number of people. Yet in both cases, except for their agitational value, the campaigns were complete duds (with the important and significant exception of Seattle). This, of course, is only a repetition of the fate of our campaigns in the past, and is the primary cause for the principal crisis which confronts the revolutionary movement today, i.e., the question of how to break out of our isolation.

The chief cause of our inability to reach the masses in action is exemplified most clearly in the lead article dealing with the price campaign in the November 18, 1946 issue of LABOR ACTION, which says: "In short, we have to rely on ourselves in this situation. There are some who are putting their confidence in local laws, guaranteeing rent controls. But as in New York, these contain a joker in almost every case,"

Here in three sentences is revealed the basic attitude which guarantees in advance that any campaign we may undertake will be a failure. For here we turn our backs upon the only way possible to mobilize the masses on this issue, i.e., a popular campaign making demands upon the appropriate legislative bodies. Instead, we reject this course of action as meaning that we put our "confidence in local laws" and counterpose in its place a phrase leading nowhere - "We have to rely on ourselves."

This essentially anti-parliamentary attitude has unfortunately been prevalent in the Trotskyist movement since its inception. So, before the war, when the Ludlow referendum became an issue, our immediate reaction was to oppose it - in this case our attitude was corrected belatedly by Trotsky. Since then, when the FEPC Bill was being forced upon Congress, instead of taking the lead in pushing it (and, of course, making it more democratic and more effective in execution), we spent 98% of our space attacking it. Only when the danger arose of its being repealed did we suddenly discover that there were some merits in the bill after all. (Needless to say, we did not undertake a campaign against Congress for preventing its repeal, for this would have implied that we were "putting our confidence" in a bourgeois legislative body!) Our handling of the issue of unemployment compensation, the OPA and every other issue that has confronted the nation, other than those that could be fought within the trade unions, has been essentially similar.

In effect, this has meant that although we have paid lip-service to the idea of utilizing bourgeois legislatures, in actuality we have rejected any attempt to apply this concept. It is true we have tried to utilize elections, but we did so on the frank basis that we were running our candidates simply as a means for disseminating

our propoganda. Those who know of our existence gave, in effect, this answer to our election campaigns:

"If we were interested primarily in your general ideas, it would hardly be necessary for you to propogandize us. And if we were ready to risk our lives in a direct assault upon the capitalist system, we would probably have been in your party already. But all we want is to improve somewhat the conditions of our lives, and we can do this to some extent by having legislation passed in our behalf. But since you tell us not to put our confidence in passing laws, and instead to rely on ourselves - i.e., to do nothing - we will give our backing to those parties who at least talk about fighting for our immediate demands."

In the pamphlet "Left Wing Communism," Lenin says that in the period 1903-1914 it would not have been possible for the Bolsheviks to preserve the revolutionary nucleus of their party, and much less to strengthen or develop it, without participating in the Russian Duma and other reactionary institutions. Could it be that here, in our refusal to conduct legislative campaigns, we have one clue to the mystery as to why the Trotskyist movement, in the more than 15 years of its existence, has not only not broken out of its isolation, but has had such a difficult struggle in simply preserving its cadres?

To return to the present campaign: Does "rely on ourselves" really mean "do nothing"? Not entirely, of course. Yet, an analysis of the many concrete proposals made by LABOR ACTION for conducting the campaign would show that they all boil down to this: (1) actions which can be undertaken only by trade unions, or (2) boycotts of goods by committees of housewives.

Actions that fall in the first category are, of course, possible only for a very limited number of people - even our fractions in the trade unions have not been effective enough to do much about this program. As for the second point, boycotts, they must of necessity be extremely ineffective. What good would it do for housewives, as LABOR ACTION continually urges, to organize committees to inspect prices? The women already know that prices are high, even without the committees, and they do not buy the highest priced goods even without our urging. Something along this line can, of course, be done - but only to a very limited extent. Committees of housewives and unions could have a real meaning only for the purpose of enforcing a maximum price law - otherwise, they are largely useless.

To cap it all, in the next paragraph of the previously quoted LABOR ACTION article, where confidence in local laws has been rejected, there is this statement: "Such action as a committee of housewives in Seattle are now taking on milk prices is exactly the kind of action required in the rent situation." (!)

But the committee of housewives in Seattle had as its purpose the demand of a city ordinance for a maximum price on milk (i.e., precisely a local law!). What is more, it is not accidental that only in Seattle, where the comrades proceeded on the basis of a legislative campaign, has there been any action taken at all - for no other type of campaign is possible. In Chicago we are undertaking a program of action aimed also at demands upon the City Council. The campaign is only beginning, but I will venture that we shall at least rival the success of our comrades in Seattle.

addenda (lest there be a misunderstanding).

This is not advanced as a panacea for breaking out of our isolation, e.g., it is certainly necessary for our comrades to go where the masses are, above all into the trade unions. Also, we should be in such organizations as the NAACP, the Jewish Congress (note: but not with assimilationist, i.e., imperialist, ideas), various independent voters' leagues, etc.

However, most campaigns can be conducted only on a legislative basis. Of course, these will often have to be accompanied by demonstrations, strikes, boycotts, or any other type of mass action for the purpose of forcing the passage of this legislation - but a program of action which in effect ignores the legislature, which counterposes "direct action" to "confidence in laws" can only result in sectarian failure.