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ON THE PARTY PRESS

By Martin

The new stage in the development of the party is strikingly expressed both internally and externally. In both fields a transformation of quantity into quality -- a veritable revolution -- has taken place. It is not the same party that it used to be, either in regard to its internal life and composition or in the nature of its external activity. These changes should be studied attentively from each side as well as in their interrelation. Here I wish only to deal with our external work, with particular reference to the press, (Later on I hope to add something to the discussion of our public propaganda work in general, and also in its various particular departments. A big field, one that has never been properly surveyed and charted, is open here).

What kind of a paper will best serve the needs of the new party in the next period which lies immediately before us? We used to think, or rather take for granted, that as we broke out of the narrow propaganda circle and began to get a hearing from the workers, we should aim at changing the Weekly into a Daily. That was the motivation for the launching of the twice-a-week experiment and the later proposal, put on the shelf by the outbreak of the internal struggle of 1939, to proceed to a three-a-week issue. It was also assumed that, as the paper became a "mass" paper, it would be obliged to adapt itself to the political understanding of the average, if not to the lowest common denominator, among its new readers; leaving the more complicated political and theoretical explanations to the monthly magazine. On closer analysis, with the question no longer speculative but concrete and immediate, both these ideas require radical revision.

The Need for a Big National Weekly

With our present resources and man-power, and those which can reasonably be counted on in the next period of expansion, a daily paper would devour such huge sums as to starve the other departments of our work and defeat our plans for a symmetrical development of the movement. The task of distributing a Daily would consume so much of the energies of our limited forces as to sacrifice volume of circulation for frequency of issue. The experience with the twice-a-week paper taught us a preliminary lesson in this respect; the circulation per issue actually declined despite the added efforts exerted by the party members. But what we have to do next is to reach more and more new people, catch their attention at the moment when they are just awakening from political indifference, and try to reach them with our message regularly. A big national weekly is ideally suited to this task. And this is a project within our means and potential resources, financial and physical. The whole situation cries out for concentration on the task of developing The Militant into an 8-page national paper, published at the cheapest price possible so as to facilitate not merely the expansion but the multiplication of its present circulation; a weekly which is not just another radical paper

but the national paper, dominating the radical labor field. This is our central task. It is within our means and resources. And its successful execution will help, not hinder, the symmetrical development of all other departments of party work -- organization, publishing house and educational system.

Why must the new Militant be 8 pages and why must we cut the subscription rate to \$1.00 per year? The necessity for these steps -- they are not optional but necessary -- flows from an analysis of the many-sided purposes which the paper must serve in the given situation on the one side, and the resources which we can reasonably depend on, on the other.

On the Price of the Militant

The decision to reduce the subscription price to \$1.00 a year was an important and necessary step at the present time. The objection that this is "too cheap" would be well grounded only if it could be shown that we can't afford to cut the price. But, according to our figures which we have checked and cross-checked very carefully, our present resources permit us to make this drastic reduction without disorganizing our budget. If we have erred in our calculations experience will soon teach us and we can make the necessary correction. In any case the experiment will be a useful experience.

The principle that readers must pay for the paper is a sound one; people are inclined to put a higher value on things they pay for, even if it is a very small amount, than on throw-away sheets which they get for nothing. I believe all experienced organizers recognize that throw-away leaflets are the most expensive and least productive of all propaganda methods. That, however, does not prevent some people, who have not yet formed the habit of thinking and weighing experience, from periodically making excited proposals for free leaflet distribution as a panacea. But, nevertheless, experience has also shown that it is the principle of paying, not the amount paid, that is most important. The two should not be confused and lumped together..

It is not our task to vindicate a commercial principle but to assure the widest possible distribution of our paper to people who value it enough to read it. As said, that is best guaranteed if they pay something for it. But then comes a second proposition to whose validity all contemporary publishing experience testifies. That is, that once the principle of payment is firmly established, the paper must be sold at a cheap price in order to attain a wide circulation; the cheaper the better. This is the publishing principle of the great metropolitan dailies as well as the national weeklies of wide circulation such as Colliers and The Saturday Evening Post. Such publications do not give away a single copy -- at least, the Audit Bureau of Circulation does not recognize free copies as actual circulation -- but their price per volume is far cheaper than the \$1.00 a year Militant. The New York Times, for example, gives a 50-page paper for 3¢. That, by volume, is at the rate of about 16 pages for a penny. The \$1.00 a year Militant figures out at the rate of four pages for a penny. Yet nobody thinks of The Times as a "cheap" paper. The \$1.00 a year Militant will not be thought "too cheap" either.

The question is solely; How cheap can we afford to make the subscription price in order to facilitate the widest possible distribution? The answer depends on how much subsidy we can count on allocating to this department of our work. The Times circulation is subsidized by advertising revenue. We must do the same thing, on a more modest scale, from voluntary contributions. At present, this subsidy permits us to sell the paper for \$1.00 per year. If later we can make it cheaper yet we will do so. We want circulation!

A postscript should be added to my notes on the price of The Militant. It is not necessary to cut the retail price of single copies. The newsstands don't like to handle a weekly paper selling for less than five cents. Once before we cut the price to three cents. The only result was to reduce the revenue without increasing the sales. It seems that people who know the paper and want it enough to hunt it up on a newsstand and pay for it are just as willing to pay five cents, the traditional retail price of radical papers. The situation is different when a larger amount of money for a subscription is involved. The difference between 50¢ and a dollar, or between \$1 and \$2 is noticed by most people. I have always believed that one of the big secrets of the great circulation of the old "Appeal to Reason" was the cheap subscription rate -- 25¢ per year. Wayland and Warren were of the same opinion. That was why, when rising costs made the 25¢ per year subscription rate untenable, they adjusted the budget by cutting the length of the subscription rather than by increasing the price of the prepaid sub card. I well remember when the new rate of 25¢ for 40 weeks went into effect. Fifty cents today is about the equivalent of a quarter at that time. I anticipate a great increase of 50¢-six month subs when the new rate goes into effect. The difference in price does not mean so much and is not necessary for old Militant patriots and radicals who want to keep track of us. But for new people who are just beginning to be interested -- and these are precisely the ones we are most anxious to reach -- the cheaper price can easily be decisive in three cases out of four.

Recognition for Sub-Getters

I am especially interested in the report George gave us about the new subscriptions secured from new readers, especially in New York. This experience may show us one of the most important avenues to that expansion which is our idée fixe for the next period. The great circulation of the "Appeal to Reason" was maintained by the "Appeal Army" of individual "sub hustlers" to which new members were constantly recruited. Wayland and Warren's instrument for recruiting and keeping this "Army" together was the "Appeal Army" column in the paper. There the humble workers in the field received personal recognition and appreciation. People like to have acknowledgment of their efforts. And I think there is no acknowledgment more universally agreeable than seeing one's "name in the paper," as a report of work performed. My father was a member of Wayland's "Appeal Army," Many a time one could read in the column such an item as this: "Four more subs from John Cannon, of Rosedale, Kansas, last week. This is the kind of work that counts for Socialism." My father was a popular man, with many friends who didn't spare praises. But I believe the little notices of his work which appeared from time to time in the "Appeal Army" column

gave him more satisfaction than anything else, because that was recognition of the value of his work.

"The Militant Is A Tool"

We need and must have an 8-page paper now, not because there is any magic in the figure 8 and not because this is the right size for a paper under all circumstances, but because it can be best adapted to the specific tasks which our press must serve at the present time and is within our prospective means. The decisions we make on such questions as the size and frequency of issue of a paper, as on all other so-called "practical" questions, should be as carefully reasoned as our "political" decisions. This is one of the surest signs of the introduction of "professionalism," i.e. "consciousness," into our work. The Militant is a tool which in the past served primarily, almost exclusively, the task which the circumstances of the time obliged us to concentrate on; the recruitment and education of a cadre of the most advanced political elements. It is quite obvious that the whole objective situation is changing now, and therewith the position of our party within it. The tasks and the opportunities of the party are changing. The press must be regulated accordingly. We all recognize this. But we can waste a lot of energy and neglect many opportunities if we see the new problems only "in general" and make a haphazard adjustment of the press to them. We should examine the new problem closely and try to make as precise an adjustment of the press as possible.

The Nature of the 8-Page Militant

Viewing The Militant as a tool, I should like to refine the definition by saying that, in the next period, it must serve us as a combination tool which can be used on several different jobs. I believe this qualification is very important.

The paper, for the first time, is getting a good reception from masses of workers without previous political education or interest. The majority of its readers at the present moment are new people, and it is to be expected that this majority will become larger. The Militant must serve this new audience, adapt itself to the stage of their political development, under penalty of losing their interest. This dictates a new journalistic technique. Our language and our arguments must be simplified and made more accessible to the new type of reader. This does not mean to vulgarize, to "talk down" in "Labor Action" fashion, but to study and learn the art of popularizing our propaganda. It is an art and it can be learned and practised without revising or watering down a single basic principle. The problem is one of presentation, with the new readers in mind. They are only, for the most part, newly interested, only partly interested, and the paper must be lightened up and brightened up in order to hold their interest and lead them into deeper studies. The paper has improved enormously along this line during the past year; but we must keep the direction clear and go farther.

I have no doubt that a "Gallup poll" would show conclusively that the cartoons and drawings and the new feature columns account to a great degree for the increased popularity of the paper. With the increased space which the 8-pager will provide we must try deliberately to make further advances along this line. More cartoons and drawings; more light features, especially short features; more effort to give information not found elsewhere; more studied effort to convey our ideas in small doses, subtly and sometimes indirectly, for the average worker doesn't like to be pounded over the head with direct arguments in every article and every headline.

Attracting the New Reader

For the benefit of the new reader we must tell the history of the movement over and over again, dramatizing the great events and personalities of the past, in order to build up one of the most powerful supporting ideas any movement can have -- the idea of tradition. Man does not live by argument alone. He needs variety of interest; color; entertainment; information; drama; recollection of things past, especially where these recollections bring human personalities into view. The more and better the paper is dressed up with these variations on the theme of Communism the better will the paper be liked and the more surely will the first interest of the new readers be drawn into firm convictions and grateful devotion to the paper which has opened for them a window on a new rich world.

The 8-page paper will give us more room, but it should not be used merely to add 16 more columns of the same. The aim should be primarily to add greater variety. We should experiment with sketches and stories about people. That is mainly what the "Diary of a Steel Worker" consists of, and that is why it is so popular. Not everybody understands it, but people like to read about people. We here have discussed the idea of reprinting in serial form the socialist and labor novels of the past. We will have room for it, and I believe the plates or serial rights could be secured for very small amounts. We thought the new generation would be interested in "The Jungle," "The Iron Heel," "Pelle the Conqueror," Gorky's "Mother," "Comrade Yetta," etc. In fact we know it. An earlier generation of social rebels were profoundly moved and influenced by these stories. Their children and grandchildren are no different.

A Combination Paper

The dominant notes of the 8-page paper must be simplification and agitation, i.e. concentrated hammering on a very few basic slogans of the day. These are the indispensable characteristics of a popular paper. But -- and here is the catch, here is the main reason we need a bigger paper -- our Militant cannot be merely a popular paper even if every line of its contents is irreproachably correct as far as it goes. The Militant must strive to be a combination paper; a paper which interests and serves the needs of the new reader who picks it up for the first time, the reader who is beginning to think of himself as a Trotskyist without yet thinking about the party, and the educated party militant -- all at the same time. If we get this conception clearly in our heads we will be able to avoid some of the most costly

errors of the past and close big gaps through which many thousands of potential socialists slipped away from the movements in the past.

We can only afford to publish one paper. And we must address ourselves to the politically educated as well as to the uninitiated. And we must also remember that between the best posted party member of years of study and experience and the new reader there are numerous strata in different degrees of development. And we must publish a paper for all of them. Most important of all, we must bear in mind that the new reader does not remain a new reader all his life. The average intelligent worker quickly absorbs the few simple ideas which attracted him to the paper in the first place. Then he begins to feel the need of more substantial food.

Learning from Past Experiences

An agitational paper which does not lead him from the "First Reader" to the Second, and then still higher, in time becomes monotonous. He doesn't feel the need of mere "agitation" so strongly on matters on which he is already convinced; and may even get tired of it and fall back into passivity and indifference, unless he is led, step by step, into the deeper questions of Marxism with the ever new and ever changing variety of interests aroused by their presentation and discussion. Precisely here was the Achilles' heel of the old "Appeal to Reason." Its unrivalled agitation on a few simple points, and its sensational exposures, made the "Appeal" very attractive to thousands of new readers who were making the first break in their allegiance to the bourgeois parties. But the "Appeal" left them, so to speak, on the first step of the ladder, never raised them higher. The readers, after a spell of enthusiasm, got tired of the sing-song which they already knew by heart and fell away. At a certain stage of its development, the "Appeal" was confronted with the life and death problem of getting new thousands of readers to take the place of other thousands who were falling away.

I know all this very well because I was one of them. It was my good fortune to discover the I.W.W. and the new problems of theory and tactics raised by it, and to get an introduction into Marxist economics at the old "Socialist Educational Society" in Kansas City, just at the time I was beginning to feel that the "Appeal to Reason" had nothing more to teach me. My case was rather typical. Most of the militants I knew in those days had gone through the "Appeal to Reason" school. But the point is, they had gone through it. I finally stopped reading the "Appeal" altogether. Occasionally when I picked it up later, it lacked the old interest for me. The "Appeal" was too simple, too exclusively agitational, to hold the continuing interest of a developing militant and aid his further education.

Of course, this example may appear to be exaggerated, insofar as it expresses the conditions of the time and the general ideological poverty of the old movement. But it is worth mentioning in any case, if only as a "horrible example." We are a head taller than the movement from which we grew, but that puts upon us the obligation to use our head. We must try to do everything understandingly, consciously. Applied to The Militant, this means among other things, that we

should deliberately plan it as a variegated combination paper which has something in it of special interest to all of its readers in all stages of their development; which conducts the new reader by stages from agitation on the burning issues of the day into all the more profound questions of the class and the party, and continues to interest him after he has assimilated them.

The capitalist press solves the problem of attracting and holding readers of different social strata and different interests in its own way. Their prescription is simple; They provide a great variety of departments and features ranging from comic strips and cross word puzzles to market reports and the society column. Something for everybody. They even have editorials and some people read them. In our own way, and for our own purposes, and with our own resources, we should follow this pattern. But for that we need 8 pages.

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Detroit Organizes for the 10,000 Sub Campaign

By Jerry Kirk

In the past campaigns new avenues of work have been opened up to the party. The campaigns that are to come will carry through the same process. We are already harvesting the results of the labor we have put into the recent sub drive and call back work. A broad periphery of workers in the industrial unions have become acquainted with us. A large group has already been approached and can be correctly labelled sympathizers of the party. A goodly number of sympathizers have entered our ranks, forcing upon us new and quick methods of education and absorption into party work,

Each campaign imposes tasks greater than the previous one by virtue of the increase of new party members -- thus requiring higher campaign quotas.

In Detroit we have learned the old adage that before you carry a campaign outside of the party you first carry on your campaign inside the party ranks. You consciously prepare the membership for the objectives of the coming drive. This requires almost as much time as carrying through the drive itself. The objective of the campaign must be understood by every member of the branch.

To facilitate the campaign all preparations of a mechanical nature, such as files, maps of areas of work, selection of neighborhoods, should be gathered beforehand. Finally, all the activity of the branch from educationals, trade union fraction work, and contacting, should be centered in a systematic fashion around the campaign.

For several weeks we have been preparing for the coming 10,000 sub drive of the MILITANT. We are busy clearing up renewals from the past subscription drive so that we can enter the next campaign with a clean slate.

In the process of this work we have selected the very best names of workers whom we consider potential members of the party.

Our objective on renewal work is to obtain subs and sell the "Trial pamphlets". With those who resubscribe and are considered potential party material we proceed one step further in bringing them closer to the party. We sell this group our new labor party pamphlet and the History of American Trotskyism. We also ask them to aid us in our coming subscription drive, and lastly, invite them to our meetings.

In this work we have a division of labor in the branch. The newer comrades are engaged in renewal work. The more politically advanced comrades assume responsibility for the contact work.

During this last sub drive this method was utilized in one plant to excellent advantage. One comrade with the aid of sympathizers obtained 125 subs in the plant. We intend to expand this activity as much as possible.

Coordinating our work outside of the plant and inside is simplified by our trade union fractions. Here too we have a division of labor. When we can't carry on a drive from the inside for reasons of caution in trade union work, we implement the work of our comrades in the shop by contacting individuals outside of the plant. This is one of the most positive results of the last sub drive. We now have contacts in every major plant in the city who are willing to do some work for the party. It is up to us to get to them.

Our branch is witnessing increased activity in all spheres of its work. To keep pace with our growth we are in the process of stepping up our educational activity. The result of all this will be -- new members -- higher quotas -- bigger campaigns. The dialectics of the process can be summed up by stating; the more work that is done the more we have to do. There is a big job ahead for every comrade.

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REPORT ON SECTION ORGANIZATION

By J. Bowers, L. A. Section Organizer

In this written report submitted to the branches for discussion, we want to deal only with the two most important phases of our activity as revealed in the development of the movement in the last period; the organization of our recruiting activity and the integration of our forces with a well-planned educational program. A more detailed analysis of composition, statistics, and other aspects of our work will be made in an oral report at the Section Conference.

1. RECRUITING. The process of recruiting to the movement in the past has been in large part a spontaneous one. While considerable planning preceded other phases of work, literature sales, distributions, mass meetings, etc., contacting and recruiting was left as a general aim, and fell into the place of a by-product of other activities. In the most recent period, the Section Executive Committee has attempted to raise this process to the level of organized campaign work, to consciously intervene in the development of contacts and recruitment to the party.

Forcibly brought to our attention while organizing a sympathizers pledge system, was the fact that many comrades had no contact with workers outside of the party. In the course of work in the movement, we had cut off contact from the outside. Our social as well as political life centered in the movement alone. Exceptions were notably among our members who still had unsevered relations with workers outside of the movement. This inward life is easy to understand. We were a small group swimming against a heavy current. Coming to the movement fully often forced a severing of old relations. But at this time such a process must be resisted, for today our ideas find more response than at any time in the past, as demonstrated in our sub campaign. The movement cannot grow except through the contact of its members with the class as a whole. Our central slogan thus became "every member must have a contact". "Every member a Trotskyist agitator". There is no reason in this period of expansion for our comrades to live in isolation from the workers. Our periphery is large and our base in the working class is growing. The full significance of our concept of turning our face to the masses lies not only in our propaganda and agitational methods, but in our way of living. Even comrades not engaged in industry can be given contacts with whom they can work and develop into party recruits.

To set the example, and to test the effectiveness of planned recruiting work, the SEC placed on each agenda the question of recruiting, assigning each member of the committee a contact, and reviewing our progress each week. We began by analyzing our contact lists, categorizing them according to their development, and working on what we called the "hot list". Branches then began to follow suit, and the immediate recruiting results were proof of the correctness of this method. Within a period of two months we recruited 17 members.

In the past few years, our primary task was that of developing our political work. Direct recruiting from the plants was negligible. General recruiting, as a result of mass meetings, classes, etc., was the dominant feature. However, the situation in the plants seems to be changing. In a number of large plants our comrades have been able to attract groups of politically awakening workers to the party. These developments dictate that we place enormous emphasis on political work in the factories, plants and yards. Sub sales and recruiting on the job are now basic features of our work. Wherever we find an opening we must direct our forces there to take full advantage of the possibilities. With this in mind, we feel it necessary to concentrate available forces in the most favorable spots as the opportunities arise. This is not colonization in the old sense, in order to build ourselves an industrial base, to guarantee a workers composition of the movement. This task, by and large, has been accomplished. We concentrate our forces now for the purpose of taking advantage of the growing recruiting possibilities where these possibilities are greatest. 1350 subscribers to the Militant in Los Angeles are perhaps the richest source of recruitment. Although, as a whole, this process will be a longer one, we have already scored a number of decisive successes in this field. The files are full of subscribers who are characterized by our comrades as very good recruiting possibilities.

We now have a larger circle of sympathizers and contacts than at any other period. This is what justifies our organized recruiting activity on a campaign basis. We are now able to think in terms of new branches with a natural development from a neighborhood or industrial base. There is already the nucleus for such a branch in Santa Monica. However, the development must be permitted to proceed naturally, and when sufficient forces have been recruited, a stable branch can be organized. Other such possibilities are looming.

In the meantime, the Central Branch has grown far too large to be able to function effectively. With nearly 60 members, one branch executive committee is not able to give sufficient attention to the individual problems in the branch. Each full meeting with contacts present more closely approximates our lecture forums. In addition, the comparatively high level of the branch provides material for at least two leading committees. For these reasons, we propose that the Central Branch be divided. This division must of necessity be an arbitrary one, for in examining the geographic composition of the branch, we find it spread out all over the city. However, we can generally divide the branch into the west side, including Hollywood, the near south side, the far west; and the east and northeast side of Los Angeles, including Boyle Heights, Eagle Rock, Glendale, etc. Out of these two large branches can be born more indigenous neighborhood branches as these become feasible.

II. EDUCATION. Just as we have had to improve our methods of recruiting, so also we have been forced to view our educational activity in a new way. The accelerated pace of recruitment necessitates a far more conscious and planned intervention in the educational processes of the movement. We can no longer be satisfied with the old methods of reliance on the individual's integration by close association with older comrades and individual study.

A. The Basic Training Course. Nationally, we have taken steps to assure the basic education of new members by establishing as a regular procedure a special course devised to meet their requirements. We must bring this national program into the routine work of the section. Each member, on joining the movement, should take as his first major assignment the Basic Training Course.

In order to organize sufficient classes to meet our present and future needs, we shall have to begin by training a large core of Basic Training Course teachers. We propose to establish as a permanent institution a regular Teachers Staff Meeting. These meetings will discuss not only the material to be taught, but also teaching methods. The Teachers Staff Meetings, should be considered as a growing institution, and should not be limited to the number of comrades needed for immediate class assignments. We should at all times have on hand a number of available teachers to begin new classes and to replace others when necessary. In each Basic Training Class we should develop amongst the students candidates for the Teachers Staff Meetings. This will be a natural process, as workers coming into the movement vary in the degree of their previous political experience. More developed recruits will be required to take the course as a preliminary training for teaching assignments.

Through the staff discussions and with the help of the national educational department, the basic training class outline will be continuously improved. We must not only be concerned with the improvement of our material, but constantly look for new and more effective pedagogic methods. If we are to meet the tremendous educational needs of a growing movement, the continuous process of training teachers must be considered of major importance.

B. The Los Angeles School of Social Science. A year ago we began the Los Angeles School of Social Science as a permanent institution. The success of the school last year guaranteed its continued existence. We must organize another session of the school this winter. However, a few changes are indicated. We want to bring the classes as conveniently close to the comrades and contacts as possible. Instead of having two sections of the school, one of which became a regular mass meeting, we want to organize five sections of the School in the following localities: San Pedro, South Side, the central office, Santa Monica and San Diego. For each section of the school, we propose the same curriculum, consisting of two courses, one on the History of American Trotskyism, and the second on the Problems of the European Revolution. Each class will be an hour, both held the same evening for six meetings. The advertising material for the school will then be centered on the subjects of the classes with the different addresses listed for each section.

As another project in the school, we shall have one major course, in the center only, for public speaking. Students in this course will be selected after application to the school. This will be an advanced course, meeting on a separate evening.

The study of Capital has been conducted by some of our comrades on an informal, small group basis. This shows a keen interest among the comrades in the study of the basic work of Marxism. To encourage such study groups and to give them every possible assistance, we propose that a formal class on Capital be organized for the period of the school, with a view to orienting and stimulating small groups to continue the study of Capital even after the school.

To meet a program of five sections for the school, we shall have to have a teaching staff of approximately twelve. As the school will be opened in the middle of February, the teaching staff should hold a week-end seminar a month in advance, with one reporter for each course, who will present a proposed outline of the course for discussion. Each teacher will then be able to discuss the material to be used in the class, and on the basis of this report and discussion, to then prepare his own outline.

C. Summer School. We must begin immediately to investigate locations for a summer school, to correspond with the other sections on the west coast regarding the possibilities of making it a west coast project, and to plan the courses of the school so that teachers may be given considerable advance notice on their assignments. The summer school planned well in advance should be a project of the most intensive educational activity of the party during the year. In planning the summer school we will also get the help and advice of the national office.

D. Branch Educational Work. The question next arises as to what role branch educationals should play in our general educational program. Although here we must be governed by a more flexible concept, as the needs vary with the development of world events, with apparent and peculiar branch problems, and the teaching forces available, a number of tasks can be outlined to help give direction to branch educationals.

First, we have the task of teaching our comrades how to use the Militant, the Fourth International and our popular pamphlets. Educationals based on our press would stimulate the reading of our press and familiarize the comrades with its material and its importance. The comrades in turn can make far better use of this material with their contacts. Some comrades preparing educationals have asked for advice on source material. The best source material for educationals is usually the F.I., which is the foremost periodical in social science in the world.

Learning to use the F.I. as source material for educationals is very important. This means also building educationals around current events. Of great interest and concern to our contacts, as well as to our members, are those events read about in the bourgeois and labor press and discussed by the workers in the shops.

Secondly, our branch educational work should deal with trade union developments and problems. Our comrades should be conversant with the trade union scene. National and local developments should be analyzed and studied. Reports from our leading Trade Union comrades will assist in this process.

Thirdly, the branches should overcome a tendency to sharply divide their meetings into a brief and streamlined business meeting, followed by an educational. Most of our work can be done in a simple and efficient way, but it is necessary that the branches discuss the organizational problems and campaigns of our section as fully as possible. The SEC gets a real education in Marxism by direct application of Marxist ideas to the local scene and the utilization in its discussion of problems of the Marxian method. The branches should also have a similar life. Let us understand that this will not alienate or bore our contacts but on the contrary will give them a keener interest and a better appreciation of the tasks and inner life of the revolutionary party. The theories of Trotskyism are not abstract lecture room formulas, but living guides to the revolutionary work of our party.

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LETTER FROM MILWAUKEE

Please consider the following suggestions relative to the 10,000 Militant Subscription Campaign:

1) Selection of a Campaign Director from the ranks rather than the regular Literature Director. Such a procedure would devote the entire energy of one person in each branch to the administrative work of the campaign. By selecting a comparatively new, energetic, and promising worker for this job we would develop new leadership as well as giving them a feeling of responsibility and worth. New workers are often devoid of the old habits of sloth carried over from a past period of the Party's work. The Literature Director assists the Campaign Director.

2) Invite sympathizers and contacts to participate in this campaign and distribute them among all branch teams. This will put the members on their toes, make them more careful and diligent and punctual.

Fraternally,

Jack O'Connell, Organizer

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EXCERPTS FROM A LETTER FROM LOS ANGELES

I am now engaged in working up plans for the coming campaign. Both technical details and perspectives. I expect to have them ready within the next few weeks, at which time I will send a copy on to you. This campaign will be an opportunity to show what we have learned from the previous ones, and I think that the worst defects of the others was the shortness of the period of preparation.

One point in Morris Stein's report on organization in The Militant was the possibility of sending field organizers to a locality to sell a few hundred subs and move on, letting The Militant be our organizer. We have several good areas around here where such an attempt should be very fruitful, Long Beach for example. This is in addition to our other good spots where quite a bit of work has already been done.

Another plan I had in mind was the selling of subs in an area a few blocks square centering around a comrade's home, if it is in a desirable area. This would make him the center of a potential branch. At least the center of discussion groups etc., and he would find it easy obtaining renewals and visiting the best of these contacts. Another form of this is the assigning of comrades the responsibility for a similar area where we do not have any comrades at present such as certain parts of the Negro area where we have only a few comrades and a tremendous number of subscribers.

Technical details include adequate filing facilities for the 3,000 names we should have in the next year, report sheets for mobilizations, close co-operation between branches and center on the names of the new subscribers. It would be a great help if the N.O. were able to print a lot of such material, especially for the smaller branches where it doesn't pay to mimeograph such material but that is only an afterthought.

A weekly or bi-weekly letter to the membership will help us keep in close touch with everyone. During the last period, in the literature campaign we used this for our mobilizations with some success.

I think it might be a very good idea for you to put out a two tone job giving some important facts about The Militant which we could use nationally. Then we could try placing the paper on doorsteps and come around in a few days. The leaflet would have done most of the work and we could clinch the deal. This might also save a lot of time.

I will keep in close touch with you on all aspects of the campaign in the coming period. I think that you might discuss with the various branch agents, preparations for this campaign to start immediately.

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A LETTER FROM FLINT

Dear Comrade:

Please increase our Militant bundle order to 100 weekly, at least for the next few weeks or until further notice.

We will need more for distributions in preparation for subscription sales. It helps a great deal to leave two or three issues at every house in a neighborhood before beginning a canvass there. Then the follow-up is much easier than cold-turkey canvassing. With such preparation the final reception is often very enthusiastic.

Also I find it helpful to offer two or even three recent issues as samples to gain an entree. That at least gets the door open, and if only children are home they can be told about the special coupon in each issue.

I find it rather an advantage than a handicap to carry along pamphlets when selling subs -- a few each of a few varieties, right in the brief case with the sample papers. Sometimes I even sell pamphlets when I fail to get a sub. But the trial sub is such a giveaway that almost anyone who can be approached at all will usually invest 25¢ for 26 issues. Then in most cases I go on: "We also have several pamphlets you might like -- on Socialism, racial questions, the need for a labor party, etc." I usually sell something; sometimes quite an assortment. Then, of course, I also announce meetings to likely people.

Comradely yours,

Jeff Thorne

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MILITANT SUBSCRIPTION CAMPAIGN

By R. Aubrey

Questions and Answers:

Q. What is the opening date of the Militant Subscription Campaign?

A. The campaign is to be launched February 25 with a national (Red Sunday) Party mobilization, the first of its kind in our Party. The results of this mobilization are to be wired to the Campaign Manager Monday, February 26, so that the number of subscriptions sold on the Sunday mobilization by each branch can be recorded on the scoreboard when the campaign is officially launched in The Militant of March 3. (Copy for the March 3 issue of The Militant must be turned into the Editorial Office no later than Monday, February 26.)

Q. What is the length of the campaign?

A. The campaign is to continue for three months and will close officially with another national (Red Sunday) Party mobilization Sunday, May 27.

Q. What day is deadline for the Militant Subscription Campaign scoreboard each week?

A. Saturday of each week is the deadline. Subscriptions reaching the business office later than Saturday morning will be included in the following week's scoreboard.

Q. How soon can the trial sub cards be obtained?

A. The sub cards are available now and are to be ordered from the Campaign Manager. We have added a new feature to the cards; they are like the previous trial sub cards except now they have a Subscriber's Receipt attached by perforation.

Q. Are the subscription cards to be paid for in advance?

A. We prefer that the cards be paid for in advance, but this should be no obstacle in ordering a sufficient supply of cards. Those branches who cannot pay for the cards in advance can request that the cost thereof be applied to their Militant bundle account. Then during the course of the campaign as the subscriptions are sold the money can be sent to us as payment on the cards.

Q. Will 25% subscribers be dropped automatically after a period of six months or will you wait for the branches to send notice?

A. The details of the follow-up on the trial subscribers to be obtained during this campaign have not been worked out yet. But these subscribers will not be dropped until we have contacted them either through the mails or through the branches.

Q. Do you want the branches to send the cards in weekly?

A. The subscriptions should be sent to us as they are secured by the branches so that the subscriber can get the paper as soon as possible; also this will facilitate our work here in the office.

Q. Can trial subscribers renew with another trial subscription?

A. The trial subscription is to be used to introduce new readers to the paper. When a trial subscriber renews he must get a regular 6-month sub for 50¢ or a 1-year sub for \$1.

Q. If a branch sells subs in a nearby town outside its territory does the branch receive credit for these subs?

A. Yes, the branches receive credit for all subscriptions procured by the branch members.

Q. Do individual comrades get credit for the subs sold by friends and sympathizers whom they involve in the work of the campaign?

A. Yes, and we are extremely anxious for the comrades to involve contacts and sympathizers in the campaign. This is not only an excellent method of increasing our subscribers, but is one of the best methods of bringing sympathizers closer to the Party.

Q. Will individual comrades be given credit for high scores?

A. Yes, the branch Campaign Directors in writing up their work should mention the comrades with the highest scores and those names will be mentioned in the weekly campaign column in The Militant.

Q. Will any prizes be given in the Campaign?

A. To the ten comrades getting the highest individual scores nationally we will present a 1944 bound volume of Fourth International.

* * *

We ask the careful cooperation of all comrades in filling out the sub cards.

Names and addresses must be printed; a poorly filled out card means that the subscriber won't receive the paper.

The postal zone number must be included on the card; the postal authorities insist that an address is incomplete without it.

* * *

FORWARD TO A MASS PAPER!

A LETTER FROM ST. PAUL

Dear Comrade Aubrey:

I was glad to hear that my experiences can be of use to the party; and as to the amplification of them, I will try to do my best in the following paragraphs.

Yes, there are some very interesting facts and stories resulting from my Christmas Fund Campaign experiences in the shop where I work. I have worked in the place for six months now. It is a railroad shop and is under the domination of the AFL craft union set-up. There are seven unions covering six hundred men. I am in one of the smallest of them and therefore the most reactionary from the standpoint of the top leadership. I have had trade union experience before but, like comrade Adams has pointed out to me, I always get involved in trade union work but never get any party comrades in them. So this time I decided to turn it around. I spent some time finding out the thoughts of various people in regard to the high cost of living, the war, and how they stood on politics. With this background we come to the Christmas Fund Campaign. It is very clear that the place to go for support was the rank and file militants. This involved risks because I didn't know who might be a stool pidgeon. In a previous discussion one of the men had taken me aside and warned me that what I was talking about might get to the bosses and to be careful. After some discussion with him, he agreed to show me the good and the bad. I found out that some of the men called him a fascist; and after investigation, found out it was because he was against the war. Through this same person I learned that the president of the union was OK. SO, now I was getting some place.

I brought the material from the CRDC on the fund drive to work and approached these two men for support and received it at once. The president of the union said, "These men went to jail for the labor movement. They must be OK." We went around the shop selling the seals to the militants which led to questions and discussion and the demand for more information. Some of the people had the false notion that the case was a racketeer case and that somebody had stolen some union funds. Of course this is what the capitalist press had told them. A wide circulation of the penny pamphlet of Goldman's did away with this notion. We gave one to everyone who contributed to the fund.

Things followed in their regular order. I sold the trial literature to my two friends first and then The Militant. After that it was just a matter of time to get around to the others. I had a very good experience with one fellow who after some discussion told me he had been an active fund raiser in the Sacco-Vanzetti Case. He said, "I know what this means. You can count on me for support." One fellow said of the literature, "This is what we used to get in the old country. It reminds me of my youth." I found out that he had belonged to the old Social Democratic Party in Europe in 1917-22 before he came to this country.

The story is not finished yet. The other day we received the Labor Party pamphlet and I took five of them to work with me. I sold them before the whistle blew and had orders for more. I can take any material to the home of the two men who helped me with the fund, and receive payment for it. The last time I was there, I got a dollar for two nickel pamphlets. One of the men told me it was obvious that the people who write this material know what they are talking about; and that I could bring him any amount of literature within reason. I asked what that was. He said a dollars worth, so I brought him a dollars worth the next day. One of the younger men, who seemed quite interested, read all of the trial pamphlets during the Christmas weekend and came back for more afterward. He wants to join the party but it looks like he will be drafted. I am trying to get some of these people to come to our forums in Minneapolis and meet our people and get party minded. We will at any rate have a grouping in the union to start with. It also looks like we will expand into the bigger and more militant Union very soon. Their committeeman has asked for the Labor Party pamphlet from my friend who was reading it on the job.

Comradely yours,

Jack Pearson

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

January 31, 1945

TO ALL LOCALS AND BRANCHES:

Dear Comrades,

MEMBERSHIP CAMPAIGN TOTAL 218

In the three-week period between January 2, the date of our last communication on membership recruitment, and the release of our comrades, 35 new members have joined the party. This closes our campaign for 180 new members -- 10 new members for each imprisoned comrade -- with a total of 218. We have thus exceeded our goal by 21%.

Needless to say, the conclusion of the membership recruitment campaign does not end our recruitment work. During the course of the campaign the party has learned much about recruitment methods. Recruitment has become deeply embedded in the consciousness of the party. This recruitment consciousness must become an integral part of day-to-day work. The branches will continue sending their recruitment reports to the National Office as heretofore. We will continue our periodic communications to the branches, reporting their achievements in recruiting new members.

Now, more than ever before, the branches must pay special attention to the task of assimilating the new recruits. This problem must not be left to chance. It can be mastered only by conscious effort. The branch meetings and educational work must be carefully planned so that it is attuned to the political development of the new recruit. Older and experienced comrades should be teamed up with new recruits in the party work, for example, in distributions, in the sub campaign, etc.

We would like the comrades to write up for the Party Builder their experiences with the problem of assimilating new members and the recruitment problem in general. We also invite the comrades who have recently joined the party to contribute to the Party Builder. We would like to hear their side of the problem of integrating themselves in the party, to tell us what it has meant to them, what obstacles they found in their way, and their opinions on how the party can best surmount those obstacles. Such an exchange of views and experiences will be of great benefit to the party as a whole in working out the best methods for the solution of a difficult problem which will become more acute as the pace of recruitment is speeded up in the next stage of our work.

Fraternally yours,

M. Stein

Acting National Secretary

MS/sc

January 31, 1945

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The 35 new members have been recruited as follows:

Newark: One electrical worker
One housewife

Boston: One student

Detroit: Two auto workers
One housewife

Toledo: One aircraft worker
One laborer

Buffalo: One woman bookkeeper
One aircraft worker

Los Angeles: One woman stenographer
One accountant
One electrician
One student
Two housewives
Two tool and die makers
One Seaman
One fisherman

Youngstown: Two steel workers

Seattle: One shipyard worker
One woman cashier
One woman office worker
One auto mechanic
One scaler

Milwaukee: One housewife

Chicago: Three auto workers
Two housewives
One steel worker
One student and part-time railroad worker

(Jan. 1, 1944 -- Jan. 24, 1945)
Scoreboard in Campaign for 180 New Members --
10 Members for each Imprisoned Comrade

<u>Branch</u>	<u>#Recruited</u>	<u>Branch</u>	<u>#Recruited</u>
Los Angeles	34	Philadelphia	5
Chicago	29	San Diego	5
Detroit	24	San Francisco	5
Seattle	22	Bayonne	4
New York	20	Rochester	4
Toledo	19	Cleveland	4
Minneapolis	10	St. Louis	2
Buffalo	9	Boston	1
Newark	7	New Haven	1
Milwaukee	6	Reading	1
Youngstown	6	Total	<u>218</u>

TEN YEARS OF THE FOURTH INTERNATIONAL

By Harry Gold

Preface:

My present talk on the tenth anniversary of the Fourth International is not a weighty well-rounded evaluation of ten years of the existence of our theoretical organ; that still remains to be done. Mine is merely a presentation by a rank and filer who stopped for a moment to give serious thought and consideration to the meaning of our theoretical organ on its tenth anniversary.

Why A Theoretical Organ? What Role Does Theory
Play In Our Movement?

It is true that the overwhelming majority of the members of our party take the F.I. for granted; the necessity for a theoretical organ for our revolutionary movement is not questioned. In spite of that, or in a sense, because of that, I feel it is proper on this occasion to spend a considerable portion of my time to this question of theory.

Our movement is grounded in theory. Its foundation stones were laid by Marx and Engels. Through an exhaustive study of human thought and human history Marx developed a scientific method of approach to social and economic questions. This method is called dialectical materialism, or just the Marxist Method.

By means of this method Marx made a thorough and most exhaustive study of the workings of our present day society, the capitalist system, and derived from it the basic laws of its motion.

Without a theory of the laws that govern our society, taking facts at random one can prove absolutely anything he wishes. And there is only one theory of the laws of our society in existence, and that is Marx's theory of capitalism.

After Marx and Engels, Lenin and Trotsky were their most important continuators. Not only were they the greatest Marxian revolutionists who for the first time in human history engineered and led a successful proletarian revolution, they also made rich contributions to Marxian theory.

Thus, our movement is based on Marxian method and Marxian theory as taught and practiced by the greatest giants in revolutionary thought and action that the world has ever known -- Marx, Engels, Lenin and Trotsky.

Revolutionary Marxist theory is not the theory of the ivory tower academician or the sectarian dogmatist; it is steeped in life's experience and is rich in content; it is an active agent in our revolutionary work; it is tested and refined in action. In fact as Lenin so emphatically put it, "without revolutionary theory there is no revolutionary action."

In the present epoch of decaying capitalism, when on one hand we experience the most acute social conflicts, rapid political shifts and abrupt changes, and on the other hand there are present all the social and economic elements in an over-ripe form ready for the Socialist Revolution except the last decisive element -- the Revolutionary Marxist Party, then correct theory becomes the important, the most decisive factor in building such a party and training this party for quick new orientations to meet these ever recurring abrupt changes.

What Place Does Theory Occupy In The Bourgeois World?

Bourgeois society is highly contradictory in all respects, so it is also in its attitude to theory. In the field of the natural sciences it is forced to value theory (only to a certain extent) but in the field of social sciences, it just cannot tolerate the objective truth and there cannot be any worthwhile theory without having as its primary aim the search for objective truth. Marx already in his time remarked that the capitalist world isn't any longer in search of a correct theory of the workings of its system but is in search of pugilists to defend the system by physical force.

However, the capitalist world in the present state of uninterrupted convulsions is constrained to search high and low for moral support. Mind you, this almighty warrior, the contender for the rule of the whole world is seeking support in the Pope or even in the lame duck of the Italian king. They surely must want and would readily welcome and pay highly for a theory which would assure them a prolonged existence! Yes, many such theories and half theories were offered, but the capitalists, loafers that they are, are no triflers when their existence is at stake, couldn't find solace in those offerings of the Zombarts and the Burnhams -- you see, they also test their theory in action!

Their only reaction to this impasse could be a still greater hatred for theory.

As to the petty bourgeois of all sorts, who, in the present epoch are under the greatest strain of contradictions any group ever was, they, if they don't cross the Rubicon into the proletarian ranks, find refuge in such sterile types of thinking as scepticism and eclecticism -- i.e., doubting everything and everybody.

This should make clear to everyone in the Marxist movement that scepticism and eclecticism, disdain for theory and incensistency in theory is of bourgeois and petty bourgeois origin, alien classes doomed to extinction. The superiority of our mode of thinking based on Marxism to that of the petty bourgeois was best expressed by the Old Man in In Defense of Marxism; "Correct method not only facilitates the attainment of a correct conclusion, but connecting every conclusion with the preceding conclusions in a consecutive chain, fixes the conclusions in one's memory." (that means, one can use them when needed -- H.G.)

"If political conclusions are made empirically, if inconsistency (eclecticism -- H.G.) is proclaimed as a kind of advantage then the Marxist system of politics is invariably replaced by impressionism (there is no bourgeois method in existence) in so many ways characteristic of petty-bourgeois intellectuals. Every new turn of events catches the empiricist-impressionist unawares, compels him to forget what he himself wrote yesterday, and produces a consuming desire for new formulas before new ideas appeared in his head."

I want at this point to digress for a minute. We are all not pure 100% proletarians; there isn't such an animal, so whenever the above description fits our state of mind, we'd better check and double-check before we make our utterances public. We then would avoid lots of embarrassment to ourselves, and would also discipline our mode of thinking.

History of the Theoretical Periodical in the Previous Marxist Movements

From my cursory ascertaining of the facts, I found the following:

In general, up to the founding of the Third International, the existence of the theoretical organ was a very precarious one. During the First International no Marxist parties existed in the true sense of the word. Marxist education went on in a sporadic manner; timely brochures, books and occasional articles in various working class publications were the method and means employed by Marx and Engels to spread their theoretical findings. During the Second International the leaders of the Marxist mass parties didn't fully appreciate the value of theory for the party. In my opinion, the corroding influence of Bernsteinism, i.e. revisionism which preached that the movement (the number of members) and its daily struggle is everything and the final goal for socialism is nothing, was at the basis of that. The 1914 collapse at the beginning of the first world war could never have been so complete if the party would have been inculcated with Marxist theory. The New Zeit, edited by Kautsky, the theoretical organ of the German Section of the Second International which counted hundreds of thousands of members, never reached a circulation of 1,000. Revisionism was welcomed in the New Zeit while Plekhanov and Rosa Luxemburg had to put up a stiff fight to defend Marxism against these revisionists, and that in a Marxist theoretical organ! Theory was a luxury only for a top few if they were so inclined, so what did it matter if the revisionists had their say in the Marxist organ?

About the American Socialist movement, the less said the better. With a membership of 100,000 they didn't even have the most basic works of Marx and Engels translated. Nobody had the faintest notion of the necessity of a theoretical organ. You see, it was all a matter of common sense! It was simple for the simpletons, as Marx once so aptly put it.

Lenin emphasized and insisted upon the importance of theory for the revolutionary party.

The theoretical organ, Zviesda (The Star) which Lenin was instrumental in bringing about, was taken over in a short time by the Mensheviks and, because of the state of illegality, Lenin's party always had to work underground, and he had to devise other means for educating the Bolshevik cadres in Marxism.

Only with the founding of the Third International did the theoretical organ really come into its own.

From 1919 until 1924 a genuine Marxist theoretical organ, the Communist International, was published regularly in four different languages: Russian, English, German and French. Each issue was the thickness of a book. Many sections of the Third International began publishing theoretical periodicals of their own. These five years from 1919 through 1924 created tradition for the theoretical organ in the Marxist movement. That Stalinists clung to the outer shell of this tradition, as all betrayers do, and they continued to issue the Communist International until the formal dissolution of the Third International.

Our Movement in America

Our movement in America began as a section of the left opposition in the Third International. Our paper, The Militant, a bi-weekly at first, then a weekly, was in reality a theoretical organ and a cadre paper. Its propaganda was mainly directed to the members of the Communist Party. Only in 1934 when we had the possibility to become active in the mass movement which coincided directly with our break away from the Third International and the call for the Fourth International, we began publishing a separate theoretical organ. The Militant became then primarily the propaganda organ, and the F.I. (formerly N.I.) the organ which was to carry articles on strategy and tactics of a wider theoretical scope. This division wasn't always strictly adhered to. The Militant was discontinued for about a year and the F.I. for about a year and a half -- because of our entry into the S.P. It is only now that the necessary division is beginning to be clearly discernible. It is, however, still only the beginning.

The existence of our theoretical organ for ten years except for this unavoidable interruption is unique in the history of the revolutionary movement. We had no big trade unions, nor cooperatives, nor the Soviet Union in back of us for this decade. We were, and still are, just a program party and as such we were the only one in the Marxist movement who tenaciously held on to its theoretical journal for such a length of time.

Of course, the Old Man deserves the greatest part of the credit for his urging, prodding us on, and for his great contributions. But the leadership and the party as a whole have the right to congratulate themselves on this anniversary for having developed the capacity and the will for accomplishments which made this unique feat possible.

Our theoretical organ didn't mar its pages with revisionist diatribes. Attempts were made but our Trotskyist party learned well from bitter historical experience and put up a solid front against these attempts.

In our periodical Sidney Hook elaborated and analyzed the Marxist method in his articles on Feuerbach and Moses Hess while he was attacked by us in the same issues of the magazine for his revisionist writings which he carried on somewhere else.

Our journal was not taken away from us like Lenin's was. The American Mensheviks succeeded in getting away with the name only. The Old Man wanted the name of Fourth International for our magazine in the first place.

Circulation:

The N.I. was started with a run of 1,500. Eight hundred went abroad and the bulk of the other 700 were disposed of in New York City.

To evaluate the role our theoretical organ played and is still playing in the vast number of countries it went to, will be the task of the future historian. But we can tell already that it played a great role as the organizer and educator of the whole international movement.

Copies were officially going to Moscow but also unofficially our magazine found its way to our co-thinkers in a number of hermetically sealed countries.

Now, because of the stringent war regulations and censorship, only a trickle goes abroad. Also the New York City sales fell off about 75% because of the split and because the American intelligensia is hiding in its storm cellars for the duration.

But in spite of these serious losses, the circulation of the F.I., according to the report at the convention, has nearly doubled.

Where do they go and who reads them? They go to all four corners of the United States and are being read by advanced workers in great numbers. Are the workers interested in theory, can they assimilate it? The working class origin of many of our leadership, the greatest percentage of workers of our membership, and the high quality of our new worker recruits as it was exemplified at our last convention, give an unmistakable affirmative answer. A worker who gets imbued with the Bolshevik spirit that animates our Trotskyist party in its struggle for socialism and which the F.I. helps to sustain, can never quench his thirst for learning.

At this point a special tribute should be paid to our leadership who is responsible for the continuation of the F.I. during this period when our forces were depleted as never before. This heroic feat will surely bring great dividends in the near future.

Contents:

Our F.I. has been fighting on many fronts. To convey to any extent the rich contents of its volumes even in the briefest manner would take hours. In order to give you just a faint idea of the material wealth contained there, I decided quite arbitrarily to classify this material into four main categories according to the main central ideas contained in these various articles. I still have two pages to enumerate them and only in part. Bear with me -- I think it will be worth our while.

Category I. Articles in defense of the basic teachings of Marx and Engels. These are in part; (1) Dialectic Materialism, (2) The Theory of the Class Struggle, (3) The Theory of the Dictatorship of the Proletariat, (4) Economic Doctrine of Marx embodied in Capital, (5) Theory of the Inevitability of Socialism.

Category II. Articles in defense of Leninism; (1) Imperialism and its specific features, (2) the role of the revolutionary party, (3) principles of democratic centralism and professional revolutionist as the two cardinal elements in organizational structure of a Bolshevik party.

Category III. Articles by Trotsky; (1) in defense of his theory of the permanent revolution and its further elaboration, (2) his thorough Marxist study of the features of the first workers' state, (3) the falseness of the theory of "Socialism in One Country" and its ruinous effect on the Soviet Union and on the world proletariat, (4) the falseness of the Popular Front and its ruinous effect on the world revolution, (5) the real meaning of the United Front, (6) analyses of Fascism and its specific features, (7) national liberation movements and the colonial question.

Category IV. Articles on topical questions, domestic and international, as (1) the Minneapolis Strike, (2) the great sit-in strikes, (3) the most timely topics of our epoch -- wars and revolutions.

Read now in the sixth year of the Second World War any war article in any issue of the F.I. as far back as 1934 and you will think these issues were printed this month, so vivid and so fresh and true sound our estimation and forecast of these present-day events.

So also undoubtedly will soon sound our articles concerning the revolutionary aspect of our epoch.

Let me read before I conclude one quotation from the F.I. of August 1939 on the eve of the Second World War as an example of thousands of similar quotations found there:

"Never before has historical determinism assumed so fatalistic a form as it does nowadays. All the forces of society -- fascism and democracy, and social-patriotism and Stalinism -- stand equally in fear of war and keep heading towards it. Nothing will help them.

They will make the war and be swept away by the war. They have fully earned it." A little later in the same article:

"There are no limits within capitalism itself as to the depths to which it can sink; this is likewise true of its shadows, the Second and Third Internationals. They will be first to be crushed by the war they are themselves preparing."

Compare this with any other writing in those days and the difference between living thought and mumble-jumble becomes immediately apparent.

Conclusion:

Our F.I. in the main has been educating the party in the spirit of Marxism and in the art of working correctly with Marxist concepts.

Comrades, our Fourth International is a creditable part of our great revolutionary tradition and rich heritage.

Let us carry on!

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THE NEED FOR FORMAL STUDY OF CAPITAL

By V. Grey

The educational program needs little elaboration, in a general way, beyond the comments of Comrade Martin in the first issue of the Party Builder. The ambitiousness, the thoroughness, the audacity of this program is inspiring to all. We are going to educate ourselves. We are going to raise the revolutionary level of ourselves and thousands more in the immediate future. Not by pulling ourselves up by our own bootstraps, but by standing on the shoulders of Trotsky and his great Marxist predecessors, and by leaning on the experience and guidance of our living leaders, we will do this. This concentrated system, with the Basic Training Course for a base and the Trotsky full-time school as the apex, introduces method and purpose into educational work to a far greater degree than our party, or any party, has known before.

Once given the subject of teaching, the method is all-important. And it will be in questions of methods where we will do the most experimentation. The basic theory and program are well elaborated. The main point is to make them understood by all. However, we cannot for a moment take the subject, the content, for granted. That is, we cannot assume that because we are Marxists all the subjects taught will automatically be the most important phases of Marxism and receive the proper emphasis at the proper time.

The basic economic document of Marxism for instance, Capital, has seldom been considered as a subject of party education in an organized, formal sense. I propose that it be considered in just that way. Not in the elementary course, perhaps, though even here the break is already being made in the study of Wage Labor and Capital and Value, Price and Profit, and even more emphasis on these pamphlets might be in order. But for more advanced courses, for the benefit of many more comrades (than have so far been thus benefited), a concentrated study of Capital should be initiated.

Don't think that there would be a lack of interest here. Our comrades are far too serious, too bent on understanding the laws of capitalism to neglect this study or take it lightly, should it be undertaken. And the book is so quoted and discussed, so basic to our theory, that the interest and curiosity aroused by its study would create zeal of itself.

The bugaboo that has grown up about Capital being so hard to understand, that bugaboo must be destroyed. The idea that it is an intellectual's book must be ridiculed where necessary, and put in its proper setting in general. The fact of the matter is, that for a book on economics it is amazingly clear, and painstakingly simple and logical. For this reason bourgeois and petty bourgeois intellectuals avoid reading it. They can't take refuge in the obscurities, because there aren't any. And its argument is too logical and clearly stated to refute. (It's much easier to refute what you haven't read.)

Marx not only made a more careful (not to say more correct) analysis of political economy than anyone else. He was so anxious to make his work a popular book that he spent much valuable time polishing the sentences, improving his literary style -- purposely reading the great masters of literature with this end in mind. The result is a brilliant, lucid, very often witty treatment of a subject to which the professorial lickspittles give their most creaking bows and most boring paragraphs.

The first chapter admittedly is tough. But even there the difficulty is mainly one of adjustment for the student -- one of getting used to a sustained dialectical treatment of a little article that one has never thought of as dialectical. A flea is amazingly complex under a microscope, and so is a commodity under Marx's powerful lens. The difference is that the most unschooled eye grasps many of the physical complexities of the flea at a glance, but it takes a lot more concentration from the mental eye to grasp the complexities Marx reveals in the "simple" commodity.

Nonetheless the worker who struggles over this brilliant but difficult hurdle of the first chapter will find a rich reward waiting in the following chapters. The market place and the factory, that is, the essentials of a workingman's existence are explained. The gigantic machinery that dwarfs a human being and drowns out his voice, is explained, its power over the worker and its changing meaning for the boss is analyzed. Iron, raw materials, machinery, the factory itself, Marx seizes upon -- and to paraphrase Marx -- bathes in the fire of his literary labor, rouses them from their death sleep, as he explains

the role of labor in production, the dynamics of capitalism and its inevitable doom.

Marx spent a great portion of his life writing this work. With the last volumes still incomplete he died from "eating the dust of the British Museum". He has left this work as a priceless heritage to the revolutionists of today. We may place it side by side, in our revolutionary equipment, with the experience of the Russian revolution.

The time is near at hand when the American masses will be interested in economic theory. Side by side with political radicalization, even at times possibly preceding it, as a result of cataclysmic economic changes, we will see the revival of the screwball theories of the last depression in a slightly different form. We will have to answer these as well as official bourgeois theory. And not only answer them in our press. Each individual comrade will meet scores of such people, and he will have to supply the answers on his own, also.

Needless to say, we must understand the inner laws of capitalist development and decay in order to analyze the political superstructure of society. The study of Capital is our greatest instrument for this understanding. And a persistent study will perceptibly raise the revolutionary level of us all.

Buffalo
January 8, 1945.

PANEL DISCUSSION USED IN MINNEAPOLIS

By B. Bruce

During the past two or three years we have used the panel discussion method for many of our branch educationals and have found it very successful. As a matter of fact, we first started to do this when the National Office sent out the questions for the basic training course. We were not in a position at that time to organize a class as proposed by the center, so we utilized the questions as material for panel discussions in the branch.

Three comrades were assigned to study the questions and the material upon which they were based. A fourth comrade was named as discussion leader or chairman of the panel. Then, at the branch meeting, the leader would ask the questions of the panel members who would answer as fully as they chose. When the panel members had had an opportunity to participate in the discussion on the particular question as much as they liked, further discussion was invited from the audience, that is, from the branch membership.

We found that this device was most satisfactory, in getting members who served on the panel to do some reading, in bringing the literature of the movement to the membership as a whole by other means than lecture, and in encouraging less articulate comrades to speak up and take part in informal discussion. This kind of education is very popular here. One of the best pamphlets for a panel discussion is Cannon's "Socialism on Trial".

It was for such a panel that I outlined the questions on Engels' pamphlet which I am enclosing. I am sure they could be a lot better, but at any rate, we did have three very worthwhile branch educationals out of them. If we are not able to complete a panel at one meeting, we lay it over to another meeting, usually to the next week, so as not to interrupt the continuity too much.

Questions for Panel Discussion on "Socialism, Utopian and Scientific";
(Kerr Edition)

1. What was St. Simon's outstanding contribution to the development of socialist thought? pp 61,62,63
2. What was Fourier's conception of the history of society?
pp 65,66
3. What is the materialist teaching on which Robert Owen based his theories? pp 67-69
4. How did Owen attempt to put his ideas into effect? pp 68,69
5. What important conclusion did Owen come to regarding capitalist production? pp 70,71

6. The early socialist thinkers based themselves on the theory of Hegel -- that events are the result of ideas. Why do we call this kind of thinking Utopian? pp 77,78
7. Some of the ancient Greek philosophers were the first to use the dialectic method to explain nature. How did Heraclitus express this idea? pp 77,78
8. How does the method of scientific research differ from the dialectic method of analysis? pp 78-81
9. How does Engels illustrate this difference, for example, in the study of the human body? p. 81
10. What well-known scientist applied the dialectic method to the study of nature? Explain. pp 83,84
11. What was Hegel's contribution to the development of dialectical thinking? p. 85
12. What was wrong with Hegel's theory? pp 85-87
13. How do Marxists apply the dialectic to the study of history? pp 90,91
14. The early socialists condemned capitalism and the exploitation of the worker by the capitalist. These early socialists were not able, however, to explain how the exploitation came to be. What discoveries did Marx make in his analysis of the capitalist system that explains this? pp 92,93
15. What do we mean by the "materialist conception of history"? p. 94
16. How does this conception apply to the development of capitalism out of feudalism?
17. What is the contradiction that exists in the capitalist method of production? pp 103-105
18. Engels describes the capitalist method of production as a vicious circle. Explain what he means by this. pp 111-116
19. How does capitalism represent the basis of socialism? pp 116-125
20. The ownership and control of the means of production by society as a whole instead of by a few capitalists is like the harnessing of electricity to operate useful electric power as compared to the destructive forces of electricity in the lightning of a storm, writes Engels. How is capitalism destructive to society under a bourgeois state? pp 116-125

21. How does capitalism carry within itself the solution to the anarchy which it creates in society? pp 125-128
22. What is the role of the state -- that is, the government -- in a capitalist society? pp 127,128
23. What would happen to the state if the proletariat should seize power and turn the means of production into state property? pp 128,129
24. Robert Owen and the other early socialists believed that if men and women would understand that capitalism is in contradiction to justice, equality, fraternity, etc., socialism could then be established by those who understood. How is this theory Utopian? pp 129,130
25. What is the historical justification for the existence of capitalism? pp 129,130
26. Why is the bourgeoisie -- that is, the capitalist class -- unnecessary? p. 137
27. What is the task of the proletariat -- that is, the working class -- in the world today?

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Suggestions: Look up all words you are not familiar with in the dictionary.

Look up the word "Utopian" in a large dictionary or encyclopedia for an understanding of its origin and present meaning.

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