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STEEL CONFERENCE REPORT

By Farrell Dobbs

The Steel Conference was a very successful and very impressive affair right from the start. It was called on short notice but the comrades, nonetheless, did a very good job in turning out delegates for the Conference, in preparing reports and organizing the Conference itself. The Youngstown branch has a splendid headquarters, well arranged, and they did a really good job of preparing for the Conference. They put a committee in charge of organizing a very efficient kitchen; they fed the delegates right there in order to utilize the time to an absolute maximum, served good meals at surprisingly low cost. All in all they did a first class job in organizing the Conference and everything went off like clock work.

The average age of the delegates at the Conference was 32½ years. The average length of membership in the party was three years and nine months.

The reporters were Comrades Lyons and Conti. Comrade Conti reported first, giving the background of the struggle of the steel workers and bringing up to date all the various factors in the development of the organization that lent a clearer meaning and better understanding to the problems of the moment. Comrade Lyons followed, supplementing the first report and filling in details. Between the two of them they did a really excellent job of giving the comrades a good feel of the task before them. Comrade Lyons later summarized the deliberations of the Conference.

Comrade Dunne presided over the Conference. He delivered a preliminary report, giving the broader picture of the whole union struggle and its inter-relationship with the various political developments. In a summary at the conclusion of the Conference, Comrade Dunne gave the comrades a detailed and very comprehensive report of the situation in auto, giving just the right touch to the wind-up of the Conference.

The following are roughly the high-lights of the developments within the steel union, especially in the most recent period, that have a direct bearing on and give certain keys to the situation of the moment.

At the last convention of the steel workers held in Cleveland last year the comrades report that fully a third of the delegates manifested a strong desire to revoke the no-strike pledge and Murray was confronted with a great deal of criticism from delegates. It was also significant that at this convention the organizers did not come forward so readily to defend Murray against these criticisms as they have always done in the past. The comrades estimate there are two reasons for this: (1) During the war these organizers out in the field who had to run around day after day trying to stop strikes acquired a certain dislike for this task and in the process lost heavily in prestige. (2) So much resentment has been built up against them that for them to have put on a demonstration in support of Murray would have done him more harm than good.

The comrades report also that the general reaction throughout the industry to the last steel contract is one that has resulted in quite a heavy blow to Murray's prestige. "We have no contract" is a common saying among the locals throughout the industry. For the first time Murray has been confronted with an opposition in the policy committee. It is not a big opposition, but it is a very important symptom and has caused Murray a great deal of worry.

Here is an example that gives a pretty good picture of what the attitude of the workers is at this time. They had a rally of steel workers in the East Chicago area prior to the strike vote for the purpose of whipping up sentiment for a "yes" vote. The general strategy laid down by the leadership was to put all the emphasis on voting for \$2 a day increase and soft-peddle strike talk. Finally one speaker who hadn't been wised up on the strategy, took the bull by the horns and began to talk strike. He took the meeting by storm. That is what the workers had been waiting for. Comrades state that this is a fair specimen of what the general sentiment is throughout the industry.

There doesn't seem to be much confidence in the ranks that Murray is capable of making any kind of fight for them. In general, particularly in the areas where they have had the rich experience of struggle, the militants are coming to the fore in the union. The comrades feel that we have a good opportunity to begin the building of a left wing in the union.

The discussion that the comrades had at the Conference about the role of veterans is also very instructive. It is the consensus among the comrades that in steel at least the veterans are quickly becoming absorbed in the problems of the union and that for the moment they are tending generally to subordinate their special problems as veterans to the main problem which is the fight against the steel corporations.

In general the veterans are right in the vanguard of the most militant elements throughout the industry. There is a great deal of talk among the veterans in the steel industry of organizing veterans' brigades as shock battalions in the event of a strike. The corporations are carrying on a feverish campaign to recruit veteran MP's into the company police apparatus.

They say it is a common statement among the veterans in steel that they are now making less than before the war, what the hell did they fight for, etc. We have an experience of our own in Pittsburgh that reflects this. The comrades there established contact with a militant veteran in one of the locals in Pittsburgh and recruited him into the party. Through him they are now in contact with six other veterans. He says that we have to get these veterans into the SWP because it is the party that is going to show them how to win their fight. He was present at the Conference and told quite a story about his experiences in the plant.

The comrades in Buffalo reported that in one plant the corporation challenged the vote of certain veterans. Their votes were segregated out until the controversy was settled. When these votes were counted separately later on, out of one block of 31 votes, 29 were for

strike. Out of another block of six votes put aside, all six votes were for strike. We cannot generalize from this but it is an important symptom of the sentiment among the veterans.

On the question of the strike vote itself, we were remiss here in the center in not taking the initiative in organizing and coordinating the work of the branches in the work surrounding the strike vote. However, it was disclosed at the Conference that the comrades did a good job by themselves and the general experience was that in those places where we had influence in any degree at all that the "yes" vote on the strike was unusually heavy.

In one plant the Stalinists sidetracked the strike-vote campaign into a committee which they controlled. This committee was to call a special meeting where volunteers would be organized for carrying on the campaign. Volunteers went to the meeting but no one from the committee showed up. A second meeting was held and the same thing happened. Two nights later at a meeting of the local the Stalinists tried to cover up by proposing one of their people work full time on the campaign. A worker made a motion that one of our comrades be put on with him. It carried by storm. Our comrade pitched in there and organized a slam-bang campaign. They came out with a big "yes" vote.

The comrades in Buffalo report that in two strike-vote rallies held by the steel locals there we had more people out than the Stalinists, did more work, distributed more Militants than they distributed Daily Workers, distributed more pamphlets, and showed them up all along the line.

The comrades discussed at length the role of The Militant in their work, particularly in connection with the strike vote. They all seem convinced that it is a valuable weapon and their main weapon. They report that in Youngstown where we have 18 subscribers in one department of a plant the "yes" vote in that department was very large.

There is also the case of a skilled worker in East Chicago who was violently Jim-Crow. Our comrades sold him a sub to The Militant. He read the paper and began to tone down on his Jim-Crow talk. He has the kind of a job where he gets around the plant. This Militant subscriber was largely responsible for swinging a "yes" vote among the higher-rated men in the plant.

In Buffalo almost 500 steel workers are reading The Militant. There is wide discussion going on now every day in the plants about The Militant.

At one plant in Pittsburgh the Stalinists started carrying the Daily Worker around to flash as counter-authority against workers quoting from The Militant.

A recently-recruited comrade who occupies a key union post said that where he really learned what he knows today was from reading The Militant for the last year. "What we need is members," he said. "I am going to make it my responsibility in the next period to use all the influence I have to push subscriptions to The Militant. First get subscribers to The Militant and then we will get members."

Here is a striking example that illustrates quite graphically the power of attraction we are developing in the steel industry. A recently-recruited comrade told us that up until a few years ago he thought Philip Murray was the greatest man who had ever lived. He doesn't think so now. He has 20 years seniority in the steel industry and has been in the CIO since 1936. This comrade told us how he had suffered through all the fakers in the steel union. And he named them man for man and described them -- "with big bellies like capitalists, like the cartoons in The Militant every week." He told the Conference why he joined the party and paid quite a tribute to Comrade K. He said, "I had begun to be quite discouraged and I was very skeptical of K. A little guy comes into the steel plant and makes good. I watched him. Everybody was against him. I often opposed him. He hung on and kept fighting. Finally I figured out, he is not fighting just for himself; he is trying to establish The Militant and Socialist Workers Party among the steel workers. I made up my mind that if a guy fights that way for an organization, it is just what I have been looking for."

The concensus of the Conference was that our tasks for the next period are to begin the practical preparations for a strike; to continue our work among the veterans; to watch the negotiations and do what we can to promote correct tactics, always within the framework of a realistic appraisal of the relationship of forces; and to concentrate simultaneously on laying the foundation for a left-wing movement, increasing the circulation of The Militant and recruiting steel workers into the party.

The morale of the comrades is very high. They have a realistic estimate of what is going on and what kind of a role they can play. Our comrades are going to give a good account of themselves in this struggle in steel in the next period and whatever the outcome of the struggle may be, we are going to be a long stride ahead.

December 4, 1945

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REPORT OF THE FOOD COMMITTEE OF THE
STEEL CONFERENCE

The secret of successful work in any field, be it trade unionism or catering, is thorough, carefully organized preparation. The Youngstown comrades have learned this lesson in the school of experience in both fields. We will never forget our first attempt at serving a dinner. It was a spaghetti dinner for a CRDC social. Time to serve came, and we found ourselves without any collander or strainer to drain the spaghetti. We had to dip it out of the water a forkful at a time while our guests waited hungrily. We learn the hard way -- but we learn.

The comrades had only one day for the Steel Conference. Since too much time would be taken up by their going out to eat, it was necessary to serve the meals here at the headquarters. The committee in charge of food was made up of four women comrades -- the

only available non-steel workers in the branch. None of us have had any experience (outside of Party affairs) in the preparation and serving of food for large groups of people. Two of the four are new members, having joined within the last few months.

We met a week before the Conference to plan the menu and make assignments for work. A second meeting was held a few days later and a telephone checkup was made on Friday and Saturday to make sure everything was in order. At these meetings arrangements were made down to the last paring knife and salt shaker. A list was prepared of all food and equipment needed -- dishes, silver, tablecloths, kettles, kitchen knives, can openers, every item large or small. Each committee member then made a personal list of those items for which she would be responsible. One member was assigned to order all food and see that it got to the headquarters on Saturday. Also, a chairman was elected to be in general charge of all arrangements and to make all last minute decisions.

The menu was conditioned by two factors -- cost and kitchen facilities at the headquarters. The meal consisted of: tomato juice, meat loaf, escalloped potatoes, peas, cole slaw, pie (choice of three kinds), hard rolls and butter, and coffee. The rolls and pies were ordered several days in advance at a bakery and picked up on Saturday. Tomato juice and peas come in cans and so could easily be prepared at the last minute. The meat loaf and slaw were prepared at homes on Saturday. Two committee members made and partially baked the meat loaves and the other two grated the 10 pounds of cabbage and innumerable carrots. That left only one major cooking task for Sunday, the Conference day -- the potatoes. The last-minute loan of an electric roaster made escalloped potatoes possible. Parboiling them cut down on the time necessary for peeling, slicing, and baking.

On Sunday morning the meat loaves were re-heated and baked for the last hour before serving (we are fortunate in having a standard gas range with an oven in our headquarters kitchen). During the last half hour, the peas were heated, coffee made, and the dressing stirred into the salad.

Free time (free from cooking) throughout the morning was used to wash dishes and lay them out in preparation for setting the tables, fill sugar bowls, cream pitchers, and salt and pepper shakers, clean up after preparation of food, and in general make sure that everything was set for the big rush.

The serving was just as carefully organized as the menu. The committee met an hour before dinner to discuss procedure; as a result, each comrade knew just what was to be done and what her responsibilities would be. No time was wasted in waiting for instructions or in duplication of effort. Planning was the reason that, although serving was done in the Conference room, the time for the dinner recess was only one hour and 15 minutes.

We proceeded as follows: The chairman of the Conference asked the comrades to adjourn into the front room while we prepared the tables. All four of us hustled into arranging and setting the tables -- we used card tables, lamp tables, the library table and desk. We filled a china pot with tomato juice and filled the glasses at the tables. This procedure (used also for coffee) prevented possible

spilling of liquids while carrying glasses and cups from the kitchen and proved the quickest method. The salad was served in small individual paper plates. We checked carefully to make sure everything was on the tables except the dinner plates and the coffee (the empty cups were there) before calling the gang in. Since we had things all ready to go, this first part of the serving process took only about ten minutes.

Two of the women comrades, who are small, took over serving and the other two 'dished up' with part-time assistance from the servers. After all dinners were served, one comrade poured coffee while the other three reorganized the kitchen and prepared the pies for serving. By the time everyone had coffee, those served first were ready for desert. So again we all dashed out and gathered up empty dishes and our serving section brought on the pie. Comrade Rose -- on whose shoulders fell the greater part of the serving -- was heckled the whole time for more and more coffee. Every other minute she swung that pot out to be refilled. We had only one committee member who could lift the big pot in which we made the coffee so Comrade L. would have to drop everything to fill up the small serving pot.

When the last coffee cup was emptied, we cleared the tables, dumping things anywhere in the kitchen so that the Conference could reconvene as soon as possible.

During the afternoon session, we washed dishes and made preparations for the evening meal. That was a last-minute affair -- not planned originally. We found a dairy store open where we could buy more cream for coffee and served buffet style all the left-overs from dinner and from the social held the previous night.

The important thing to remember in organizing such an affair as this is that no matter how careful the planning, many unexpected tasks arise at the last minute. It was because we planned to have as little to do as possible on Sunday morning that we were able to scour the neighborhood for a grocery store that would be open on Sunday morning (we ran short of potatoes and milk and forgot all about flour) and do some unexpected dishwashing and still get the meal ready on time.

Planning is the thing. It can work miracles.

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THE YOUNGSTOWN STEEL CONFERENCE

By B. Pearson

(Connecticut)

For a number of years, up to last July, there have been three to five comrades in Connecticut, living in three cities widely separated from each other, who have plugged away as best we could to keep Trotskyism alive in this area.

I was in steel most of the time, being the only comrade working in a basic industry.

Anyone can understand from the above that we lived in a state of isolation that was weighing down on us pretty heavily, until the National Office found it possible to send in new forces, which in building up activity and spirit, resulted in the good showing we made in the sub campaign, and recruitment. However, the effects of our isolation still weigh on us. Therefore one can imagine my reactions to the Youngstown Steel Conference, to which I was sent by the Connecticut comrades.

The optimistic spirit and warm proletarian comradeship of our comrades from the steel centers and mills, was a wonderful tonic, and the discussions were a real education in how a Bolshevick group should analyze a situation and organize to meet it.

Reports from the Youngstown delegation were the most striking. They told of the role comrades there played in preparation for the strike vote, the plans they have made for conducting the strike, the veterans' defense guard -- everything worked out in the most minute detail, all of it giving you the utmost assurance of success in case of a strike. The reports from the other delegations were practically in the same tone, and added to the impression of a clear common understanding of what our job is to be in the coming struggle.

I felt that stressing the need of maintaining complete solidarity between the veteran and non-veteran workers was of great importance. Judging from the reports, friction is non-existent between these two groups of workers, in spite of everything the corporations are attempting in their efforts to drive a wedge between them. And that is bad news for the forces of fascism.

Another phase of the preparations made, the role planned for The Militant in the coming struggles, was a matter that I felt could not be over-emphasized. As we can see from the recent issues of The Militant, our paper has gained a great amount of prestige among the striking auto workers. And we can be sure The Militant will play an equally important part in the coming steel strike. It will be as well received by the steel workers.

Attending such a Conference and hearing such reports from comrades, who a few years ago were somewhat isolated themselves, gives me firmer faith that we can eventually do a real job for the party in this area.

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COMMENTS ON AUTO WORKERS' CONFERENCE

By W. H. Arthur

(Minneapolis)

The sixth Automobile Workers' Conference, and the largest -- with some 102 delegates in attendance -- impressed me most by the caliber of the men and women who comprise the auto workers' fraction of our party. Most of the delegates were young, in their twenties and thirties, but already they were well-developed Marxists. Their youth promises well for the future; in them are many more years' service to the union and the revolutionary movement. These auto workers are a dynamic group, streamlined, keen-fit antagonists to the most powerful and arrogant group of bosses in the world. I was sure that they and the dynamic ideas they represent will prove more than a match for the auto bosses.

What next impressed me was the great number of comrades we have in the vital sections of the auto industry -- in Detroit, Flint, Toledo, Cleveland, Buffalo, and so on. And I was happy to see many old friends I had known in Minneapolis and St. Paul, who are now active in other branches of the party where the opportunity to engage in party work is much more decisive.

Altogether, it was an impressive and inspiring Conference, and I left with the greatest confidence in the future of the American working class, whose vanguard is our comrades in the mass movement, and particularly, in the Auto Workers Union. The high quality of the reports, and that of Comrade E. R. Frank who made the main report, gave me the firmest confidence that in the coming period of great strike struggles we shall not be found wanting; indeed, I am sure that we shall fully measure up to the great tasks ahead of us.

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BUILDING A BRANCH IN BALTIMORE

By Dorothea Lessing

Baltimore has a population of approximately one million and about 170,000 are workers. When I was sent down here at the end of October, we had seven subscribers to The Militant. One of them had joined the party during the previous month, another was a potential member.

The first two jobs to be done were to acquaint as many as possible of the Baltimore workers with our ideas and to get the "feel" of the city. Toward this end we decided to plunge right into the sub campaign and sample as many working class sections of the city as we could. The city is 90 square miles in area, and the working class districts are spread all over the city. During the six weeks of the campaign we canvassed about 2,000 workers. We covered 20 of the cities' blocks, and visited five housing projects. We now have 175 subscribers here. Our best response was from the Negro workers. Most of the workers who took subs were eager to discuss their problems with us. The only sections where we found a completely negative reception, and even here it wasn't hostile, were those where the workers owned their own homes and felt a certain measure of security. The experiences we met with here were probably duplicated all over the country during the sub campaign. A Negro member of the NMU and CP wanted to know the differences between our program and the Stalinist's. A veteran engaged us in conversation for hours telling us about how during the war his eyes had been opened to the need for understanding politics. A 17 year old girl told us how the girls in her unorganized shop had fought militantly against segregation. These workers and many other new readers will become our sympathizers and lay the basis for the building of our branch.

In one of the housing projects for white workers which we covered, our results were particularly good. The project is in East Baltimore, where the Stalinists have many members and used to be quite active. Most of the workers in this project had worked at the shipyards. Many of them are now unemployed, some have found new jobs and many of them were returning to their homes in Tennessee, Kentucky and Pennsylvania. There are 600 families in the project and we sold 34 subs there. We bumped into 12 readers of the Daily Worker in the project. Only one was openly hostile, two were willing to talk to us, and the others didn't want The Militant because they already had one labor newspaper. None of them took subs. All the canvassing was done "cold." The only places where we felt we might have obtained a better response by a distribution of the paper prior to canvassing, was in those few areas where we got no subs. Our sales talk is pretty lengthy and we feel sure that before any worker takes the sub he has a general idea of the viewpoint of the paper.

Baltimore's industries are varied and from what we can estimate, fairly well organized. During the war the Bethlehem corporation had 25,000 workers employed at their shipyards and mills. They now have 15,000 and the union is controlled by the Stalinists. The shipyard and dockworkers' unions were Stalinist-dominated, and they control the local CIO Council. GM, Westinghouse, American Can, Pittsburgh Glass have large plants here which are organized. Our job is

to reach as many as we can of these and other union members and recruit some of them into the party.

We took advantage of the situation in GM to become acquainted with the two locals here. Both the officers and the rank and file of these unions appreciated The Militant's reporting of the strike. The unionists who have been active in the strike have received all the issues of The Militant since the strike began. On our initial visit to the local to get a report on the strike vote, we interviewed three of the rank and file members who gave us their names and addresses. One took a sub, bought a "Labor Party" pamphlet and showed a great interest in our ideas. We covered a meeting of the Fisher Body Local and got three subs there. One of the officers also took a sub, said we help his morale. The Militant is mailed to the union hall, and is well-thumbed and read. We have covered some of the non-Stalinist unions, getting their meeting places and times, and asking them if we can send the paper to the hall, wherever they have a reading room. In addition to the GM Local the paper is being sent to the Glen Martin UAW Local and the ILGWU. We were not able to get information on union affiliation of all our subscribers. The data we gathered follows:

14 are in the CIO
8 formerly in the CIO
6 AFL
6 Railroad Brotherhoods
1 UMW

We have collected \$10.00 for literature sold in the past two months and loaned many pamphlets and books to comrades and new friends. At a meeting of the NAACP we sold 30 copies of the "Negro Struggle" pamphlet. At a lecture on China given by the Free State Book Shop Association (Stalinist) we sold 12 copies of The Militant. We placed the paper on a newsstand in East Baltimore this week. In the same vicinity we distributed 75 copies of the paper which carried an advertisement of the fact that the paper could be purchased in the neighborhood.

Aside from the sub campaign, our main work has been visiting contacts. In addition to the six readers we had in October, we had a list of seven friends of a New York comrade who formerly lived here. One joined the party and a comrade moved into the area. We now have four members here. Our contact list has been expanded to include 10 workers we met during the sub campaign, two ex-YPSL members and one Zionist. As in the sub campaign, now, too, there is no substitute for hard work. We intend to plug away, visiting these contacts, bringing them our literature, getting them to attend our meetings and classes.

The next project we are going to concentrate on is the establishment of The Militant Labor Forum. We have rented a room in the Workmen's Circle Hall in East Baltimore and will hold our first open meeting January 13. From our list of subscribers and contacts, we hope to build up a regular weekly attendance for the forum. From the people who attend we will recruit the members of the future Baltimore branch.

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RECRUITMENT IN PHILADELPHIA

By Max Goldman

The period from June 1 to December, 1945, a period of six months, has witnessed a complete transformation of the Philadelphia branch. From a small group performing with firm determination the task of maintaining a political grouping, the branch has developed into a substantial section of the party, confident of greater growth in the future.

The branch has grown in numbers, wiped out old debts to the National Office, The Militant, Fourth International and Pioneer Publishers. It has oversubscribed all quotas assigned to it in every field of party activity and carried them through with revolutionary zeal.

The branch, in June 1945, consisted of 10 members, its activities were circumscribed by its numbers. In addition, the heritage of the internal party struggles of the past, both the split of the Oehlerites and the party-wrecking policies of the petty-bourgeois opposition in 1940, weighed heavily on the branch. It is a great tribute to the Bolshevik firmness of the handful of loyal party members that they kept the Trotskyist banner flying in the face of external difficulties and internal wreckers.

Since June the branch has experienced a steady growth. Concretely, the figures show a rise, from 10 to 31 members. Three of those have since been transferred to other branches of the party -- making the present branch membership 28. The following table tells its own story: old members -- 10; members transferred to Philadelphia -- 5; recruits -- 16.

Another point deserves mention, before proceeding to relate the experiences of recruitment and the problems of integration involved in such rapid growth. It has been mentioned that Philadelphia suffered much at the hands of the petty-bourgeois party wreckers now called the Workers Party. Here the splitters took with them the overwhelming majority of the old Socialist Workers Party branch. Here also, due to the circumstances, the Workers Party had one of its most substantial branches. The best information available credits them at one time with a membership of 50, a sizeable youth group, and bases in several important unions. Compared to our little group, they loomed as a formidable organization.

But, as the old saying has it, "the race is not always to the quick," particularly not to those who build on adventuristic policies and not upon the bedrock of Bolshevik organizational methods. The proof of this assertion is in the rapidity with which the Philadelphia WPers have expended their forces and their positions in the trade union movement. It can be stated, without any fear of contradiction, that as the Philadelphia branch of the SWP has grown and expanded its activities, the Philadelphia WP has receded in importance. Although the present relation of forces are about equal, from the point of view of political effectiveness, party organization, and membership responsibilities, there can no longer be any comparison of the two branches. A test, in a small way, it is true, took place between

"our methods" and "theirs." The results show clearly that the WP's organization methods are as ineffective as their political theories are revisionist.

The growth and development of the Philadelphia branch, in the main, is in line with the general growth of the party nationally. The Militant has been our best organizer. The paper opened the door to contacting and influencing workers to join the party. The majority of the new recruits to the branch got their first political experience through reading The Militant. It can be said, that the paper plays an important role also, with workers who have had previous political experience. Several old-timers were reached through The Militant and through activities revolving around the paper -- distributions, subscription campaigns, discussion group organization, etc.

The relating of some of our experiences in Philadelphia, where work with The Militant has been the basic party activity will best illustrate the important role it has played in the growth of the branch. In June a fundamentals class attended by some sympathizers active in the CRDC and a few party members was transformed into a discussion group on current events. The party's attention was turned towards bringing contacts made in the second Militant sub campaign to the meetings of the discussion group. Growth of the discussion group was the direct result of visiting Militant readers and inviting them to participate in the discussions.

A month later, the discussion group was established in the party headquarters, and changed into a regular weekly meeting called the Militant Labor Forum. This forum has met continuously since then with an average attendance of 35-40 at each meeting. A direct connection was thus established between the party and the new readers. The new readers were introduced to the party, made acquainted with our fundamental literature, participated in discussions with party members, and then brought into the party.

It should be mentioned that recruitment along such propagand lines establishes a new departure for the party in reaching politically undeveloped workers. The Militant reader, after a month or so of reading the paper, attending several meetings and being contacted by party members is ready to join the party. The problem is more one of selecting the best types for party membership than finding potential party recruits. The old method of long courtship with party sympathizers and their recruitment after a long study of the program has become obsolete. Experience here has shown that The Militant reader, after making contact with the party, either joins soon or remains a passive reader of the paper. This does not mean that the latter group is not influenced by the paper, but that their activation will take place at the next stage, that is, when the party turns from propaganda activity to direct participation in the class struggle.

The recruitment of politically undeveloped workers confronts the party with the vital tasks of educating the new people in the program of the party and of integrating them in our life and activities. This is the most important and difficult side of recruitment

As Comrade Stein has pointed out, our job is to make the new recruit a citizen of the party -- a full participant in the party's work. The methods to accomplish this aim have not as yet been mapped out by the party. Direct experience along these lines will be our best teacher.

In a branch such as Philadelphia, where party activity is practically all propaganda work, the problem of integration presents some difficulties. There are no means of introducing new members to the direct application of the party's program in mass work. The activities center around distribution of the press, educational meetings, classes, socials, and visiting contacts. There is a natural hesitation on the part of the new members to participate in distributions or in house-to-house work with The Militant. For a time their activities are limited to attending meetings. This is not an unimportant part of the process of integration. Learning the importance of regular attendance at branch meetings is the first stage in the development of a new party member. The problem is how to develop them to the point of participating in the activities of the branch. The point where the new member takes his place with the older members in the day-to-day work of party-building, marks his transition to full party membership.

The method found most successful in integrating new members here involves giving individual attention to recruits. A new member is assigned to an older member who acts as a sort of tutor. It is the responsibility of the old member to become acquainted with the new member, instruct him in the history of the party, acquaint him with organizational procedures, coach him in reading party material and induce him as soon as possible to aid in the general work of the party. This is not a fool-proof method since much depends on the quality of the recruit and the flexibility and understanding of the comrade assigned as tutor. While not successful in every instance, the tutor system has proven sufficiently helpful to warrant further experimentation. On the matter of attendance at branch meetings, the method has been of greatest aid. Consciousness of the problems involved in the integration of new members is a MUST for the party in the coming period; being conscious of the problem, we shall learn the best methods to use in consolidating the gains made.

The Philadelphia branch -- old and new members alike -- are proud of the achievements of the past six months. But pride in the work accomplished does not blind them to the fact that only a beginning has been made. The task of the party is to give leadership to the hundreds of thousands of workers in this important industrial area. The branch is conscious of the prime need of changing from a propaganda organization to one involved in the daily problems of the workers. Such a further development is now possible with the establishment of a stable party organization in Philadelphia.

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THE MILITANT IN FLINT

By Jerry Kirk

During the General Motors strike The Militant has proved to be a powerful instrument for organization and education. All Trotskyists can be proud of the role our paper played in this great battle in which we participated to the greatest advantage. From the beginning the union bureaucrats feared The Militant to such an extent and went to such lengths to combat it that it appeared that they considered it to be an independent force in the strike.

Our paper had the most complete and most factual coverage of the GM strike from coast to coast. For this reason the strikers had to rely on The Militant in order to find out what was happening. It certainly was not to the credit of the UAW that the membership had no other source of information than the capitalist press or The Militant. Moreover our paper had an editorial policy that was so clear, so forthright and rounded out that it produced a tremendously sympathetic reaction among the militant GM workers on the picket lines. All of this was enhanced by virtue of the fact that in Flint there is only one daily paper. Controlled outright by General Motors.

Before the outbreak of the strike comrades in the National Office had made plans for a weekly bundle of 3,000 copies of The Militant for Flint. They had also worked out plans with leading comrades in Detroit whereby Flint would have the forces to handle The Militant and other work of the party.

From the beginning Comrades Dunne and E. R. Frank had cautioned us on the possibility of an anti-Trotskyist campaign here.

With our second distribution of The Militant these warnings were borne out. We decided to avoid any head-on collision with the regional office, but in any case we intended to distribute the paper. For the first two weeks we were able to distribute The Militant in all strike headquarters and strike kitchens except Chevrolet. We soon learned that the regional director was requesting that we be barred by all four locals. In light of this we were prepared to avoid a clash and continue passing out the papers on the picket lines.

After our coverage of the mass picket lines at AC Sparkplug the regional director decided to proceed a step further. Up to that time The Militant did not have a direct attack on the leadership of the strike. The bureaucrats, however, recognized it as a possible threat in the future inasmuch as they were not competent to handle an all-out strike. (Holt was only recently elected regional director; most of his staff were just rank and filers during the sit-downs).

The regional director who had advocated a policy of retreat on the question of the office workers even prior to the mass picket lines at AC called a special "super duper" strike strategy committee meeting with two members of each local strategy committee present. For all intents and purposes they were to make decisions in regard to the threat of injunctions and the salaried help (See Dec. 29 issue of The Militant). However we learned that the main topic of discussion

was how to stop The Militant. They decided to instruct each picket captain on the AC line not to let us distribute the papers until the lines broke up. They also decided to pass the word on to bar us from all union halls and strike kitchens.

The Buick officials immediately put this edict into effect. At AC a motion was made to bar us at their strike strategy committee. Archie Myers, president of the Local, ruled the motion out of order after four of the seven people present had spoken against the motion. At the Fisher Local we continued to distribute the papers without opposition.

On the following day we went out to the AC picket lines with the intention of putting Holt's ruling to a test. From the very beginning we observed that there was no way of putting the ruling into effect. The workers knew The Militant and knew what they wanted. Of the six picket lines with separate captains only one attempted to stop us. Since this captain had a small line and inasmuch as we had covered about 500 workers we decided to avoid a conflict with the captain who was financial secretary of the Fisher Local.

Proof that the regional staff were in fear of The Militant is seen in the fact that they felt it necessary to call a "super duper" strategy meeting of eight rather than a full meeting of the 60-man City-Wide Strike Committee. (In our opinion their decision might have passed in either case. Reasons for this would have to be dealt with separately. I will just mention that accompanying the campaign against The Militant was an under-cover Trotsky-baiting campaign).

With their failure in preventing us from reaching the militant strikers the officers embarked on a different tack. For the first time the Flint CIO Council paper which was a subscription paper sent through the mail was distributed free of charge on the picket lines and in the union halls in an obvious attempt to counteract the influence of The Militant. At the same time the Buick Local's paper, The Headlight, suddenly changed its format from tabloid size to the same size as The Militant. One of our comrades asked the editor what brought on the change. He blushed all over and answered, "We had been thinking of it for some time."

It was the opinion of the regional office that if the UAW with 40,000 members found it difficult to publish and distribute a weekly paper then surely the Trotskyists must have a huge force in Flint. The PAC regional director expressed this fear to a comrade before the strike when he said, "The Trotskyists can't have more than a hundred members in Flint." Undoubtedly their estimation climbed after the strike.

Many workers on the line thought that The Militant was an official paper of the strike. Scores subscribed to it on the grounds that in this way they would help to build it up to a twice-a-week paper. Many workers were indignant because we didn't issue the paper more often. Many of the workers felt that if enough people subscribed to the paper it would be able to efficiently counteract the lies of the Flint Journal.

Provisions were made whereby we obtained subscriptions and the strikers did not have to pay for them until they were back to

work. In this way we obtained 70 subscribers in two days, over 20 paid for on the spot. In all we have obtained about 130. With the continuation of the strike we will undoubtedly sign up many more readers to The Militant.

At the Buick Local we had difficulty reaching some Negroes who were serving in an official capacity during the strike. The leaders of the Local who are close to the regional office had evidently spoken against the paper. After the issue of The Militant with the story about the vigilante action on the West Coast had appeared they warmed up considerably. Comrade Reggs reported that one worker remarked, "I looked through the Flint and Detroit papers to see if they carried something about what happened on the West Coast and I couldn't find a thing."

Many second rank leaders who did not agree with the political ideas of The Militant read the paper because our editorials were calling the turn at each stage of the strike. They wanted to know what was going to happen next.

Comrade Carli reported in The Militant how a leading Stalinist reacted to the foresight of The Militant on Fact-Finding Committees. The Stalinists, as a group, were extremely disheartened by the steady appearance and friendly reception the workers gave the paper.

The Socialist Party which dwindled from a large group in 1937 to less than a handful today has done nothing in the strike. One of their mainstays mentioned to me, "We don't have to do anything as long as the Trotskyists are doing a good job."

Our having several hundred subscribers prior to the strike has helped us considerably. When we approach a picket line to ask for subscriptions the subscribers are the first to speak up in praise of the paper. This makes our work very easy indeed.

One fellow at Plant 10 Chevrolet, who first saw the paper during the strike, makes a talk on why workers should subscribe each time we come around. Then he nudges them and pokes them until they do. With his help we have quite a good number of readers at Plant 10.

At the Bucik Local one of the picket captains told us, "You can get individual subscriptions, if you want. Some of us picket captains decided that we are canvassing our departments when we go back to work like we did for In Fact. When we have two or three hundred we'll send them in."

Our coverage of the picket lines was complete and thorough. We hit each change of shift concentrating on Buick and Chevrolet which are the two biggest Locals in Flint. As a result of this work we met the most active union members in Flint. This consistent activity has been rewarded by new members and greater influence; it will bring us richer dividends in the near future. Out of our work, in which the whole party contributed, we now have a solid branch of union activists in all four GM Locals in Flint.

January 15, 1946.

REPORT OF THE NATIONAL SUBSCRIPTION CAMPAIGN OF

LOCAL NEW YORK (October 14 - Dec. 9, 1945)

By Harry Gold

The national subscription campaign of The Militant which was started October 14 and ended December 9, 1945, is the third of its kind initiated by the NEC of the party, and is the second one this year.

During the previous two campaigns the comrades individually and the party as a whole acquired much valuable experience and a good measure of confidence in its ability to get results. This manifested itself admirably in the highly successful results of this campaign. We in Local New York obtained about half the number of subs in about half the time of the last campaign. This means that in this campaign we obtained subs at the same rate as in the last campaign although the subscription price was doubled and the party, simultaneously with the sub campaign, carried on other very intensive activities.

It should therefore be of interest and of some importance to examine certain features of the recent campaign and also to evaluate certain results, especially in view of the fact that no comprehensive survey was made of the previous two campaigns.

From the previous sub drive we had the experience of a partially planned campaign, the one we conducted in the Marcantonio Congressional district in Manhattan which was very successful. We therefore decided to base our plans for this campaign on that experience. But Greater New York always confronts a small party like ours with the problem of its immensity; where should we start first?

In the previous campaign we worked in four boroughs, Queens, Brooklyn, Manhattan and the Bronx. Each branch used a whole borough for its territory and the East Side branch even used three boroughs, Manhattan, Bronx and Queens. But all this was done on a hit or miss basis and was the very opposite of planning.

In that campaign, however, we did hit on a few good sections where our work in selling subscriptions to The Militant brought the best results. These were primarily Harlem, Manhattan and Bedford-Stuyvesant in Brooklyn; there were also other promising sections like Williamsburg and Brownsville in Brooklyn and some spots in Queens and in the Bronx. But these places needed a further and more thorough exploration before we could consider them fit to be used in intensive national campaigns where high quotas had to be met.

There was one other problem in planning the territories for the recent campaign and that was to avoid sending our canvassers into houses which were covered in the previous campaign, as our purpose in this campaign was to extend our circle of readers. We therefore mapped out two areas. The Harlem area in Manhattan and the Bedford-Stuyvesant area in Brooklyn, indicating on the maps the house numbers previously canvassed.

All the Manhattan branches were to work in Harlem so the

territory (only from W. 110th St. to 150th St.) was divided in five sections and each branch unit was given a section map from which to work during the campaign. The section map of each branch was subdivided into streets and avenues and each team captain received a subdivision of the branch map which contained all the necessary information and from which the captain and the team were to work until the assigned territory was covered.

The work was similarly planned in Brooklyn except that the Brooklyn area is not so easily mapped out because of its varied nature from block to block and even from house to house in the same block. A constant and closer attention was required from the Brooklyn branch director to all the details of the particular area to be canvassed during a mobilization; Brooklyn was indeed fortunate in having such a diligent and devoted comrade as director who did just that.

Because of the difficulty involved in the planning of a campaign in Brooklyn (which holds true also for the Bronx and Queens), it is therefore imperative to spend more time to make all the necessary detailed investigation of the territory in question before considering it ready for campaign purposes.

As to the organizational part of the preparation for the sub-drive -- we had one meeting with the branch directors and captains where all the plans and directives were thoroughly discussed and explained.

The campaign from then on was carried on by the directors and captains with a minimum of direction from the city director or the City Office.

The detailed records kept of each comrade, team and branch, was the best ever achieved in our party. The statistical tables which will be found elsewhere in this report could have never been worked up if not for this information. These statistical tables, in a limited way it is true, summarize the capacity and efficiency of the party in New York in this field.

Although the rate of obtaining subs was good from the very beginning and improved as the campaign progressed we never exceeded our week-to-week quota by a large enough margin to permit us to experiment with other desirable neighborhoods.

Only when the National Office extended the subscription drive for an additional two weeks and we became certain of reaching our quota did we make use of the extended time to map out an area in the Bronx where three of the Manhattan branches worked during the last two mobilizations of the campaign. We obtained over 300 subscribers in this area.

Capacity and Efficiency of Each Branch and of Local New York as a Whole as Shown by the Results of the Sub Campaign (Oct. 14-Dec. 9, 1945)

Table "A"

Number of members in each branch who went out canvassing two or more times during the campaign:

Youth	--	12	West Side	--	21
Harlem	--	12	East Side	--	29
Brooklyn	--	13	Chelsea	--	30

Table "B"

<u>Branch</u>	<u>Average no. of times ea. team went out during the campaign</u>	<u>Average no. subs obtained by one comrade ea. time</u>	<u>Total no. subs obtained by branch</u>
Youth	4.5	3.6	186
Harlem	3.7	4.1	182
Brooklyn	6.4	3.8	314
West Side	5.6	4.4	519
East Side	4.5	4.6	606
Chelsea	4.3	4.2	549
Unaccounted for			28
		TOTAL	2,384

Table "C"

Local New York

1. Number of members participating in the campaign (twice or more) -- 117.
2. Total number of subs obtained by Local New York -- 2,384.
3. Average number of times each comrade went out during the campaign -- 4.8.
4. Average number of subs obtained by one comrade each time out -- 4.2.

Warning: In a small group of 117 comrades average results are not very typical because a few outstanding individuals can change these averages perceptibly. This is the reason why I didn't show the average number of subs obtained during the campaign by any one comrade. On the other hand the average number of subs one comrade obtained each time he or she was canvassing is much more typical because the numbers of times out by all comrades are 561 and the individuality of the comrades is here less assertive.

Briefly what the tables show:

1. The most important factor in getting subscriptions is the number of times out canvassing.
2. The rate of procuring subs was the lowest in the Youth and the highest in East Side branch.
3. The Brooklyn comrades worked the hardest in this campaign. The next hardest was the West Side branch. The Brooklyn branch with a workable force of 11.1 percent of the total produced 13.3 percent of the total subs while the rate of getting subs in Brooklyn was the lowest of all the party branches, proving decisively that sub-getting is primarily a factor of time out canvassing.

The Chelsea branch with a score of 4.3 times out canvassing per comrade also made a remarkable showing considering the high number of members who are able to enjoy only a short stay on shore.

4. The average number of times out canvassing, taking Local New York as a whole, is 4.8. This means that during this six-week campaign (New York Local participated only six weeks out of the eight weeks) in which the party called seven mobilizations. Each comrade on the average participated almost five times. This is a commendable average in our opinion.

5. The rate of 4.2 subs per comrade each time out shows the attainment of a high degree of skill in the technique of obtaining subs on the part of the comrades of Local New York.

OBSERVATIONS AND SUGGESTIONS

Subscription rate; 50¢ versus 25¢. The change of the subscription rate from 25¢ to 50¢ changed the nature of the campaign qualitatively. At 25¢ per 6 months the national subscription drive had the character of a mass distribution of a certain type. This mass distribution character was lost in this campaign because of the increased price. There is no doubt in my mind that, in New York at least, we could have doubled the number of subs obtained during the same 6-week campaign if the price were 25¢ instead of 50¢.

Permanent New York Quota and Circulation Manager

In the first Militant sub campaign we obtained over 2,000 subscribers. In the second drive we obtained close to 5,000 subs; altogether over 9,000 were once or are now subscribers to The Militant. We have now close to 7,000 subscribers to The Militant, of which about 4,000 have or will expire shortly.

Many of these 4,000 subscribers can be persuaded to renew and many of them are good contact material. They can be called upon to help in further spreading The Militant. When you add to this that in the next period the branches will be busy in neighborhood activities, an important part of which will consist of further spreading The Militant, it becomes apparent that for Local New York to conduct this work in a planned and intelligent fashion it must set for itself a realistic goal and establish a central department to supervise and direct the work. This means the setting of a fixed quota for the Local of a sustained paid yearly circulation of The Militant and a departmental head, a circulation manager, to direct and supervise this activity. This circulation department should, if feasible, become a part of or work under the city literature department.

Length of Future Sub Campaigns

Future Militant subscription campaigns should only be of short duration like four weeks each and should be complementary to the work in this field carried on by the branches all year round.

A repetition of this year's sub campaigning which took up 21 weeks should be avoided by all means.

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CONNECTICUT MILITANT CAMPAIGN

By Connecticut Trail Blazers

Connecticut was given a quota of 100 subs but went over the top to the tune of 237. These subs were obtained mainly in virgin territory.

The positive factors responsible for the success of our campaign can be attributed to:

1. The leftward surge of the industrial workers, which reached a high point after V-J day;

2. The new high in staff work by the comrades responsible for the technique and plan of The Militant, as to timeliness of stories, attractiveness of make-up, and variety and quality of articles, cartoons and photos;

3. The fine anti-fascist, election and union work of our comrades nationally, which was of great aid to isolated comrades in selling subs, since we were able to present their work as positive examples of what our party could do;

4. The absence of political opposition on the part of the CP (which has been the principal working-class party in this state) due to the consequences of its traitorous war role and its internal situation, which has resulted on the one hand, in the falling away of its membership and sympathizers, and on the other, in paralysis of the CP activities in mass propaganda work.

The negative factors were:

1. Our small forces consisting of seven comrades, dispersed in four towns, only five of whom could be activated;

2. The great expenditure of time involved in order to get to our concentration points, equaling and often exceeding the time actually spent in sub work itself.

We aimed principally at projects containing predominantly proletarian elements, which are typical of this industrial state, and hit them cold (without previous distributions). We tried distributions beforehand on two occasions, but found success only among Negroes, when using this preparatory method.

We found what sold the sub was driving home the facts: that we were not selling a trade union paper but a radical political one; that we were the ones who had fought against this imperialist war and had so proclaimed and condemned it from the start; that workers needed the truth which was being kept from them, and which they could only obtain through our pages, because it was a paper devoted solely to the interests, needs and problems of the workers; that they knew they could not get the truth from the pages of corporation-controlled newspapers, which contained only lies and half-truths.

We quickly learned, as to technique, that a "canned" mechanical line was not nearly as effective as a more personalized talk based on a quick estimate of the prospect, with the basic "line" varied to suit your estimate. Further, you must be able to shift your approach if the worker, by some comment, should indicate that you have not estimated him correctly. All of this, of course, within the bounds of principled political argumentation. Ability to handle yourself in this way, during the few minutes normally spent on a prospect, requires a degree of political skill which is one of the valuable gains from sub work. Sub-getting develops the ability of a comrade, especially a new one, to think fast politically.

The only other aspect of technique requiring mention is contained in Comrade Kujac's commentary -- "Make with the legs!" We seriously believe all that prevents us from having a circulation of 1,000,000 nationally is the lack of people to go out and get them. But 100,000 is certainly a realizable goal. And the way subscribers are beginning to recommend the paper, which we have noticed already, indicates that we can expect substantial help from them toward the achievement of our goal.

We presented ourselves openly as Trotskyists, or as fighting socialists who meant business, using the Minneapolis Trial pamphlets as proof that we were not the kind of radicals who buckled when the going got tough. On some occasions we explained that we were a comparatively new organization, composed of the best elements of the old parties (Communist, Socialist, Socialist Labor) elements who had left these old outfits because we had found that they had betrayed or abandoned the real ideas of socialism. There can be no doubt of the profound interest we generated, nor of the deep respect that was tendered us. As soon as it became clear that we were not capitalist-newspaper salesmen, we were often invited into the house, offered drinks, food, etc.

That constituted one of our small problems. Many workers, especially old militants or radicals, were simply dying to pour their hearts out to us, but the time limitations required us to cut our visit as short as possible. However, it was necessary to judge the types we met. Many had valuable information to offer about the local labor movement, and a few were important union officials who were curious to know if we had answers to some of the problems they faced. However, by working a block of houses in pairs, we were able to pull each other out of drawn out discussions.

We scored our greatest success in a 1,200 home project in Hartford. Part of it was occupied by white-collar insurance clerks from whom we got a very poor response. However, we estimate that about two-thirds of the project is occupied by industrial workers (Colt's, Pratt-Whitney, Royal Typewriter, and smaller machine-shop concerns). We obtained 98 subs in that project, hitting them cold with the above-described approach. We sold subs to CP members and sympathizers, but found little evidence of Stalinist activity. Yet this project should have been a "natural" for a large number of Daily Worker and Sunday Worker subscribers. The apathy of the CP, organizationally, was even more pointedly demonstrated by our work in another Hartford project. It is entirely occupied by Negroes and Negro Stalinist leaders live there. It has a Negro CP unit whose sole activity appears to be

distribution of Stalinist papers. The project contains about 1,000 apartments. Although we have been there about four times during the last two months and have distributed or sold about 300 single copies of the paper and 31 subs, there is no evidence of any anti-Trotskyist campaign on the part of the CP. We expect to recruit a member from the project, and have several sympathizers now, so we would have heard about any move of the Stalinists against us.

We now have more Militant subscribers in this state than the CP has Sunday Worker subscribers. They do not concentrate on selling subs to the Daily Worker.

In regard to the price of the Militant subscription: Naturally a 25¢ sub would be easier to sell than one costing 50¢. But we found the price to be a real drawback only in a minority of cases. I think the conclusion can be drawn that 50¢ is an obstacle only if sufficient political interest does not exist, excluding cases of outright poverty. We have hit places where the paper was wanted, but where 50¢ simply was not in the house. On the other hand, we found a wonderful response from workers who had been out on strike for six weeks and whose interest in the class struggle was therefore stimulated. They gave us the money in nickels and pennies. (In this particular section of Hartford, we got one sub from every two homes visited). We had a similar experience recently among the GM Bristol strikers. We easily obtained 31 subs from them in spite of the fact that they face a long, exhausting workless grind. Joe Singer's approach overcame any hesitation over parting with 50¢. "If the strike is your gun, then this paper gives you your ammunition," he told them.

The response from working-class vets was especially encouraging. Their mood, in the great majority of cases, was a serious willingness to find new answers. They all openly expressed the conviction that "World War II was for money." One could sense not merely disillusionment, but a positive determination to find a real way to prevent war and the economic dislocation they know is in the offing. Further, as one talked with them, it became definitely apparent that they were judging us coolly, watching every word to determine whether we meant business and knew what we were about. These vets are willing to go places, if they can be satisfied that those who offer them leadership are capable of giving proper direction that will bring results. Their experience in the armed forces has, as we expected, stripped their minds of much of the rubbish previously inculcated in them. They are grimly convinced that they have been duped and that their lives were endangered for false ideals. They believe war is due again soon, and they are willing to listen to anyone who can tell how to prevent it. They are interested in our anti-fascist fight and will pitch in on the side of labor.

In many cases women were eager to take the sub but they were prevented from subscribing many times by their husbands. (This includes housewives, as well as women workers). We had one experience, though, of a gray-haired grandma, who bitterly berated the younger members of her large household when they seemed uninterested. "You damn fools will go on working for nothing, and won't listen to nobody that knows what its all about. Give me that paper! Those damn fools!" she muttered bitterly.

Some strike leaders wanted the paper around where union members could get them, feeling that the paper would be of value in educating raw members and thereby help keep up their morale. Every strike leader we met voiced the worry -- how to educate the members. They felt the need for working-class education. I am referring to the new layer of militants, honest leaders, who constitute a small minority in their locals. They greet us with the utmost friendliness and listen carefully to our suggestions on practical union matters.

We have come across a few UAW and UE leaders who have been to CIO conventions and have seen our paper there. One of these men, in Bristol, has carefully kept his copy in his desk and has probably re-read it many times. Other oldtimers had heard of us and were curious about our ideas. Most of them were interested in the labor party idea and bought the labor party pamphlet. We want to add that we found no difficulty selling subs and pamphlets at the same time, especially among Negroes, who often bought the sub and also the three Negro pamphlets.

Finally, we wish to express our admiration for the fine job The Militant staff has done. After all, the paper itself has to provide an inducement. During the campaign and since, we feel that The Militant was better than ever from every conceivable angle. Many times we felt: "Well, this issue is so good that it couldn't possibly be improved. Will the next one be anywhere near as good?" Sure enough -- it was! Such work on the part of the staff is one of the greatest morale-building forces. It stimulates sub-getting, especially among isolated comrades working in a new area. The paper fills us with pride and provides the necessary spur to keep us hitting the ball. Hats off to our comrades of the staff!

We have signed up one Negro as a result of our campaign work. Another is almost certain to join after the first. We also have established excellent contacts among workers, unionists and union leaders. A branch is in view. We have more than 400 active subs in the state, morale is high, and we are aiming for 1,000 subscriptions. With such a paper as The Militant we are sure to achieve this goal in the not too distant future.

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COMMENTS ON THE SUB CAMPAIGN

By Arlene Williams

(Bayonne)

I think the comrades nationally will agree that this last campaign for subscriptions was really a tough assignment, generally speaking. Several factors which we did not encounter during previous campaigns created definite obstacles for us.

In my opinion the party made a mistake in its policy on the price of the sub. During the war, when there was full employment, it was certainly a mistake to charge 25¢ for a subscription that we lost money on when it was possible to charge 50¢ and meet our expense. Now, on the heels of cut-backs, strikes and unemployment, we raised the price and the results are obvious. I can safely say that, with a few

possible exceptions, the branches found the procurement of 50¢ a task.

The general psychology of our potential subscribers was to hesitate, not over the type of newspaper or the quality of it, on that score the general reaction was good, but on the question of the price. The consolation on this score is, of course, that what we did not get in quantity we got in quality.

Another aspect of the campaign to which I objected was the failure to make a specific drive to gain renewals from old subscribers. To me, the most important aspect of a subscription drive is the follow-up work on it. I know for the Bayonne branch, it was veritably impossible for us to attempt to meet our quota and at the same time follow up on our numerous old renewals. Our forces just did not permit it. I recognize the importance of widening the party's sphere of influence by spreading The Militant but I think it is a mistake on our part to counterpose this to the concrete work that can come from re-visiting previous subscribers at the time when their subscription renewals are due. I know some comrades will argue that the re-visiting should come under the category of regular branch work along with the sub drive.

Well, comrades, judging by the previous scoreboards and the present one, every branch has a few hundred subscribers, if not more. For the large branches, it is possible for them to have a division of labor on contacting, sub-selling, etc. But I think comrades in smaller branches will agree that when there is only a comparatively small core of workers in the branch, all of these tasks, including many more such as mass union work, educational work, etc., the same small group assumes the major part of the burden. Something undoubtedly has to suffer as a result.

I recall Comrade Dave Lands' statement in a previous Party Builder to the effect that the Cleveland branch was dropping all of its activities, including its branch's regular weekly meetings in order to be able to have sufficient time to meet their sub quota. To me this is a disastrous policy. If the procurement of new subscriptions becomes counterposed to the regular functioning of a branch or if the other aspects of branch work must necessarily suffer, or if the over-taxing of the activities of a core of a branch is the result, I am forced to say that our policy on subscription drives must be re-examined and revised.

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SUBSCRIPTION CAMPAIGN REPORT FROM READING

By James White

Due to the limited forces of the Reading branch, we were forced to utilize them in a way that would assure the best possible results. Most of the local comrades were burdened with an unusual amount of union activities, which included four or five meetings a week. This forced them to solicit subscriptions almost entirely from fellow workers in the shops.

The few remaining comrades were used for door-to-door canvassing. With these limitations in mind, we experimented for a solution to eliminate the hit or miss proposition of door-to-door bell ringing. These experiments proved that the workers who live on the side streets and in the poverty-stricken areas find a greater need for a militant workers' paper and an independent labor party than their more fortunate fellow workers who reside on the better kept streets and haven't felt the pinch of the present cut-backs too severely. Of the various approaches, we found that the explanation of our Independent Labor Party slogan proved the most effective.

At the beginning of the campaign, we simply chose a working-class neighborhood and started plugging. This led to one subscription out of every eight or ten homes visited. In a number of instances we were met with open hostility.

Thus, with our areas, streets and approaches carefully selected, our effectiveness was increased considerably.

During the latter part of the campaign, we were met with warm friendliness and received a subscription from one out of every three homes entered.

This simplified method of canvassing enabled our local pacemaker to obtain 23 subscriptions from 43 homes visited on the last day of the campaign. This achievement in itself is proof of the effectiveness of our plan.

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MILITANT SUBSCRIPTION CAMPAIGN IN LOS ANGELES

By Ruth Daniels

The recent subscription campaign which wound up as a total national victory, ended as only a partial victory for the Los Angeles Local. Here, 1,140 subs were sold, 76 percent of our quota of 1,500.

In an evaluation of the campaign, the most fruitful investigation lies in the examination of why we failed to meet our quota, for the lessons learned in this campaign will help us in future campaigns.

Mistakes were made, not only locally but nationally. Many comrades had the feeling of campaign weariness. A rapid succession of national campaigns deprived this one of some of its significance, and the enthusiasm of the comrades did not rise to the level it might have if the campaigns had been spaced further apart.

Locally we made a mistake at the very beginning of the campaign when we underestimated the difficulty of the task ahead of us and failed to gear ourselves for it. In contradistinction to the easy and quick sale of subs in the last campaign, this time the average sale per person was 1.8 subs per hour. This was due, of course, to the increased price of the sub as well as the increasing economic pressure on the worker in the uncertain post-war period, causing a

reluctance to spend even 50¢ on an unfamiliar publication. Many workers who did not buy subs expressed sympathy with the program of The Militant and bought single copies and pamphlets. We sold approximately 150 single copies of The Militant and 75 pamphlets, mainly "Jobs for All" and the "Labor Party."

In line with a general policy of encouraging the branches of the local to operate independently, quotas were assigned to each branch and the task of planning mobilizations and territories was left to the individual branches. This, I believe, carried the decentralization too far. It would have been organizationally more efficient had a central committee with representatives of each branch met each week to plan territories and, in cases where a territory was untried and uncertain, sent a few sub-getters in ahead of time to test it out. Instead, it often happened that a whole branch went into an uncertain territory, which not only wasted much time and effort but also had a demoralizing effect on the comrades.

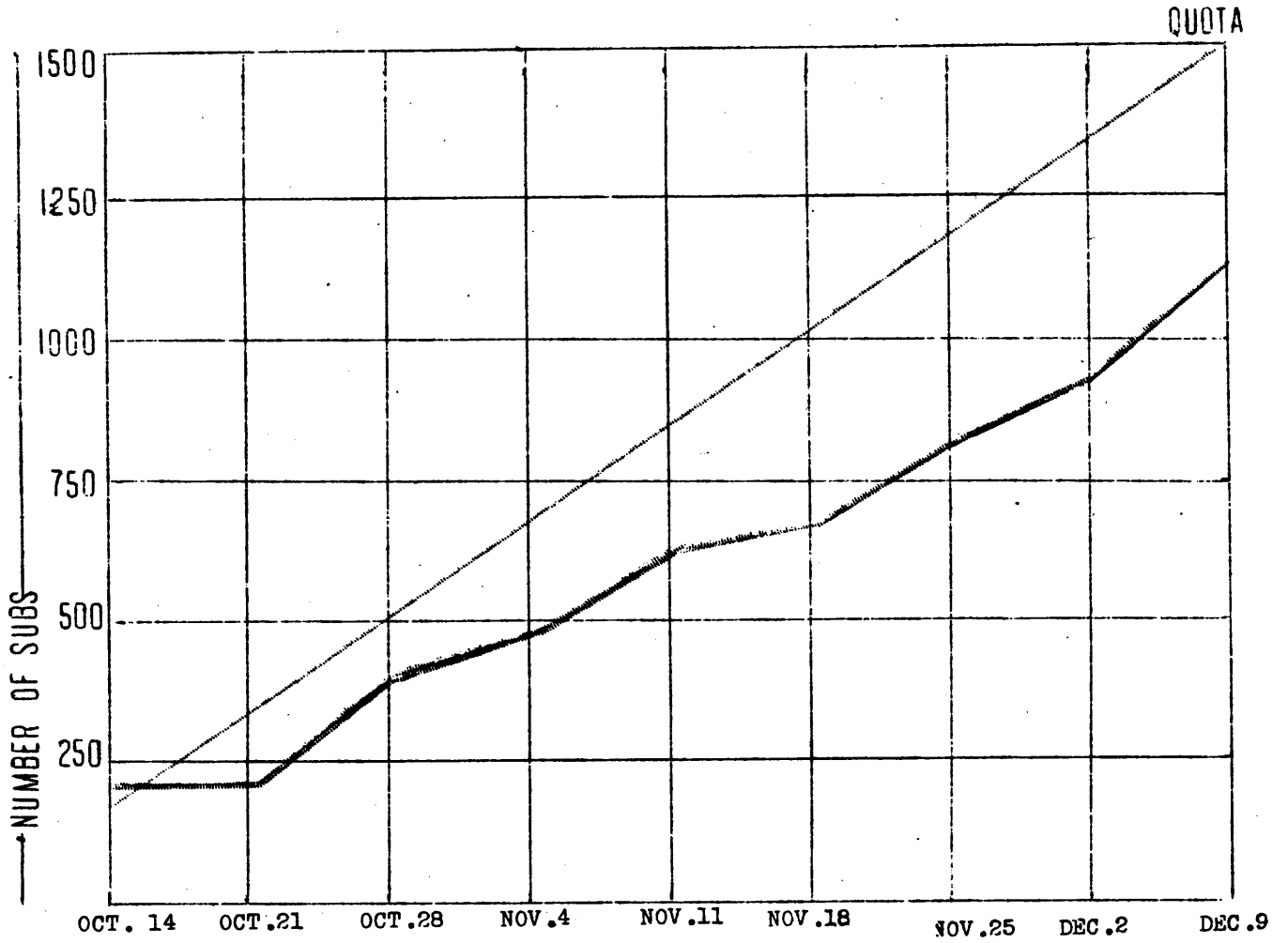
We found in this campaign, as in the last one, that the best results were obtained in the most oppressed sections of the city. It is these most oppressed, the Negro and Mexican workers, who reach out most eagerly for our program. After many attempts to sell in new neighborhoods, we repeatedly had to come back to the Negro and Mexican sections even though this meant reworking the same territory as the last campaign. Thus at many of the houses at which we called we found old Militant readers, all of whom told us of their enthusiastic esteem for The Militant. In many cases the old readers helped us sell subs to their neighbors. One sub salesman, after finding six subscribers in a row, was able to sell subs to all the remaining houses on the block, making a solid block of Militant readers.

In the accompanying graph, the dotted line represents the score we should have maintained and the solid line gives our actual score throughout the campaign. It will be noted from this that there was a mid-campaign slump for which a last-minute spurt in the final week of the drive failed to compensate. The cause for this slump was largely a natural one. It is difficult to keep up continual exertion over a long period of time and in line with this, the national campaign directors might consider the suggestion that in the future, subscription campaigns be called for much shorter periods, perhaps even for one Sunday at a time. This would eliminate the psychological strain of the drawn-out method of campaign. The leadership, locally, also made the mistake of not compensating for the slump by failing to inspire more enthusiasm among the comrades. This might have been done, perhaps, by reiterating and driving home the political necessity of the task of gaining new Militant readers.

There were other factors over which we had no control, which interfered with our subscription work. Many of our comrades were unable to participate in the subscription drive due to intensive trade union activity. The Anti-Fascist Campaign, coming in the midst of the subscription campaign, not only took up most of the time and energy of nearly all our comrades, but also prevented entirely for many weeks the participation of the Socialist Youth Club, upon whom we had counted heavily for aid.

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MILITANT SUBSCRIPTION CAMPAIGN
Los Angeles, California Oct.14-Dec.9, 1945



Although most of this report is devoted to analyzing the lessons to be learned from this campaign, we by no means overlook the many concrete gains of the subscription drive. Besides the obvious gain of 1,140 new readers in this area and the sale of literature, the subscription work put us in touch with many new contacts. Every mobilization was followed by glowing accounts by comrades of the new sympathizers, contacts and possible recruits they had met while selling subs. To celebrate these gains and the national victory, we wound up the final mobilization on December 9 with a Victory Dinner, prepared and served by comrades and friends. There, in a beautifully decorated hall and after a delicious meal, comrades gave reports and experiences of the campaign and prizes were awarded, after which we had some entertainment and singing of revolutionary songs. We finished the campaign completely confident that in the coming period the number of new Militant readers will continue to grow at an ever increasing pace.

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THE PHILADELPHIA SUBSCRIPTION CAMPAIGN

By Max Geldman

The outstanding feature of the last Militant sub campaign in Philadelphia was the dynamic drive put into it by the branch, which from the very beginning assured its success. The energy and zeal of the comrades broke through traditional organizational methods and constantly opened new fields for the obtaining of subscriptions. In a sense, it can be said that direction of the campaign resolved itself into giving the comrades the field and turning them loose.

This does not mean the campaign was unorganized, but rather that organizational methods were adapted to fit the needs of the campaign. The work done and the 758 subscriptions obtained, amounting to 253% over the original quota, represents an organized branch activity. It differed from previous sub campaigns in the flexibility of methods. Comrades explored new territories and adapted themselves to the changed conditions brought about by the end of the war.

At the beginning of the campaign an elaborate plan was presented by the campaign committee. The branch was to be divided into two competitive teams with assigned territories. In addition, individual competition was to be stressed, through a complicated chart showing both team and individual scores. A banquet, celebrating the successful conclusion of the campaign and honoring the local pace-setters, was to wind up the drive.

The only part of the plan carried out, was the holding of the banquet. Some 40 party members and Militant subscribers gathered on Saturday, December 15, and paid fitting tribute to the achievements in the campaign.

The teams were abolished during the very first mobilization. Instead, the comrades were organized into a number of small crews who set out to explore various sections of the city. The sections assigned to the crews were not altogether unknown to the comrades. Pamphlet

sales had been conducted previously in these sections and pre-distributions were made in a number of others. The practicality of working in small crews demonstrated itself so effectively during the first mobilization that it was utilized for the balance of the campaign. It cut down time wasted waiting for comrades to gather at the headquarters and permitted spending maximum time sub-getting. It was further demonstrated that where each comrade took individual responsibility for papers, sub cards, literature, and other supplies, less time was wasted waiting for the group to gather.

Another note-worthy feature of the campaign was the determined manner in which the comrades stuck to the task of making the rounds despite difficulties. Comrades who went all day without getting a sub were not disheartened by their lack of success but sought opportunities to make up for the failures of the day. They found Militant subscribers everywhere; on the street-cars, in the subway, in restaurants -- wherever they found an opportunity to talk with workers.

With such a spirit, there was no need to stress individual competition or show individual achievements on a chart. The emphasis was on branch achievement and in the steadily rising number of new subscribers. That was reward enough for all. There was pride, both in the sterling performance of Comrade Teresa Stone, who led the branch with a total of 142 subs, and in the work of comrades who plugg-ed along from Sunday to Sunday.

For the Philadelphia branch, the last sub campaign was an opportunity to demonstrate through concrete activity the quality of a party unit composed of many new members. The original quota of 300 seemed a formidable quota indeed. It was not until the comrades saw the results of their efforts that confidence in the branch's ability to make its quota was established. During the second Sunday mobilization there was already talk of doubling the quota. The branch further expressed confidence in its sub-getting ability by challenging Minneapolis on totals to be obtained. The goal of twice the quota was reached in the sixth week of the campaign -- 646 subs, or 215 percent. The two weeks' extension of the national campaign inevitably caused a let-down. The momentum was sufficient, however, to obtain an additional 150 subscriptions in the extension period.

The greater part of the new subscribers, 75 percent, were from the Negro sections of the city. There are several reasons for this. The paramount one is that the Negroes, an oppressed racial minority, are the section of the working class most favorably disposed towards our program. The issues dealt with in The Militant -- jobs for all, the labor party, racial equality, the imperialist nature of the war -- were more easily grasped by them, since they were issues that affected Negroes in their daily lives. Even the unemployed responded to the appeal of The Militant. They emptied penny-banks to obtain a subscription to a paper which they knew was fighting for them.

Another factor in the large number of Negro subscribers is the sheer weight of the Negro population in Philadelphia. The exact figures are unobtainable, but estimates place the percentage of Negroes in the total population at 20 percent. And 33 percent or over of the working class are Negroes. Practically all those employed in industry were members of unions. The bulk of the new crop of Militant subscribers are industrial workers, members of unions -- mostly CIO. They are

politically ready to accept the revolutionary message of our party.

The question may be posed -- are the white workers less responsive to the appeal of The Militant?

It would seem so according to the experiences of the last campaign in Philadelphia. But even here, where the percentage of Negro subscribers is so high, it would be a mistake to conclude that white workers are not receptive to The Militant. Distributions at plant gates have demonstrated again and again that workers accept The Militant eagerly. The problem is to reach them. With the forces available in the Philadelphia branch, we were unable to do this in the last campaign. It remains one of the primary tasks of the branch in the coming period. Perhaps it would now be a good idea for the party to consider another special "six-months for 25¢" sub campaign in the future, a campaign directed primarily toward the leftward moving white workers.

In the Philadelphia area, where The Militant is the main medium opening the road to the building of the party, such a campaign would enable the branch to advance to the next stage of its development -- contact with the main stream of the organized workers.

The shortcomings of the branch in some aspects of the campaign, which are well understood by the local comrades, does not lessen the importance of what was accomplished. In January 1944, there were some 25 subscribers in Philadelphia. Today over 1,000 workers are receiving the paper.

An entire new layer of workers have become readers of our press. Even for branches without roots in the trade union movement, the way is open to reach workers with our program, appeal to them for aid in our general activities and recruit them into the party. We no longer are dependent on the cynical, tired radicals who occasionally contribute a dollar to the party after hours of complaints about it, the working-class as a whole and the failure of the movement to appreciate the "sterling quality" of their characters.

One of the great satisfactions of this last campaign was the work in Camden, N. J. Camden, across the Delaware river from Philadelphia, is a highly industrialized, well-organized area. About 150 subscriptions were obtained there. This represents the first time an organized, concerted effort has been made to reach this town with its concentrated worker population. The group of comrades who pounded away in Camden during the campaign reached shipyard workers, Campbell soup workers, RCA workers, etc. All of them are union members, some are stewards and among them are a few delegates to the CIO Council. Some of these subscribers are members or former members of the Stalinist party.

In Camden, as well as in Philadelphia, many former readers of the Daily Worker were encountered. Many of them had at one time been members of the CP or one of the Stalinist periphery organizations. The Negro workers, in particular, were disillusioned with the CP as a result of the Stalinist pro-war policies and their abandonment of the struggle against discrimination. It was necessary for us to explain the differences between our program and that of the Stalinists in order to break down their resistance and get them to subscribe to The Militant.

In one instance, a Stalinist functionary in Camden, incensed at the number of Militant subscribers in his vicinity, attempted to bull-doze one of our comrades into leaving the neighborhood. Our comrade stood her ground and sold Militant subs to the Stalinist's next-door neighbors.

As a result of our work in Camden it is possible to begin the process of contacting new Militant readers and organizing discussion groups there. Eventually we can establish a regular forum and later, perhaps, a branch of the party.

The sub campaign has had many direct benefits for Philadelphia. A large group of readers has been established. The party is drawing them to meetings and social functions. We are recruiting some of them. During the campaign, five new members were obtained as a result of activities around the sub drive. Not of least importance has been the rapid integration of the many new members who began the campaign with questions as to their abilities to serve the party. Four of the first six branch pace-setters were new members. The successes of the campaign demonstrated abilities which they were unaware of having. The confidence obtained through participation in the weekly Sunday mobilizations and in day-to-day work with The Militant is reflected in the growing activities of the branch. The comrades who began the campaign as hesitant experimenters, ended as veterans ready for the next assignment.

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ARRANGEMENTS FOR NEWARK FORUM

By Frieda Kalb

On Sunday, February 10, the Newark branch organized a very successful meeting on "The Meaning of the Strike Wave and the GI Demonstrations" with Comrade William F. Warde as the speaker. There were about 50 people present of whom 20 were outsiders.

In spite of the fact that we are out-growing our small headquarters and it is difficult for us to run large-scale meetings, this meeting was well organized from beginning to end. First of all we emphasized the theme of our meeting by hanging Laura Gray's cartoon, "Solidarity Will Win," mounted on a red background, on the wall in front. Above this we put up the slogan, in large block letters, "Withdraw All Troops from Foreign Soil!" On the side wall we had a big display of 35 large photographs of strikers in action all over the country and some photographs of the soldiers in action in Paris and on the picket lines at home. We borrowed the photographs from a newspaper photographer and some from The Militant office. All were mounted on red cardboard 3 feet by 6 feet. Above this display we had a large slogan, "Smash the Anti-Labor Offensive!" These were only the highlights in addition to our two large stands displaying our literature.

For the first time we had two comrades as ushers. These comrades adapted themselves very well to their new roles. As the people

came in they showed them where to put their hats and coats. Then they invited them over to see the display where they introduced them to other comrades standing around. It gave us an excellent opportunity to learn something about the newcomers and they in turn felt more relaxed and interested in their first meeting and acquaintance with us.

However, one of the most important aspects of the meeting, providing color and entertainment, with a class angle, was the role of the pre-chairman or as some of the comrades referred to Comrade Mary Steel as the Mistress of Ceremonies. She started the meeting by announcing that some records would be played. We had the recordings "Talking Union" with the Almanac Singers. Before she played each record she would announce the title and make a few remarks. When the hall was filled and it was time to get to the main part of the meeting, she introduced the chairman, Comrade Kohlman, our organizer. Oh yes, she also plugged the literature.

Our party and The Militant are attracting many new workers. And naturally, they are not accustomed to sitting for two or more hours listening to two or three speeches. I think this idea of a pre-chairman can really be developed to lend much needed color and entertainment, with a class angle, to our meetings. For example, if we could get recordings of Joe Hill's songs (I do not know if there are any that have been recorded) or any other working-class songs, the pre-chairman in addition to announcing the titles of the records could also make a few brief remarks about the author, touching briefly on the IWW movement; thereby giving many new workers some idea of the struggles and tradition of the American labor movement. Or take some of Josh White's recordings or Billie Holiday's "Strange Fruit" and present a few brief remarks about Jim Crow, etc.

Of course as we recruit and become a mass party and gain more influence we will be in a better position to put on skits, dances, etc. Already the New York Local and the Los Angeles Local have choruses. And Chicago has a Theater Militante!

Many branches and locals throughout the country are already or very shortly will be setting up committees for May day meetings. It would be a good idea to have the branches send in to the Party Builder any new ideas about running meetings -- program, decorations, publicity, etc.

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NEW YORK YOUTH WORK

By E. Varlin and S. Robertson

1. Origins of the Trotskyist Youth Group

The split with the Shachtmanite opposition resulted in the disappearance of a separate youth organization of the Socialist Workers Party. In its majority the membership of the Young People's Socialist League (Fourth International), almost entirely petty-bourgeois in composition, joined the Shachtmanite minority in its rebellion against the

political program and the organizational methods of Trotskyism.

Those youth who adhered to the program of the Trotskyist majority entered the party after the split. At the time our forces were not strong enough for a separate youth organization. Most of the remaining youth were old enough to be assimilated in the work of the party by entering industry. The exceptions had matured politically in the course of the faction fight and found it quite simple to integrate themselves in the party.

The revival of youth work began about three years ago, not as the result of a prearranged plan, but because opportunities arose which made it a necessity. Some of the comrades' children, younger brothers and sisters and their friends, began to show interest in our movement. They were quite young and, since there was no place for them in the party's life, they grouped together. It was decided to hold a separate class for them based on the trial pamphlets. These younger comrades formed part of the cadre of what later became the youth group.

2. The Youth Group Since the Last Convention

When the last City Convention met in September 1944, there was no functioning youth organization. Forums, occasional socials and contact work, prepared by a nucleus of comrades and close sympathizers, were the only youth activities.

At the last City Convention the setting up of a youth organization was projected. It was realized that contacts would become dissatisfied with mere participation in forums and would drift away unless we could make them feel that they were part of a functioning organization. We set ourselves the perspective of broadening our work in the schools, working in other youth groups and organizations, selling The Militant on the campus, etc.

In December 1944, the Trotskyist Youth Group was set up as a membership organization with a statement of purpose and rules of membership.

Since that time, the Youth Group has seized upon every opportunity that presented itself to recruit in the schools.

The Youth Group has taken part in all the campaigns of the party. Whenever possible, the Youth Group tried to reach young people in these campaigns.

The Youth Group quota for the party expansion fund was \$50.00. \$75.00 was raised.

In the first Militant sub campaign (25¢ subs) the Youth Group quota was 500 subs; the group got 540. In the last campaign we sold 201 subs, (50¢ subs), one over our quota. We tried to split the sub-getting into two categories, door-to-door work and the sale of subs on the school campuses. Most subs were obtained door-to-door.

The Trotskyist Youth Group, in addition to working with the party in the collection of petitions, and the distribution of election

material, held three successful street-corner meetings at NYU, City College and Brooklyn College during the election campaign. This is the best example of how the Youth Group exploited the youth angles of party agitation.

The Youth Group suffered from several organizational weaknesses in the last period. The comrades were inexperienced and they are still learning through the trial-and-error method. The loss of the older Youth Group members to the Army made it necessary to continuously renew the leadership.

Educational work during the last year has been confined to two basic training classes and the forums. To broaden the Youth Group's understanding of the traditions and role of the Marxist movement a class, "From the First to the Fourth International," is being planned.

Another very serious organizational fault is the inordinate length of meetings. The problem of too many meetings, all of them too long, is being tackled now.

Lack of information on other youth organizations and youth problems generally hampers our work considerably. The Youth Group is planning to start work now collecting and organizing such material.

3. Membership and Composition of the Trotskyist Youth Group

There are now 24 members of the Trotskyist Youth Group, five of whom are also members of the party. In addition, there are three absentees. Nine former members of the Youth Group have left it to join the party. Of the present Youth Group membership, 11 joined since the last City Convention. There has been some turnover. Four members left the Youth Group in the last year. But the Youth Group has demonstrated its ability not only to hold its own but also to recruit fresh elements.

The Young People's Socialist League (Fourth International) was made up, for the most part, of college students. This is not true of the present Youth Group. Only six of its members are attending college; four go to New York University, one to City College, one to Brooklyn College. Nine are distributed in five high schools: four at Washington Irving, two at Stuyvesant, and one each at Seward Park, Haaron and Sewanika High Schools. Nine others are working. The ages of its members range from 13 to 20.

The social and national composition of the Youth Group is a vast improvement over that of the old Yipsel. Most of them were college students. Of almost 200 members, there were less than half a dozen non-Jewish youth in the latter. There was not one Negro in the entire Young People's Socialist League (Fourth International). In contrast, only about half the membership of the present Youth Group are Jewish and, with exceptions, these came from working-class neighborhoods. There are, in addition, four Negroes, two Puerto Ricans, and individual representatives of several other nationalities. Why is this significant? Firstly, because the nationalities of New York tend to group together in separate neighborhoods and the recruitment of new nationalities opens the door to new neighborhoods.

Secondly, because it indicates that not social ties but the solidarity that comes with the belief in a common program and the adoption of a common class outlook binds our youth together.

Members are recruited on the basis of adherence to the Declaration of Principles of the Trotskyist Youth Group appended to this article. A process of education takes place after recruitment which prepares them for work in the party. The fact that three of the former members of the Youth Group are now in the party's maritime work and that one of the absentees was engaged in the work of the paper fraction is an index of the understanding and seriousness of purpose that the members of the Youth Group have acquired in the course of their work in it.

4. Activities and Perspectives

Work in outside organizations will be continued and extended. The efforts of the comrades in Club Equality have already borne fruit in recruitment and in friendly contacts. At New York University, our comrades will remain in the AYD where they have already made several contacts and one recruit. We plan to participate in school organizations that show possibilities.

Where our strength is great enough, we will attempt to form Current Problems Clubs in the high schools, organizations in which we can present our program to contacts in those schools. Thus far, this is possible only in New York University.

Much stress will be placed on individual contacting in the schools. The weekly forum conducted by the Trotskyist Youth Group will be the means by which these contacts will be drawn closer to the group.

Leaflets announcing meetings of topical importance will be distributed at those schools in which we have members. Programmatic leaflets presenting our point of view and our differences will be distributed to such organizations as the AYD.

The education of the membership will be achieved through classes and membership meetings, at each of which there is an educational and discussion after the business is taken up.

The expansion of the party in New York offers possibilities for the Youth Group. A Harlem comrade suggested that our comrades in the Youth Group might be able to organize a study group at the Harlem branch to which children and younger brothers and sisters of our Harlem comrades could be invited. The Brooklyn organizer informs us that there are 25 youth subscribers to The Militant in his borough and that they will be contacted. We are ready to follow up any lead. For the time being, we urge the party comrades to invite any youth they think would be interested in the Friday night forums of the Youth Group. Leaflets announcing the forums will be available.

The Youth Group will continue to work with the party on election campaigns, Militant drives, etc. However, its main efforts will be directed toward reaching the youth.

THE STATEMENT OF PURPOSE OF THE TROTSKYIST YOUTH GROUP

The Trotskyist Youth Group is an organization of young workers and students who realize that the social and economic problems of youth can be solved only by the establishment of a socialist society. The Trotskyist Youth Group, therefore, seeks to prepare youth for participation in the working-class struggle for emancipation. Its aim is the education of youth in the principles of Marx, Engels, Lenin and Trotsky, as embodied in the program of the Socialist Workers Party.

THE RULES OF THE TROTSKYIST YOUTH GROUP

1. Every youth who agrees to engage actively in the work of the youth group and abide by its decisions shall be eligible for membership.
2. Each applicant for membership shall pay an initiation fee of 35¢. Each member shall pay monthly dues of 25¢.
3. The Youth Group shall elect an Executive Committee of seven to plan and coordinate the activity of the Youth Group. Elections shall be held every six months.

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REPORT ON NEW YORK ELECTION CAMPAIGN

By Carol Lynn

The limited experience of the party on the electoral field was reflected in the November Mayoralty election in New York by a number of shortcomings that showed up during the campaign. In most instances these shortcomings were due to lack of previously accumulated information and inadequate organization. In order to profit by our experience this report will deal largely with the technical and organization aspects of the campaign.

Nominating Petitions

1. It is important that nominating petitions conform to existing election law. If the form is incorrectly drawn, the petitions can be disqualified. Therefore, it is advisable to have a competent attorney scan the form before it is printed.

a. Election law is amended at each session of the legislature. A knowledge of current law is necessary, also of court decisions that may have a bearing on the interpretation of the law.

b. The number of signatures should be limited to ten on each petition. In the event of a challenge, one disqualified signature on a petition may result in the discarding of the entire petition.

c. All signatures on the nominating petitions should be written in ink. Although indelible pencil may be used according to some interpretations of the law, there have been court decisions handed down disqualifying petitions signed in indelible pencil.

d. Wherever possible a full city slate should be run. In New York the office of Mayor, Comptroller, President of the Council, etc., are on the same petition and require no additional effort in the gathering of signatures. In addition, the nomination of a full city slate would have given us additional free time on the radio, greater representation at election forums and meetings, a more impressive list of candidates on the voting machine, etc.

Campaign to Collect Signatures

A total of 7,500 qualified signatures are required in New York for city-wide offices and 2,500 for borough offices. In order to be sure that we have the required number of qualified signatures, it is advisable to get double the number required. Also, in the event of a challenge, it is more difficult to disqualify our nominee when we have a substantial margin well above the minimum requirement.

The tremendous job of collecting signatures, as well as the great amount of technical work required, is designed to make it as difficult as possible for minority parties, such as ours, to get on the ballot. However, we can and must utilize the gathering of signatures on our nominating petitions, as part of our political campaign.

The gathering of signatures should be combined with the distribution of specially prepared election material. Street meetings can be utilized to facilitate the gathering of signatures and advancing our program at the same time in selected neighborhoods. Nominating petitions should be sent to contacts and sympathizers and to readers of The Militant, as well, enlisting their aid in the work of circulating our nominating petitions. Considering only those who signed our nominating petitions in the mayoralty campaign, for example, we could have easily distributed 20,000 pieces of literature to the signers of our petitions alone.

Organization of Collection of Signatures

The organization set-up used in the 1945 campaign for the collection of signatures consisted of a committee of one representative of the City Committee and representatives of the branches.

a. Harry Gold, City Director, planned the campaign on a city-wide basis with our main concentration in Harlem. Due to the exceptionally short period of time allotted it was impossible to do any house-to-house work. Such work could serve a double purpose of contacting readers of The Militant and could lead to the organization of block committees to support our candidates.

b. The work of branch directors in the past campaign was limited to checking on assignments, seeing that petitions were turned in as soon as possible and that those comrades excused from outside work were utilized for desk work.

In the future, with each branch participating in the local campaign, the role of branch directors for this phase of the campaign will take on a more political character.

It is important to complete the quota of signatures as early as possible so that the required book work can be completed and the party's nominations can be filed with the board of elections early enough to obtain an advantageous position on the ballot. With the exception of those parties already on the ballot, the position of any candidate is usually determined in the order in which independent nominating petitions are filed.

Adequate time must be allowed for the desk work necessary in preparing the petitions for filing. The work of locating the Election District and the Assembly District of each signatory is tedious and slow and must be done accurately, otherwise the petitions can be disqualified.

Campaign Committee

Our experiences in the 1945 election campaign are an indication of the future work of the party. More and more we find that the regular day-to-day work of the party increases to such an extent that we cannot depend on the regular party apparatus to conduct such special and intensive campaigns.

During an election campaign, which in the past has involved the attention of the whole local apparatus, we find that the party often has to conduct parallel campaigns. For example, the Package Campaign, National Pamphlet Drive, Harlem Headquarters, National Sub-Campaign, etc., was conducted along with our election campaign.

We, therefore, must see that a special apparatus is set up for Election Campaigns to fully exploit all avenues made available to us in election periods.

A campaign committee to function properly should be established along departmental lines: publicity, finances, etc.

A strict division of labor, of course, cannot easily be achieved as we found in the recent campaign, but it should be our aim to go as far in this direction as circumstances permit.

Publicity Committee

The most important task of the publicity committee is the planning of special campaign material beginning with the period of the collection of signatures to the day of the elections. If effectively done, this entails a great deal of work. Due to inadequate forces we were limited to two pieces of special campaign literature: (1) The Election Platform -- 25,000 copies. (2) The Jim Crow Leaflet -- 25,000 copies.

Research Department

1. To seriously deal with the many issues arising during a campaign period the daily press must be followed closely. All papers should be clipped and the clippings classified.

2. Compilations should be made on housing, taxes, etc. Past records of individuals and parties participating in the elections should be made available to our candidates, speakers and writers.

3. This data is important for us to have in dealing with the issues, candidates and parties involved in the elections.

News Releases

The problem of breaking into the daily press is a difficult one but a serious attempt should always be made. News releases should be meticulously drawn up and as carefully dispatched.

Lengthy articles used as news releases are a waste of time and energy for us. To assure any possibility of having our releases published, we must be brief and to the point.

It is well to be acquainted with deadlines of the various papers and to time releases accordingly.

The results we achieved in the Negro press were not, of course, entirely determined by the above factors but were the results of an active Negro candidate in the field with a clear unambiguous line on Jim Crow.

During the period of the campaign, press releases were issued to the Negro press weekly on a national scale, numbering 168 papers in all, covering all major cities in the west, midwest and east, and every southern paper we were aware of. Arrangements were made for exchange copies with The Militant.

Results in the Negro press: Our releases were published in the following papers -- Afro American, Pittsburgh Courier, L.A. Sentinel, L.A. Tribune, New York Age, Amsterdam News, Peoples' Voice.

Radio

We are often dismayed when we learn the cost of radio time and certainly we should be. But when we consider what a wide audience we can reach over the air and compare this number with our small forces, we begin to realize the importance of the radio.

This field of the election campaign was given considerable thought and attention from the beginning.

Even before our petitions had been filed, we notified all stations that we were participating in the campaign and would expect to be included in any public program planned. This notice was followed by other letters after we had gotten on the ballot and as a result we obtained six 15-minute periods and seven 4-minute periods of free radio time. Many letters were sent us from radio listeners requesting further information about the party and for election material.

In addition to the free time obtained, we bought two 15-minute periods from WMCA for our candidates.

For the most satisfactory dealing with radio stations, it is advisable to work through a radio agent who is familiar with time

available on all stations. Such an arrangement can be made with no additional cost to us. The agent is given a 15 percent commission by the radio station on all sales, and of course, is anxious to get customers. Radio time should be bought early before the other parties have reserved all desirable time.

Other Organizations

In our approach to outside organizations, we note again the importance of active candidates and a full slate. It is hard for us to comprehend the personal importance placed upon candidates in the field as our main attention is directed to the program. However, it is an established procedure not to accept substitute speakers for candidates. If we are to use these extra forums, therefore, it is necessary to have candidates whose time is available for campaign work.

Unions

A form letter was sent out to all the unions who had previously supported the CRDC requesting an opportunity to speak on the issues in the campaign and requesting that our election platform which was enclosed be posted on the bulletin board. This request was never followed up with further appeals due to lack of forces, but it is very doubtful that we would have achieved any results. First of all, the labor movement in New York generally was committed to either the ALP or the Liberal party. Secondly, our own isolation here in New York made it impossible to get to the ranks of the unions who are disgusted with political company-unionism of their leadership and who would have welcomed our program.

Non-Partisan Groups

Such groups as the League of Women Voters, Women's City Club and others conduct public meetings and forums during the period of election campaigns. Providing we have the forces we should participate in these affairs for they are usually covered by the daily press. These so-called non-partisan groups never invite us but we can obtain a place on their program along with established parties in the manner done in this campaign. Each time any of these forums or meetings were announced, we would notify the sponsor of our participation in the election and our desire to be represented. It was in this manner we gained the 15-minute period for Farrell Dobbs over WMCA in a program of the Women's City Club. Time which would have cost about \$500. Ten engagements for our candidates were obtained by us in this campaign from various non-partisan groups. Only two were kept.

Minority Groups

Aside from a mailing sent out to a large number of Negro churches, little work was done in this field. It would have been desirable if we could have compiled a list of the many minority groups in this city and directed appeals to them for speaking engagements, following up with visits, etc. In our next campaign this must be given attention.

Street Meetings

Our original plans for street meetings were complicated by the

many unexpected problems which arose over the use of sound truck equipment, as well as our lack of knowledge of the various neighborhoods selected.

In the future a special committee must be set up to plan and organize this important work so that we are prepared in advance to meet the various difficulties as they arise. Schedules on a city-wide basis must be mapped out.

In future campaigns, this work will become even more important as we become more occupied with neighborhood work and activity. Parallel to a city-wide committee to plan street meetings will be the branch committee consisting of speakers, literature distributors and contact committee.

Here it is well to cite the experiences of the Harlem comrades as an example. With the preponderance of the branch new comrades, but with a local candidate in the field, they conducted the most effective street meetings held in the city. New comrades spoke with ease about the immediate problems in that area. Contacts were made for the party and subs to The Militant were sold.

Speakers Bureau

As the party grows and takes on new activity, it becomes more essential that we have qualified speakers available for the party election campaigns. To take hold of this problem and to deal with it properly, a speakers' bureau is necessary at all times and in particular during a campaign period.

Aid must be given inexperienced comrades in preparing outlines and compiling necessary material. Here again we see the experience of Harlem as partial answer to this problem. As we integrate ourselves into the neighborhoods and become familiar with local issues, we will be better equipped to speak to workers about their problems.

Finances

This important part of the Election Campaign was sorely neglected, here again, due primarily to a lack of forces and the pressure of other work.

Our original plan was to establish a committee comprising representatives of all the branches whose job it would be to devise ways and means of raising money to conduct the campaign, by special appeals to Militant readers and sympathizers of the party and by organizing affairs for the purpose of raising funds.

Aside from the importance of raising money for the campaign is the effect upon contacts and sympathizers of the party who contribute to a campaign. This aids in drawing them closer to us; they have a stake in the party so to speak, and it is easier to involve them further in party work.

We were fortunate in having a radio fund which had been held for this use for some time and in getting other sizeable contributions which covered the expenses of the campaign.

Mass Meetings

During the period of the campaign, from June 22 to November 4, five mass meetings were held. A mailing was sent to all Militant readers with tickets and a special letter. A selected list of unions were circularized and an average of 25,000 leaflets were distributed per meeting.

The average attendance at these meetings was about 350, and each meeting helped in developing new contacts for the party. Although our public meetings are not as large as we would like, it is gratifying to see the changed character of the attendance. We have succeeded in escaping from that petty-bourgeois radical fringe which never did us any good and with further work we can build our meetings into even more effective proletarian rallies.

The Militant

Unquestionably The Militant was the most effective medium of the campaign. With the increased number of subscribers we were sure of our election material reaching 5,000 readers each week.

In addition, The Militant was used with good effect during the entire period of the collection of signatures. Over 5,000 copies were distributed at that time.

Arrangements were made for the city-wide distribution of The Militant on the newsstand beginning with the Labor Day issue and concluding with the end of the campaign. During this period over 9,000 copies were sold.

Thirty thousand copies of The Militant were distributed during the active campaign period of the elections at street meetings and in conjunction with advertising our mass meetings.

Conclusion

With the end of the mayoralty elections we began preparations for the coming congressional election in the fall of 1946.

An election committee has been established to follow developments on the electoral field, to gather information and material, and to begin the preliminary organization work.

A study is being made of the statistics of the last election as well as of the congressional districts to determine which offers us the most fruitful field for participation.

Electoral activity will become an increasingly important branch of party activity which will require special attention by comrades charged with the direction of this work.

In this way we can correct our shortcomings and eliminate the obvious errors that are the postmark of inexperience in this important field of political activity.

REPORT ON THE NATIONAL RAILROAD CONFERENCE

By Farrell Dobbs

The first national conference of our railroad factions was held in Toledo on March 9th. Delegates were present from Rochester, Reading, St. Paul, Minneapolis and Toledo. The average age of the delegates was 42 years. The average length of time that the delegates had been in the party was 7 years. And the average period of their service in the railroad industry was 18 years.

The following are the opinions of the railroad comrades as to the conditions in the railroad industry today, the sentiments of the workers, and the program we should follow for our work in the next period.

Most of the railway unions have already agreed to arbitrate their demands. However, the railroad workers generally understand that whatever they get through arbitration will have been won for them by the strike struggles of the workers in the mass production industries. Moreover, the attitude of the railroad workers toward strikes is changing. By and large, all picket lines were honored by the railroad workers during the current strike wave.

During the war quite a bit of younger blood was injected into the industry. Now that the war is over many of the older men will be retired. Consequently, the average age in the industry will be reduced somewhat. The trend of thinking, especially among the younger elements in the industry, is towards militancy and this has had its effect on the older men as well.

The railroad workers are losing confidence in the reactionary leadership of the Brotherhoods and in the whole idea of the craft set-up as a vehicle for their organization. Right now the railroad industry is ripe for industrial unionism.

It is not our job to agitate the railroad workers. They are already agitated. Our job is to furnish them a program and leadership. The workers are floundering about seeking an answer to the question, what to do? It is probable that in the next period committees and councils will spring up throughout the industry. Unless these councils and committees are guided and coordinated they will wither away.

The workers are thirsting for information about their problems but they have no way of getting it. There is no organ in the railroad movement that gives a comprehensive picture of what is going on in the industry, analyzes the problems, and reflects the general sentiments of the workers. Most of the information they get comes by means of the grapevine. There is real need for a left-wing railroad paper, however, we are not in a position to swing such a project right now.

But we can get in some good licks with our party press. Therefore the comrades decided at the conference to recommend that our railroad comrades put on a special Militant sub campaign. For

this campaign the comrades will use a special sub card on which, in addition to the regular information, the workers will be asked to indicate what Brotherhood they belong to and what local lodge. This information will enable us to ascertain the sections of the railroad movement in which The Militant has influence and the extent of its influence in these sections.

The need for improved treatment of the problems of the railroad workers in The Militant was discussed, and the conference decided to ask for a railroad column in the paper. Comrade Adams, who was elected secretary of the national railroad fraction, will edit the railroad column for the paper and will collaborate with the editorial staff in preparing other material on the railroad industry.

The railroad comrades were urged to avail themselves of the Workers Forum column in the paper. In addition the paper will from time to time carry special articles on the railroad industry, and occasionally an editorial based on suggestions and information sent to the editors by the railroad comrades.

The conference recommended that the railroad comrades advocate the following five-point program:

1. Every railroad worker a union member.
2. Complete democracy in the railroad unions.
3. Progressive amalgamation, looking to industrial unionism.
4. Government operation of the railroads under workers control.
5. The railroad unions must help build the labor party.

The report would not be complete without mention of the excellent work of the Toledo comrades in providing accommodations for the conference. Toledo has a neat, orderly, nicely decorated headquarters. An attractive display of party literature catches the eye immediately. Good meeting facilities were provided for the conference. The main meal was served to the delegates in the efficient headquarters kitchen. After the conference, members and contacts of the Toledo branch joined the conference delegates for a convivial social evening.

Everyone left the conference with the firm conviction that we have taken another step forward on the road to a mass party.

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