

(FOR MEMBERS ONLY)

Party

CONTENTS

PROGRAM OF ACTION	1
INDUSTRIALIZATION AND COLONIZATION - HOW TO CHARACTERIZE A FAILURE AS A SUCCESS - By Sid Roberts (Detroit)	14
REPORT ON OUR PARTY PRESS By Henry Judd	10
"THIS SUPERNATURAL SOLICIT- ING" - A Reply to Comrade Sid Roberts - By Nathan Gould	19

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Builder

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OF THE WORKERS PARTY

PROGRAM OF ACTION

(Adopted in outline form by the National Committee Plenum in November, 1946, and adopted in final form by the Political Committee.)

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This is the second Program of Action since the National Convention (1946). Our previous Program of Action (August 1 to November 15, 1946) stated: "At the termination of this period a new program will be outlined in accordance with the central political issues and the given tasks before the Party. The latter particularly will depend upon the extent of progress registered in the first period." In this respect our new Program of Action bases itself upon and proceeds from the previous one. Attention is called to that document which appeared in full in Volume I, No. 1 of the PARTY BUILDER. All members are urged to reread this in full, but a reading of the sections on "Recruitment" (pp. 5-9), "Integration of New Members" (pp. 9-10), "Education of the Membership; Training of Leaders" (pp. 10-11), "Industrialization" (pp. 11-13), is mandatory. Each of these sections applies with the same validity today as it did for the previous period and is incorporated in this current Program of Action.

1. Orientation

The National Plenum established, through its report on the State of the Party, that the task of reorganization and consolidation of the Party has been largely completed. Although the Party had experienced some growth in the previous period, the strengthening of the Party was largely a qualitative one. There remains, however, much room for further improvement along qualitative lines. This will be indicated and efforts will be made to achieve further strengthening along these lines. But the Party, with almost all of its branches stable and functioning, is in a very favorable position to recruit. The Program of Action points to a concerted effort to build the Party by means of local campaigns for the recruitment of new members.

The campaign to recruit is integrally linked with sustaining the effort to change the social composition of the Party. Together these constitute the key to our tasks in the period covered by this Program of Action. The past months have shown progress in the direction of increasing the number of workers in the Party. 43% of our total and 51% of our available members are now industrial workers. This figure represents a gratifying improvement over the previous months. The process must continue. There can be no relaxation of the pressure to make every available Party member an industrial worker. More than this, the effort must be made to concentrate our membership in the basic industries. At the same time, cognizance of our industrial orientation means that our efforts to recruit should be directed mainly toward the industrial workers. It is such recruitment that will decisively alter the social composition of the Party.

2. Period.

This Program of Action covers a five month period beginning on January 1, 1947 and ending on May Day 1947.

3. Coördination and Direction.

While various phases of the Program of Action will be directed by specified department heads and their departments, the over-all responsibility for the coordination and direction of the Program of Action rests with the Political Committee and the three National Office officers (National Chairman, National Secretary, Director of Organization) and their respective departments.

4. Political Campaigns

The primary political activity of the Party will be focused upon three primary political issues as follows:

- A. The fight against rising prices and for higher wages.
- B. The housing crisis.
- C. The struggle for a Labor Party.

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A. The Fight against Rising Prices and for Higher Wages

The struggle against rising prices and for higher wages is the counter-offensive to the new onslaughts of capital and its government against the living standards of the working class. The encroachments of organized business and the government upon the living standards of the working class takes two forms: (1) the lifting of ceilings on prices and (2) the drive to weaken organized labor and to harness the labor unions by every means including federal anti-labor legislation. This is accompanied by an adamant resistance to any proposed wage increase. The offensive of business and government denotes the character and the issues of labor's counteroffensive.

Strike struggles are in the offing around the issues of renegotiation of wage contracts to meet the increase in the cost of living. Union and industry-wide fractions must be tightened and prepared for active participation in these struggles and in their preparation. The program of "Wage Increases without Price Increases" is advocated as the answer to the inflationary assaults of business and government, as well as the social plane upon which labor's struggles can be conducted successfully in this period. At the same time we advocate the inclusion of escalator clauses in new wage contracts.

It is through our work in the shops and in the unions that the Party can most effectively carry out its program against rising prices and for higher wages. Just as the union itself is the most effective instrument of struggle against the price increases, so our own effectiveness in this fight hinges upon our concentration in industry. Therein will lie our principle effort in the prices campaign.

The Party branches will gear for the anticipated strike struggles. Aid to the strikes by the Party will be engaged in wherever possible (support of picket lines, advocating measures for support of striking industries by non-striking industries, etc.). The Party will seek to develop its own activities around the strikes (LABOR ACTION sales, subs, etc.).

Bearing in mind that our main activities in the prices campaign will be through our union work and conscious of our limitations due to the smallness of our forces and influence, the Party will not neglect to take advantage of any prices movements springing up outside of the trade union field. While urging the comrades to allow no opportunity to pass, we caution that our numbers and influence necessarily constrict the scope of our intervention. Cognizant of this fact we feel that a proper organization of the work, and alertness of the branches will enable us to supplement our prices work in the unions with participation in such prices movements as develop outside the unions.

In the struggle against rising prices and for higher wages, the Party will also direct particular attention to the fight against the lifting of the ceilings on rents. Particular attention is drawn to the fight in the Negro sections where housing and rent conditions are especially notorious. In local areas the Party will seek to inject itself into the fight for the freezing of rent ceilings by activities through the unions and veterans organizations, as well as through tenants leagues and consumers committees, and will advocate the joining of these forces in a common front against the rent gougers.

The Party must be alerted to these developments. Party members should join and participate in tenants leagues and consumers organizations and where possible initiate local and block committees for action around prices in general and the rent issue in particular. Where possible, the Party will initiate a petition campaign calling for State legislation to freeze the rent ceilings (in anticipation of the abrogation of Federal ceilings) and for the establishment of committees representing the unions, the veterans organizations, tenant and consumer groups to enforce the rent freeze.

Wherever possible the Party branches will seek to link the prices fight of the unions with those outside them. For example, where a tenants movement is developed in a given city, our neighborhood branch or branches, or the local as a whole, will seek to participate actively in it. At the same time our comrades in the unions will urge union support of and participation in the tenants movement. An indicated procedure would follow should the union initiate the action. The branch would then seek to give the union action support by participating or, where possible, organizing a neighborhood tenants committee.

LABOR ACTION and public Party activity will be directed toward these issues. In alerting the Party we mean to prepare the Party not only to participate in the price movement by vigilance and rapid action to inject the Party and Party members into any developing movement. It means that where forces and the opportunity exist, we initiate organization.

B. The Crisis in Housing.

The impotence of the government and its housing agencies to resolve or even to ameliorate the critical housing shortage is now accompanied by the total scrapping of the so-called Veterans Housing Program by the Truman Administration, that is, by its complete acquiescence with the terms of the real estate interests. The mounting resentment, especially - though not exclusively, among veterans is assuming organized form and promises the development of militant actions around the housing situation. The activity around housing is now centered in the veterans organizations and, to a somewhat lesser degree,

in the unions. It is through these organizations that the Party will participate most effectively in the fight around housing. It is to these organizations that issues of LABOR ACTION featuring housing should be circulated. It is in these organizations that our housing program should be presented. This means a tightening up of our veterans fractions and an intensification of our veterans work as well as turning the attention of the Party branches to union and veterans work, both internal and external.

In several cities veterans organizations have formed flying squadrons to meet evictions. We advocate this policy in anticipation of the lifting of rent ceilings and the concomitant evictions that will ensue.

In addition to our propaganda campaign in LABOR ACTION, which must be utilized in our local activities around housing, the National Office will publish a pamphlet on housing and rent ceilings. The Educational Department will prepare by January 15, 1947, statistical data on housing and prices for use in Party propaganda.

The National Secretary of the Party, Comrade McKinney, will continue in charge of the prices (housing and prices) campaign.

C. The Struggle for a Labor Party

The recent debacle of the PAC and the collapse of the policy of organized labor's support to the Democratic Party, as well as the current offensive against organized labor, have projected the issue of the independent Labor Party into the forefront. These events have laid the basis for a greater receptivity especially among the union members for independent political action through a Labor Party free from ties with the capitalist parties. The Party will intensify its activities in and outside the unions in its advocacy of an independent Labor Party around the general slogans, "Independent Political Action" and "Turn the PAC into a Labor Party." The lessons of the Congressional elections, the new offensive against labor, the lessons of the railroad and miners strikes, as well as the prices and housing issues, should be drawn upon to illustrate the need.

In addition to the campaign in LABOR ACTION, a pamphlet will be issued by the National Office on the Labor Party question.

5. National Tours

In connection with the political campaigns of the Party, the National Committee will sponsor at least one coast to coast tour. This tour is to be made by Comrade Shachtman beginning on January 30 and ending on April 15.

6. Recruitment

We again call attention to the fact that the Party is today in a better position to recruit than it has been in many years. The achievement of the task of reorganization and consolidation, the progress made by the Party in the past months, makes this possible. Branches are called upon to organize to conduct recruitment drives, setting for themselves local quotas based upon specific knowledge of available contacts. The entire period covered by this Program of Action must be devoted to a carefully organized and intensively executed campaign to recruit.

Fractions in unions, in veterans and other organizations, should meet to discuss recruitment possibilities. Lists of possible recruits should be drawn by these fractions and special recruiting assignments given. The Educational Committee should organize classes of contacts and LABOR ACTION readers with a view to recruiting the students into the Party. Branch executive committees should review contact, LABOR ACTION and NEW INTERNATIONAL sub lists and direct the contact work pointing to recruitment. The entire campaign must be worked out by the branch executive committees and presented to the local memberships. The recruiting campaign will be directed by the branch organizer and the branch executive committee.

While the special recruiting effort should be sustained over the entire period covered by the Program of Action, we propose that local quotas be drafted covering 6 week or two month periods within the 5 month period of the drive. We emphasize that these quotas should be based upon concrete knowledge of possibilities.

7. Industrialization

Our previous Program of Action declared that "the over-all problem which is central and the key to our tasks is that of changing the social composition of the Party." This remains a central task. We also reiterate these lines from the previous Program of Action: "We cannot expect to make our party a proletarian party within a three or a six or a twelve month period. But every month of the period ahead must show progress in this direction." In the past four months the Party has made advances in this direction. The Party will continue systematic efforts to industrialize the Party. Branch executive committees and, where necessary, special activities committees should interview members who are not already in industry and who are (or should be) available for industrialization. This work should continue until every Party member who has no valid reason for not being in industry is placed in a factory. Simultaneously, recruitment should be directed primarily toward shop workers.

In placing comrades in industry, branches must keep in mind that wherever possible these should be basic industries and, where feasible, the Party industrial concentrations. The next period should show not only a percentage increase in the number of workers in the Party but also an increase in the number of comrades in the concentration industries.

8. Into Mass Organizations.

There are in the Party, members who for legitimate reasons (health, housewives, in some cases age, etc.) cannot be industrialized. All such exemptions are, of course, determined by the branch executive committee. In every case, those excused must establish contact with the workers or wives of workers by becoming members of non-Party (preferably mass) organizations. This, of course, does not exclude comrades who are in industry from joining such organizations. For example, most of our veterans are now working in factories. Yet, every veteran must become a member of a veterans organization. The few who have not joined must do so. Many more of those who already belong must become more active. Nor does this mean that Party members may choose between working in a mass organization or working in industry. We say again - members who for legitimate reasons are excused by the authoritative Party committees from work in industry

must become members of and active in outside organizations.

It is the objective of the Party to broaden its sphere of influence among the workers and their families. This is accomplished first and foremost by achieving the maximum industrialization possible in the Party and by recruitment of workers from the shops into the Party. This effort is further extended through contact with workers already organized in mass and fraternal organizations. It is mandatory that every Party member shall maintain contact with the workers, to conduct party activity among them, to educate and to recruit. Where, for legitimate reasons (as established above) this cannot be done in the preferred field - the factory and the union - it must be done through membership in some outside organization. Housewives, for example, should join consumers and tenants leagues, parent teacher associations, etc. Comrades should join such organizations as the NAACP, AVC, etc. In each locality the executive committees should scan the field and assign the indicated members to join. Their work in these organizations should be supervised and reported upon by the executive committees. Where more than two Party members belong to the same organization, a fraction should be organized.

9. Integration of New Members

See previous Program of Action (Section II-B.).

10. Education of the Membership.

See previous Program of Action (Section II-C.).

The study of the Party registration reveals one of the major weaknesses of our Party. Our membership is relatively new to revolutionary politics. The task of education of the Party, the training of a cadre is one of the biggest and most important task of the Party today. The most carefully organized educational program must be conducted. Classes, elementary and advanced for members and sympathizers should be in continuous operation in every branch. Branch educational meetings should be used as forums for Party education on the current politics of the Party.

The National Educational Committee will supervise the campaign of education of the Party. It will issue (as well as reissue the now exhausted material) outlines and educational study material. (Outline on Volume I of Capital; reissue Blue Cover Series on the Role of the Party and the Role of the Trade Unions; reissue the ABC of Marxism outline, etc.) The National Organization Department will publish the convention resolutions in two volumes. The branches will receive general implementing directives from the National Educational Department, as well as individual correspondence with the branch educational directors.

The National Committee will complete plans for the holding of a National Training School to be held either in the latter part of the period of this Program of Action or the early part of the next period (spring of 1947). This school will be conducted under the supervision of the National Educational Department.

11. The Party Press.

Development of the circulation of the Eight-Page LABOR ACTION and boosting substantially the subscriptions and sales of the NEW INTERNATIONAL must in the next period occupy a central position in the work of the Party.

Sluggishness in making the turn to the new promotional forms indicated by the appearance of the Eight-Pager, the slowness in developing the promotional work around the paper stands out as one of the most serious weaknesses in the Party's work since the National Convention. In truth, most branches have permitted this work to shift for itself. The results are desultory. No organized effort, no attention, no concerted drive has been made, resulting in a fierce lagging behind the requirements of our press. There must be a sharp turn - a very sharp turn - and immediately.

Every branch must have a literature agent.

The task of circulation conducted under the immediate supervision of the branch literature agent, must become the direct responsibility of the branch organizer and branch executive committees.

The branch executive committees will see to it that literature sales are a part of every activity in which the Party engages.

Sales of LABOR ACTION and of subscriptions to the paper should be regularly conducted at union, veteran and suitable public meetings; where possible, at factory gates.

Party members must become accustomed to carrying several copies of the paper even when making social calls. Sub blanks should always be on the person of a Party member, ready for use.

The building of the subscription list to LABOR ACTION should be an everpresent aim in the planning of all Party activities. A special subscription drive for LABOR ACTION will be conducted by the Party beginning in February.

Intensified literature and promotional work all along the line, including newsstand placements of the paper.

LABOR ACTION and press promotion must be placed on the agenda of every branch executive committee meeting until satisfactory results are obtained.

A similar effort must be waged with respect to THE NEW INTERNATIONAL. The Party still has the task of making THE NEW INTERNATIONAL a self-sustaining magazine. We have made considerable progress in this direction. We must yet triple our present circulation to achieve this goal. It is not anticipated that this can be done by May 1st, but the report on that date should mark another substantial stride in this direction.

12. Pamphlets

The following pamphlets are to be published in this period:

1. "The Question of Unity" by Albert Goldman
2. "Marxism in the U.S." by Leon Trotsky
3. The Labor Party Question, by Max Shachtman
4. "The Crisis in Housing" by Walter Weiss.
5. Possibly a pamphlet on the Negro question which is being written now.

13. Full-time Organizers.

The Party proposes to place one full-time field organizer, in addition to those already placed (New York, Philadelphia, Buffalo, Detroit, Chicago, Los Angeles, San Francisco and Seattle). We propose to add to this list a full-time organizer for Ohio.

14. Colonization

For several years the Party has conducted a program of colonization. The drive was not continuous and varied in its demands and intensity. The most recent phase has been conducted in the last six month period. Its prime objective, stabilization of the Buffalo, San Francisco and Cleveland branches, has been realized. The overall colonization policy had primary objectives: (1) The organization or strengthening of branches in the "industrial quadrangle" (Buffalo, Detroit, Chicago, Cleveland-Akron); (2) The strengthening of weak units in the Party by providing them with qualified and active members. Both, of course, were united with the general program of the industrialization of the Party.

These two primary objectives of the colonization program have been fulfilled in the main. The consistent drain upon New York of a large number of qualified cadres, active members and industrial or potential industrial workers, has weakened the New York Party. This fact is evident in the work of the New York Party as a whole as well as in the life and work of its branches.

A program of colonization cannot be a continuous process but must proceed in waves: first, as colonization is demanded by the developments of the Party nationally and locally; and second, to provide organizations sapped an opportunity to recoup their losses and to replace the lost cadres with new corps of trained comrades. And more than this.

If the purpose of colonization is to provide a given locality with a corp of trained cadres, the responsibility of Party building rests with the local organization as strengthened. It devolves upon those to build their branches by the recruitment of native workers and the training of their own cadres. No one has ever conceived of colonization as a means of distributing equally the numbers in the Party so that all branches are of the same size. No one has ever conceived of colonization as a substitute for recruitment or of local education and training. Once a branch is stable and has a corp of qualified cadres, the task of Party building and education, of growth and expansion devolves upon the branch. The branches which have been strengthened and stabilized through colonization (or through their own efforts) must now build with the resources they have. Almost all of the colonized branches have, in fact, been doing this. For those branches which are stable and guided by a qualified leadership, the addition of colonized people would be of aid but in a large sense would represent an artificial strengthening of the branch. That is, once a branch of say 15 or 20 exists as a stable unit with

a qualified leadership, the addition of three or a half-dozen additional comrades will not solve for it its problems of integration and growth. That task would remain. It is necessary, therefore, to direct the greatest energies on the part of the branches already colonized toward local integration and fruitful work in recruitment to the Party from among the workers of the area.

No intensive colonization program is contemplated for the next five month period. This is not to say that there will be no colonization at all. Such colonization as does take place will not be upon the scale conducted in the previous five month period. It will take the form of providing one or two people each to several localities which require not so much numbers as experienced cadres to share in the direction of the work. Efforts will be made to colonize one or two comrades in each of the following localities: Baltimore, Los Angeles, Akron, Reading, St. Louis and West Virginia.

15. New Branches

The Party will seek to organize regular branches out of the fraternal branches in St. Louis and Baltimore, and will make efforts to form a branch in West Virginia.

16. 5,000 Fund Drive

See communication on Fund Drive dated December 1, 1946.

17. May Day

The Party will conduct a national celebration on May Day. Detailed directives on May Day activities to be issued on March 1, 1947.

REPORT ON OUR PARTY PRESS

By Henry Judd - Press Manager

* * *

The report given below is intended to acquaint all Party members with the progress made by our Press since the convention and our standing today. In general, the report indicates a substantial and healthy progress, with many difficulties still to be overcome, but we are definitely on the right road. Above all, the growth of the Press as an independent Party institution, departmentalized but coordinated with all other Party activities, has been a major step forward. The Press of the Workers Party now has a clear existence and everything points toward its strengthening. We will divide up this report according to the various institutions of the Press - that is,

- (1) LABOR ACTION - The Eight-Page paper.
- (2) THE NEW INTERNATIONAL
- (3) WORKERS PARTY PUBLICATIONS
- (4) LABOR ACTION BOOK SERVICE.

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(1) The Eight-Page LABOR ACTION has now been in existence for three and one-half months. Its political and journalistic success are known to all. Its organizational success, by way of distribution, sales and subscriptions, has not matched this progress, unfortunately. This does not mean, however, that certain things have not been accomplished.

LABOR ACTION now has a definite set-up and organization so far as its relations with Branches and Agents is concerned. Its distribution, sales and payments have become systematized - an essential for real progress. Its list of subscribers (approximately 2500) is a solid list of genuine readers and subscribers. The average weekly inflow of subscriptions and renewals is good, above former averages (now about 60 per week), but nowhere near the 100 per week we aim at. From the viewpoint of the paper and its solidity, the building of our subscription list is a major requirement. We expect to retain the present subscription rates, and - in the early part of 1947 - we will propose a nationwide subscription drive for LABOR ACTION.

The great, the real weakness of the paper is on the matter of Branch and Agent bundle orders. When the Eight-Page paper was launched, we knew that the road to overcoming the previous system of mass, free distributions would be difficult. We have not made too much progress along these lines, and our bundle order circulation is far, far too small! This is the major problem - the public sales of the paper. In our opinion, it is directly related to the health and activity of each Branch. An active Branch sells the paper regularly; a demoralized Branch gives the paper out to one another (plus a few sympathizers), and then raises the money to pay the bill by passing the hat. We have no cure-all idea for overcoming this difficulty; it is entirely related to the life of the Branch as a whole. Every organizer and literature agent knows, in a "theoretical" sense, how the paper can be sold. He knows that people must go to meetings to hawk it, to display it, to put it on newsstands, to have cheap distributions (at the 1¢ rate that is always available) when such distribu-

tions can be followed up by real sales, etc. It is a question of the will, drive and initiative to go out and do these things in practice. The Press Department in January will have published a Bulletin on the art of sales and distribution. It will suggest ways and means of doing this.

The financial aspects of the Eight-Page LABOR ACTION have already been dealt with in the plenum report on that subject. The press run today is 6,000 copies per issue - what we consider our bedrock press run, and from which we intend only to go forward.

In addition to plans for a nationwide subscription campaign next year, LABOR ACTION is planning other promotional aids and helps. We try to promptly answer all correspondence and take care of all requests as soon as they come in. We will supply all Branches and Agents with whatever material (sub-blanks, bill forms, etc.) they need. We are ready to fulfill all the material, physical requirements within our powers. Furthermore, we want to take this opportunity to announce the creation of the:

LABOR ACTION POSTER AND SILK SCREEN SHOP

In 1947, we shall supply all Branches and Agents with attractive newsstand posters, posters for headquarters, posters for wearing when selling the paper, and possibly, if desired, a newsboy apron. This Poster Shop is now under construction and will shortly be turning out what we venture to predict will be among the finest posters you have ever seen! Those comrades who recall the Poster Shop and posters of the old "Socialist Appeal" days will know what we have in mind. From our end, in New York, we shall continue our best efforts in supplying your needs. That is all we can do; the rest must come from the life and activities of the Branches.

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(2) Of all our press institutions, THE NEW INTERNATIONAL has made the most heartening and steady progress since the Convention. Its press run and complete distribution now varies between 3,000 and 3,300 per issue, depending upon needs. We shall not here repeat the results of the recent campaign for THE NEW INTERNATIONAL - a campaign we estimate as moderately, but not entirely, successful. But certainly successful enough to have warranted the campaign! Our subscription list is much larger and more solid now; our newsstand and general circulation has had a most heartening growth, and the general interest in the magazine (as indicated by inquiries and requests that come to us) has certainly increased. The income of the magazine has gone up substantially so that now it is at least 50% self-sustaining.

We expect to continue our regular pushing forward of the magazine. Its sales problems are generally the same as those of LABOR ACTION, except insofar as it appeals to a different circle of readers. Bound Volume sales have been disappointingly poor. The new 1946 Bound Volume will be ready sometime in January (10 issues) and we hope it will sell better than past issues. We shall also continue our practice of printing poster-covers of each issue, and sending them out to the Branches.

The real proof of the progress made by THE NEW INTERNATIONAL

lies in the fact that the magazine, in all probability, will resume regularly monthly publication in 1947. That is, there will probably be 12 issues of the magazine next year; each appearing early in the month as have the last issues. This we consider indispensable for its further progress, and there is every reason now to expect its fulfillment.

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(3) Our WORKERS PARTY PUBLICATIONS, consisting of our pamphlet, book and bound volume publications, has shown progress in terms of organization and systematization of sales, but the turnover of our products is far too slow! Our inventories of stock on hand is much too large and is the primary reason for delays in publication of other greatly needed pamphlets. We have far too much frozen stock, representing cash investments, on hand. If we could get this stock moving through sales, we would have the resources to push forward our general pamphlet and book publication program. Again, it is a problem of sales and general Branch activities.

You will shortly have in your hands a printed, up-to-date list of WORKERS PARTY PUBLICATIONS. Many comrades will be surprised by the extensive list of publications available - books, pamphlets, mimeographed bulletins, bound volumes and NEW INTERNATIONAL supplements. It represents a considerable political achievement by our organization. We expect to shortly add the following to this list, two in fact are now being printed and are already listed:

SET-UP AND BEING PRINTED: (a) Marxism in the United States,
by Leon Trotsky
(b) The Question of Unity, by Albert Goldman

IN MANUSCRIPT FORM: (a) Jim-Crow in Los Angeles, by Hal Draper (a local campaign pamphlet)

SCHEDULED FOR REPRINT: (a) The Role of the Trade Unions
(mimeographed)
(b) ABC of Marxism (mimeographed)

IN PROJECT FORM: (a) Ten Years of Carlo Cartoons, by Carlo
(b) Popular Labor Party pamphlet.

Finally, bound volumes of LABOR ACTION (1946) and THE NEW INTERNATIONAL (1946) are now in preparation. WORKERS PARTY PUBLICATIONS intends to take full advantage of the Poster Shop service for producing posters advertising its publications. Our present discount rates to the Branches and Agents (33% off) still holds and will continue. The important thing now is the consistent pushing forward of our publications and getting them off our hands and out to the general radical public.

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(4) LABOR ACTION BOOK SERVICE now possesses a well stocked cabinet of literature available to all, and guarantees to procure all available Marxist classics by Lenin, Trotsky, Marx and Engels.

This Book Service has been growing slowly, but its possibilities are much greater than now actually employed. The Book Service has published and circulated to all Branches and Agents a poster listing all books now available at popular prices. The Branches do not make sufficient use of this Service. We call to your attention the fact that we offer a 10% reduction on all purchases totaling \$25 or more. Branches should invest money in this Book Service and, in turn, resell these works. When a Branch organizes a class in Marxist fundamentals or Marxist economics, it should order its needed literature through the Book Service. This Service is now in the efficient hands of Comrade Arthur Stein and quick delivery, correct filling of orders, etc. is absolutely guaranteed.

In addition, the LABOR ACTION BOOK SERVICE has now entered the field of selling foreign publications (French books on politics, economics, etc.) and if sufficient results are obtained, will branch out into other fields and other foreign languages. The important thing regarding the Book Service seems to bring to the Party comrades a real awareness of its existence. We will continue our best efforts in this direction.

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In conclusion, then, we believe that a good framework is now being built for holding together our Press institutions and assuring their further growth. We would be especially appreciative of various suggestions, criticisms and proposals for helping us out in this work. The Press Department of the Party is always "Open House" to advice and help. Please write us.

December 20, 1946.

INDUSTRIALIZATION AND COLONIZATION
--HOW TO CHARACTERIZE A FAILURE AS A SUCCESS

By Sid Roberts (Detroit)

* * *

Ever since the end of the war, the key problem faced by our party has been the imperative need of reindustrializing the great majority of our people. Before taking up the measure of success (or failure) in attaining this objective, it would be well for us to go briefly into the background of this problem.

The Workers Party, as formed in 1940, was predominantly petty bourgeois in character, and concentrated mainly in New York City. The need for making organic contact with the working class by going into the factories both in New York and in some of the key industrial centers of the country, and thereby changing the composition of our ranks--and making a start toward changing the character of our party to that of a working-class organization--was plainly seen by the majority of our membership. By and large, we succeeded in doing just that in a relatively short time. Upwards of 75% of our membership was proletarianized; Philadelphia, Detroit, Buffalo and Los Angeles were colonized; and substantial progress was made in recruiting workers to the party at several of our key industrial concentrations.

The war ended, and we found ourselves out in the streets alongside our year and two years seniority (that was unavoidable because the party had concentrated in war industries). We knew it would only be a question of a few months before the comrades in Detroit, Buffalo and other industrial centers got back into industry. However, it was obvious that we were faced with a terrific job in industrializing the New York membership advantageously in a city that, aside from the garment trades, had little basic industry.

Basing ourselves on the above premise, many of us came around to the conclusion that colonization would have to be an inseparable corollary of industrialization for the New York membership. We felt that sizable numbers of comrades should be transferred to industrial centers like Detroit, Buffalo, Akron and Cleveland - key centers of the most militant and progressive unions in the labor movement.

Beginning with the New York City Convention in December 1945 and going on right through the National Convention in June, 1946, the New York membership, the national membership, and the party leadership adopted the perspective that an industrialization and colonization drive was vital for the party's health and would have to be energetically and faithfully carried out. For the sake of reference, I would like to quote from several National Convention resolutions to show how the party went on record on this question:

Resolution on the Party:

"The convention authorizes the National Committee to continue and intensify the concentration of the party work in the main industrial area of the country, the quadrangle bounded by Detroit, Chicago, Ohio and Buffalo." (p. 26, para. 7)

Erber amendment No. 13 to the Resolution on the Party,
adopted by the National Committee and Convention:

"The key to the solution of these and similar problems (integration and education of worker recruits) which are problems created by our growth, by our progressive change from an existence to which it would be fatal to return -- lies in rooting into industry and the labor movement at least 85% of the party membership so that our members are immersed in the life, problems and struggles of the workers."

Also, no less a figure than our National Chairman was heard by myself and several others (in informal talks) to say that 20-25 people would be sent to Detroit soon after the National Convention and proportionate numbers to the other main industrial centers.

Aside from Marco and Leonard, who came out against "a trade-union party," very few comrades were honest enough to voice similar opposition - even though there must have been many who agreed with their view. There were also those who might have agreed with the party orientation, but for "special" personal reasons figured it would apply to "the other guy." And there were several who would have attached conditions such as not sending people out of town unless their friends could go along with them.

Comrade McKinney, at least, was aware of the potential opposition which existed to the industrialization and colonization drives because in the Trade Union Resolution which he submitted for the approval of the National Committee and the National Convention (and was approved by both bodies) he said on page 15, Sec. IV:

"The Party cannot afford to and must not tolerate in its ranks, following the convention, those who refuse to accept in action the factory and trade union orientation of the Party. The Party must demand that every member agree to qualify as a good soldier of the revolution. The Party must demand that every member actually place himself at the disposal of the Party. This must include willingness to accept assignment from the Party for whatever city, factory or union that the Party designates."

In line with the above, prior to the National Convention, it was proposed by a responsible leader (either at the 1945 New York City Convention or at a later membership meeting - I forget which) that a commission was to be created by the New York City Committee to go over the New York membership rolls and sort out all those whose services were not vitally needed in New York and who could be performing a more useful function in the movement out of town, and who could not offer very, very excellent reasons why they should be permitted to stay in New York for assignment to wherever the party felt they were needed. For those who refused to obey party decision, membership in the party was to be open to question. Recalcitrants were to be put in the category of party sympathizers -- or dropped. No doubt that was taken as a bluff by some people. Therefore, carrying out party decision on this question resolved itself into a major test of our party's organizational character (i.e., were we a group of serious revolutionaries or an organization of petty-bourgeois radicals).

After the National Convention of last June, we of the Detroit

branch awaited the rapid industrialization and/or colonization of all the non-workers in New York (with very few justified exceptions). We also anticipated the arrival of the 20-25 additions we were told to expect. As the weeks and months passed, and news from New York indicated that industrialization and colonization both were lagging badly 'during this time, and up to the present day, two comrades have come here from New York) many of us grew cynical about the achievement of the convention goals (a goodly amount of skepticism had existed from the start). The issue was brought to a head by the announcement of the results of a party census (as of September 5th) revealing that out of the first 325 people registering, only 106 were in trade unions, and the receipt of a communication from Comrade Shachtman informing us that the party was nearing the completion of its highly successful colonization campaign!

To put it mildly, some of us were taken aback by that last statement. A letter was sent to New York requesting details of this "success". Thereupon a highly indignant communication was received from Comrade Gould answering our request for information and inquiring as to "who had put the bug into our ear."

Gould's letter contained statements that not only contradicted Shachtman, but also himself. Instead of repeating Shachtman's gem about "a highly successful colonization campaign," he explained that the further departure of comrades from New York was being held in abeyance until the end of the election campaign - at the request of the New York membership. If that were all, one might say that at least Gould says that some more people should, and are, to leave New York. However, we should not jump to hasty conclusions -- we shall soon see why.

Comrade Gould further informed us that 23 people had left New York since the convention, and, as a result, New York was running short of capable people. (It should be mentioned that 4 people returned to New York from Detroit during that period, and that the P.C. asked Chicago to send several capable people back to New York because of the aforementioned shortage.) Isn't Gould's implication clear that it would be unwise to send any more capable people out of town? That implication, plus Shachtman's statement and, most of all, plus results to date led the Detroit branch to go on record as accusing the leadership of our party of renegeing on its avowed proposal to carry out the colonization and industrialization perspectives faithfully.

An amendment to our motion accused Gould of figure-juggling. This is what we meant. He broke down the 23 colonizers among the various cities. Seven, we were informed, had gone to Buffalo. However, the catch in this, and the figure-juggling lay in the fact that of those seven, four (Ferris, Mason, Prentis and Eli) were only returning to their old branch. Therefore, by our reckoning (and Gould's no doubt, if he were pinned down) not seven but three were colonized to Buffalo.

Another indication that colonization is not being carried out in a responsible manner is the decision to delay the drive until after the election campaign. If that is not just a convenient excuse, it is very poor judgment. No one denies that benefits are to be gotten out of an election campaign, but to postpone colonization for it is something else again.

Isn't it ABC in the movement by this time that industrializing our party means doing it quickly so that we get some seniority in the shops. If our people don't get jobs within the next few months, and stick to them, they will be S.O.L. when the first layoffs come along. To illustrate what I mean, at one of our main concentrations in Detroit, only one of our five people were laid off during a recent 40% reduction in the working force--despite the fact that of those who held their jobs, two of the comrades had 3 and 4 months seniority, respectively, another one 9 months and only one over a year. Our good luck was due to the fact that there has been such a terrific turnover of labor (particularly among ex-G.I.'s) that anyone who stayed on a job for a few months was assured of being fairly well up on the seniority list. With the labor market getting tighter, that situation won't exist much longer. Are we going to get wise or not?

While on the subject of seniority, the party "missed the boat" in not seeing to it that our veterans took advantage of the 90 day clause in most UAW contracts which stipulates that any G.I. who is hired within that period after his discharge gets credit for military service in computing seniority. Only a couple of our veteran comrades were able to take advantage of this break. A large part of this failure was due to the leadership's inexcusable ignorance of this fact --or, if they knew of it, their failure to urge us ex-G.I.'s to get into a shop within the stipulated period was even more inexcusable.

Just a few words in answer to those who might agree with several Detroit comrades who claim we are raising a big stink about colonization and industrialization to cover up our failure to recruit. I fail to see any validity in that charge. While the problems of recruitment and industrialization overlap to a great extent, problems of recruitment have no place in this particular discussion of why the party's goals as set down by the convention have not been achieved. That is, unless one has abandoned the perspective of concentrating overwhelmingly on the shops for recruitment.

The question that comes to mind now is: How will the party get people to leave New York or go into industry if they refuse to do so voluntarily? There can only be the answer that the convention indicated - invoke party discipline. The voluntary method has failed - there is only one way left!

As much as we can ill-afford to drop people today, neither can we permit the demoralization that is developing from the present situation where one-third of the party membership is located in New York - largely not in industry. Just as bad is the sad fact that in failing to carry out this all important drive, party discipline has been shown to be something that is conveniently relegated to reports at convention time, discussions on democratic centralism and debates on Bolshevism with Liston Oak (Shachtman should first try to make our party a Bolshevik party before he defends that revolutionary organizational principle from a Social Democrat's criticism).

When I returned to New York after several years absence, I was very discouraged to see that our party in New York still had that same inborn character which I had hoped would have been at least partly lost through the industrialization of our comrades

during the war years. I concluded that the sort of existence that was so typical of New York party life would prevent us from ever sinking our roots into the American working class. And so long as New York continues to be over-populated with our people, it will continue to constitute a black spot and drag on the party. (Even though the American revolutionary movement will always owe a tremendous debt of gratitude to New York for its role in enabling us to get started, once a party passes the stage of being a propaganda sect, the "Big Town" has to lose much of its importance as a key center of the party.)

I think it unfortunate that the party rejected Comrade Erber's proposal to move the National Office to Detroit. If it is argued that we could not get the needed printing facilities here (in Detroit), the obvious retort is to leave the party press and staff and any other needed functionaries in New York and move a large part of the party apparatus out here. A move such as that would go a long way towards shifting the weight of our party away from New York.

In closing, I want to make it clear that I believe the party must attack this problem quickly and with the greatest vigor or we will have lost our last great opportunity to transform our present group into a party solidly rooted in the working class before the next depression comes along. No one will deny the crucial importance of achieving that goal.

"THIS SUPERNATURAL SOLICITING"
A Reply to Comrade Sid Roberts

By Nathan Gould

* * *

Several weeks before our recent plenary session of the National Committee, just as we were assembling our material for the report on the "State of the Party," we received the article entitled: "Industrialization and Colonization - How to Characterize a Failure as a Success." The report on the "State of the Party," presenting a picture of the work and accomplishments as well as failures of the Party since the National Convention, is in itself the most devastating reply that can be made to the allegations of Comrade Roberts. (Comrade Roberts must have that report by this time.) However, we are under obligation to Comrade Roberts and any of the Detroit comrades who may share his views to reply in detail to the specific points as the author of that article has made them.

If the purpose of the article in question is to facilitate the process of industrialization, then its aim is indeed very audible. In a party which has experienced a not immodest degree of resistance to industrialization as well as colonization, vigilance may be required to assure the party that its leadership will not grow weary in the effort to overcome the resistance and, in turn, succumb to "insurmountable opposition." But even vigilance must have some basis of justification.

Comrade Roberts submits a bill of particulars in his indictment which, had he taken the trouble to check, might have spared him a good deal of work, time, anxiety and - may I add - embarrassment. Let us examine the history of the issue and ascertain as to whether the vigilance and charges of Comrade Roberts have any validity.

In September 1946, Comrade Shachtman prepared a letter addressed "To All N.C. and Branch Executive Committee Members." The letter was a straightforward and frank presentation of relevant facts pertaining to the party and the Eight-Page LABOR ACTION. Comrade Shachtman submitted the draft of his letter to the P.C. which unanimously authorized its publication. This letter of the P.C. appeared over the signature of Comrade Shachtman and was dated September 16, 1946.

A number of members of the Detroit Branch took exception to parts of this communication. Views were expressed that the letter was "falsely optimistic," that the passage "our planned and systematic work of colonization as outlined in the convention program of action, is nearing a highly successful conclusion" was not justified by the facts. The membership figures given (425) were doubted.

In accordance with the wishes of the branch, Comrade Hall, organizer of the Detroit Branch, addressed a communication (October 7, 1946) to Comrade Gould requesting facts to clarify the doubts which had been expressed in connection with the letter of Comrade Shachtman. The reply to the letter of Comrade Hall was written by Gould on October 11, 1946. Then came the following motions adopted by the Detroit Branch (October 27, 1946):

"The Detroit Branch of the W.P. rejects the explanation offered by Gould on the subject of colonization. It feels that the leadership of the Party has reneged on its avowed objective of changing the character of the Party (now predominantly petty-bourgeois in character) by not putting forth every effort to see that every member in New York who could not be industrialized would be strongly urged to colonize - or that his membership

in the Party would be subject to question. The leadership, aided and abetted by the New York membership, has failed to carry out the perspective either in the letter or the spirit of its intention. We demand that we go back to our initial perspective at once. ...Motion adopted 9 to 3 with a whole bunch of non-votes.

"Amendment to the motion; The branch also strongly condemns figure-juggling in trying to convince the membership of colonization or the size of Party membership. We feel such actions can only lead to further demoralization." Amendment carried; 5 for, 3 against.

The article by Comrade Roberts seeks to motivate and explain the motion and the amendment. Let us examine the facts.

Comrade Roberts tells us that: "After the national convention of last June, we of Detroit awaited the rapid industrialization and/or colonization of all the non-workers in New York (with very few justified exceptions). We also anticipated the arrival of the 20-25 additions we were told to expect." The additions referred to by Comrade Roberts is based upon a statement made by "no less a figure than our National Chairman" who stated in personal conversation with Comrade Roberts, among others, that "20-25 members would be sent to Detroit soon after the National Convention - and proportionate numbers to the other main industrial centers."

If the execution of this plan involved the transfer of more than 30-35 comrades of local New York as of the convention (and it could only mean a great deal more if a minimum of 20-25 were to be sent to Detroit alone), then this pledge, assuming of course the accuracy of the account, was not merely impractical, but so impractical as to be incredible. Even with the most severe interpretation of colonization, a combing of the entire New York membership by the sternest taskmaster could not conceivably have produced the names of 40 comrades who were legitimately colonizable at convention time.

I asked Comrade Shachtman if he had made the statement which Comrade Roberts attributed to him and if so, on what basis. Comrade Shachtman informed me of the following: In December 1945 the National Committee had planned to bolster further the Detroit Branch by sending additional forces "up to 20-25 comrades." He stated that "at no time did the Committee decide, or did I state to Comrade Roberts or anyone else that 'in addition to 20-25 to be sent to Detroit, proportionate numbers were to be sent to the other main industrial concentrations.' The proposition was to send up to 20-25 to Detroit - period." Comrade Shachtman added, "Moreover, this perspective was not conceived, and obviously could not have been, as a post-convention perspective. It was to operate in December 1945 and immediately thereafter."

I am further informed by Comrade Shachtman that, in fact, six or more (he recalled 6 off-hand) comrades had been colonized in Detroit between December 1945 and the national convention, one of these a member of the N.C. Two more were colonized immediately after the convention. So that between December 1945 and June 15, 1946, at least 8 comrades were colonized in Detroit.

Let us assume that the perspective of sending 20-25 to Detroit conceived in December 1945 was not to go into operation until after the convention. But between December 1945 and June 1946 one or two things happened. Buffalo collapsed; San Francisco was in very serious straits and Cleveland was, for all intents and purposes, not a branch. Detroit had some 30 odd members and was reported relatively stable. It was, in fact, one of the few functioning branches left in the Party at the time. Confronted by these facts, should we have said, "A promise is a promise - come what may," or should we have altered

the perspective? The choice was not Detroit and - but Detroit or -.

At convention time we drafted a list of 32 names of New York comrades to be colonized. This list was drafted without, or despite, consultations with the individuals. We grant we may have overlooked a few. Aside from those obviously essential for New York work (City Committee members mostly), all other members were examined for colonization. What ultimately happened to these 32? Two were withdrawn when Comrade Falk was assigned full-time youth work. Four were expelled or dropped from the Party. 21 (including Comrade Waller who replaced Falk on the list) were colonized -- 15 of these 21 between June 10 and August 1, 1946. That leaves 6 of the original list of 32. These are facts.

In August, a new list was drafted -- a sort of combing in a manpower shortage. It yielded 28 names. Of these 28, six were colonized (included in the 21 total from New York colonized between June 10 and October 10, 1946), six were withdrawn when they obtained jobs in industry and three were dropped from the rolls. That leaves us 13 of which 2 have their Party memberships in question. These are facts.

This is not the first colonization program carried out. There have been cuts -- drastic and justified cuts -- in the New York cadres before. Yet, with a sharply reduced reservoir upon which to draw, a very intensive colonization program was carried out systematically in a very concentrated period of time. Three full-time organizers were provided the branches in the field (2 from New York). Twenty others colonized (19 of these from New York). These are facts. It is a not inconsiderable record of achievement. The fact is that the colonization objectives set forth in the Program of Action were realized in their main features.

But isn't the outburst about 20-25 comrades to Detroit somewhat belated? Comrade Hall and other delegates from Detroit to the National Convention, I am told (I know Hall definitely) stated quite candidly that "Detroit required no further colonization," that "Detroit would build on what it had," which at the time was over 30 members, a majority of whom had been colonized into Detroit over a period of years.

No secret was made of the post-convention colonization perspective.

Witness - Letter from Gould to Hall, June 12, 1946 - "...places like Detroit and Chicago should be stricken from our colonization list in view of the much more urgent need for colonization in places like Frisco, Seattle, Los Angeles, Akron, Reading, Cleveland etc..... You can expect no more colonization to Detroit."

Witness - Letter from Gould to Hall, June 15, 1946 - "There are no other comrades being considered for colonization in Detroit. No other applications have been submitted and if they are -- unless there is some very special reason -- they will be discouraged from going to Detroit in line with my previous communication" i.e., more urgent needs elsewhere.

In fact, several comrades who indicated Detroit as their first preference were routed to other branches. This was no act of discrimination against Detroit. This policy was dictated by very cold and brutal facts: put simply enough -- Detroit was stable. Other important industrial centers were in dangerous conditions, one of which was almost completely written off. That is precisely what Comrade Shachtman meant when he wrote of a "systematically organized colonization program."

By why should Comrade Roberts have waited for months after the convention for the arrival in Detroit of 20-25 comrades? Again a futile vigil. Not because the leadership reneged but because he apparently does not trouble to read the perspectives which he presumably attacks. Wasn't the Program of Action published in the PARTY BUILDER, available to every Party member? Were not advance copies of the Program sent to the Detroit branch? And does it not say in clear and unambiguous language on page 14 of the Convention Program of Action, Point III, Section C, the following: "The National Convention has established SAN FRANCISCO, BUFFALO, and CLEVELAND as the three centers toward which the greatest colonization efforts will be directed during the period of the Program of Action." Here was the Program of Action and the perspectives for the period from the National Convention to November 15, 1946 (Detroit, informed by letter in June as to the colonization perspective adopted by the Committee, received the final draft of the entire Program of Action in early July). There is no reference in it to 20-25 people being colonized in Detroit. It does not list Detroit as being among the three main colonization centers for this entire period. In fact, it does not even mention Detroit. There was no protest from Detroit. No one wrote a word about the colonization program as outlined there or anywhere else. Then, why after all this and in October-November, 1946 does a statement (or perspective) enunciated by the National Chairman in December 1945 become the basis for a charge against the present leadership? And why, after all this, has Comrade Roberts' vigil from June 1st to November 1st shocked him into cynicism? Cynicism is bad in any variety. But there is none worse than cynicism that is born of self-deception. One may certainly question the wisdom of the perspective adopted. It is debatable and we are willing and anxious to debate it, if need be. But what was printed and established is not debatable.

Comrade Roberts then declares, "As the weeks and months passed and news from New York indicated that industrialization and colonization both were LAGGING BADLY . . . many of us grew cynical about the achievement of the convention goals (a goodly amount of skepticism had existed from the start)." (My emphasis. N.G.) Now, that is a very strange passage. It provokes several questions.

1. The letter of Comrade Hall to Gould dated October 7, 1946, informed us for the first time that questions were being raised in Detroit regarding the colonization and industrialization program. This inquiry (according to Comrade Roberts) presumably produced from Gould a highly indignant letter in which Gould is alleged to have asked, "who had put that bug in our ear." (The quotation marks and the quotation both are Comrade Roberts', as anyone interested in reading my reply of October 11, 1946, will readily see.) Comrade Hall's letter described the characterization given the colonization and industrialization program by some of the Detroit comrades somewhat differently than is represented in Comrade Roberts' article. Bear in mind that Comrade Roberts characterizes the program as "lagging badly." But Hall wrote on October 7, "In the past month or two in this or that odd connection, it has been maintained in discussions that the WHOLE PARTY PROGRAM for industrialization and colonization has BOGGED DOWN and there has been NO PROGRESS MADE in this respect SINCE THE CONVENTION." (My emphasis. N.G.) It was this categorical characterization with which my letter of October 11 took issue. "No progress since the convention!" It was not indignation that was expressed in my letter. I was shocked and flabbergasted. We all were. My reply, after expressing surprise at the above quote, assembled and presented the facts as of that date, which facts were a complete refutation of the charges made on colonization and membership. But apparently Comrade Roberts paid no more attention to these facts than to other directives and communications.

But something did change. That is what is strange about the quotation I have referred to. There is a shift of ground - from "no progress" to "badly

lagging." Sometime between October 7 and November (when Comrade Roberts wrote his article) - the characterization underwent refinement. As between "no progress made since the convention" and "badly lagging" there is an important qualitative difference. How is this refinement derived? This is not explained. Yet, the moment we begin to examine the reasons for the change to this milder evaluation, the whole position of Comrade Roberts, his article and the motion of the Detroit branch collapse. Between June 10 and October 10, some 22 or 23 comrades were colonized. This is evaluated, according to Comrade Hall's report of the views of some Detroit comrades, as "no progress since the convention." But between October and November there were none colonized. This should give strength to the original charge. Instead we witness a refinement of the characterization to "badly lagging." On the basis of what facts, what figures and what logic is the change in characterization justified?

2. My second question: If the change in evaluation from "no progress since the convention" to "badly lagging" is based upon the information contained in my letter of October 11, why then the violently worded motion which charges that the "leadership has reneged" and "has failed to carry out the perspective either in the letter or in the spirit of its intention.?" So strong an indictment might very well follow from a characterization of "no progress since the convention." "Badly lagging" does not suggest reneging or abandoning of the perspective, but some degree of laxity. It would suggest a somewhat milder formulation like "the leadership is not pursuing with sufficient vigor or conviction", etc. But, if the facts in my letter of the 11th produced the refinement, why does the strongly worded motion begin with a rejection "of the explanation of Gould" and end with a condemnation of "figure juggling?" Perhaps Comrade Hall did not convey the sentiments of some of the branch members accurately in the first place. But in that case you still must explain the strongly worded motion predicated upon the characterization of "badly lagging." Unless, of course, Comrade Roberts establishes that there is no relation between the character of a crime and the degree of punishment.

3. And third: Comrade Roberts states that "news from New York indicated that industrialization and colonization both were lagging badly..." Then we must ask -- What news? From what official Party source? And is it not possible that your sources of information may have been unreliable and hence that you were misinformed? Let us examine all the sources which Comrade Roberts quotes. (Naturally, we cannot examine those which he does not quote.)

Comrade Roberts writes: "The issue was brought to a head by the announcement of a Party census (as of September 5) revealing that out of the first 325 people registering only 105 were in the unions." We are told that the crisis in the Detroit Branch was precipitated on October 27 by the above fact on industrialization. But these figures (105 in unions out of 325 recorded) were not a report as of September 5, as Comrade Roberts carelessly states. These figures were assembled on July 17 and issued in a Weekly Letter dated July 26. So, it was not September, but July. The date of the industrial census is important. Why? The facts report industrialization in mid-July, that is, just about six weeks after the National Convention. One might make a tentative evaluation of a leadership's efforts to carry out a convention program 4 or 5 months after a convention. But how can anyone presume to make so definitive an evaluation after only 6 weeks. Are we to believe that on the basis of these facts issued in July, the Detroit Branch divined late in October that the N.C. had "reneged" and demands "that we go back to our original perspective at once?" That is not possible.

But the baselessness of this act of condemnation is magnified when we examine further the report on the industrial census (dated July 26). Aside from the fact that that report was admittedly incomplete, IT WAS NOT A COMPARATIVE REPORT, that is, the report did not say we have 106 unionists today as compared with such and such a number 6 months ago, or 3 months ago. Such information is 185

of the essence since without it one cannot judge whether 106 represented an increase or a decrease over the period immediately preceding the report.

Hence, on the basis of an incomplete report issued about 6 weeks after the convention; without any knowledge of whether these figures represented an increase or a decrease, and by transposing the date of the directive from July 26 to September 5; the conclusion is drawn that the leadership has, in connivance with the N.Y. membership "failed to carry out the perspective either in the letter or the spirit of its intention." Comrade Roberts may argue that mid-July to October (late) is a very little time and that he assumed that no change had taken place, but this is precisely what has to be proved. You cannot assume that which you have to prove. This kind of research and reasoning is not guided by a spirit of objectivity. The facts are, as demonstrated in the "Report on the State of the Party", that even between July and November measurable progress in industrialization was made.

Between July 26 and the Plenum (November 23, 1946) there was not ONE SINGLE communication reporting on the progress of industrialization. The very first report since July 26 appears on pages 16-19 of the "Report on the State of the Party." But that report was issued after the "crisis" presumably broke in Detroit and some 2 or 3 weeks after we received Comrade Roberts' article. What then is the factual basis for this denunciatory motion which demands "that we go back to our initial perspective at once." Neither Comrade Shachtman's letter of September 16 nor Comrade Gould's of October 11 made a single reference to industrialization, because the new industrial census, the first since July, was scheduled for November 1, in preparation for the Plenum reports, and there were no facts on hand prior to the receipt of results of this new census.

What is the N.C.'s record on industrialization? In April 1946 the Party suffered the most severe effects in the "regression" in industrialization which set in immediately after V-J Day. The overwhelming majority of the Party membership was out of industry. The leadership of the Party set out to cope with the problem, to reverse the trend - first by understanding what had taken place and why. This "analysis" appeared in our Program of Action. Was our estimate of the problem correct or incorrect? The N.C. introduced extraordinary organizational procedure to stop the trend, prevalent among returning veterans, to resume their schooling. The N.C. succeeded in breaking the backbone of this trend so that today, of 460 members in the Party (as of the Plenum) only 24 are students and most of these are either youth comrades or new members.

The end of the war brought a resurgence back to professional and white-collar work. The Party put a break on that and reversed the trend. The trend back to industry really got under way after the convention, both through colonization and pressure for industrialization of Party members. How was the backbone of the "recession" broken? By organizational measures? Yes, partly, but not mainly. It was accomplished primarily by a campaign of education. The Program of Action gave primary importance to the question. The entire program was oriented around this point and developed it further in a special section on industrialization. It was injected into other reports, particularly the points under recruitment. It was accomplished by a painstaking process of interviews with members of the New York organization. It was accomplished through letters to individuals and branches, through numerous meetings with the N.Y. Organizer, through the establishment of an "activities" committee in N.Y., and a special N.Y. membership meeting called at the request of the P.C. at which meeting Comrade Shachtman reported the views of the P.C. on industrialization and on "the prerequisites of Party membership," by dropping from the rolls several people who preferred the alternative of school to Party assignment. And it is being accomplished by means of a political education against the point of view of the I.K.D. as it relates precisely to this problem.

Now, which of these measures taken should not have been taken? Which not executed with sufficient vigor? What additional steps should have been taken? 186

Comrade Roberts throws out a series of suggestions as to the steps which should have been taken. Have we omitted any of these listed by Comrade Roberts? And the facts and figures prove that these did yield results. Do these figures indicate that the national leadership "aided and abetted by the New York membership" violated the spirit and letter of the convention perspective?

Comrade Roberts allows that there are in N.Y. a "very few justified exceptions" as to comrades who are neither in industry nor available for colonization. On November 17, Comrade Bern, on request from the Secretariat for the latest lists of available people for colonization and industrialization, submitted the following breakdown, by name: 63 members in industry, 16 functionaries, 49 professional and white collar workers, 7 students, 23 housewives and 23 unemployed. Now, compare the N.Y. percentages with those of other average branches (including Detroit). The percentages are not too bad, are they? On December 5, Comrade Bern submitted the names of 45 comrades, aside from functionaries, housewives and industrial workers, who could not be industrialized or colonized. (Of course, this was not the first such list prepared and presented.) The Secretariat examined each claim carefully and critically. We were unable to remove a single name from that list. We are prepared to submit it to Comrade Roberts for his judgment. The "very few justified exceptions" granted by Comrade Roberts total no less than 45 members. Add these 45 to those in industry, functionaries, housewives, new members who are unemployed and you begin to see the point. After a series of colonization programs carried through, the source begins to run a little dry and needs replenishment. That is why the list grows sparse. Bear this in mind: **THERE IS NO PARTY TO OUR KNOWLEDGE WHICH HAS CONDUCTED AS INTENSIVE A COLONIZATION PROGRAM AS HAS THE WORKERS PARTY SINCE ITS FORMATION.**

Space will not permit this article to treat with the principles motivating and guiding a colonization program. I hope in the near future to prepare such an article and relate it to the program recently carried out. But these simple points must be emphasized. A colonization program is designed to draw a corps of comrades from ANY branch which, at a given moment, can spare forces and plant them in a new locality. Once that locality has a solid corps, it is to the best interest of that branch and to the Party as a whole that it build around that corps by recruiting members who are native to the city. That is how we build through colonization.

The motion of the Detroit Branch states: "The branch also strongly condemns figure-juggling in trying to convince the membership of colonization or the size of party membership." (My emphasis. N.G.) Comrade Roberts' article would have us believe that the above quoted section of the motion did not refer to "figure juggling in trying to convince the membership... of the size of the party membership," but referred only to colonization. But the charge is made clearly in the amendment to the motion. Why does the article beg this question?

The census of September 5, which Comrade Roberts says brought the crisis to a head, was not, as we have already pointed out, an industrial census. It was an organization directive (No. 6) which provided membership figures as of that date based upon an incomplete registration and upon reports from the branches as to membership strength. The directive established that while there were 424 members reported by the branches, only 321 registrations had been sent in up to that date. The directive concluded: "Branch organizers are asked to check the figures for their respective branches and notify the National Office of any discrepancies. Also act at once to complete the registration." No one branch reported an over-estimation of its figures. Was there figure-juggling here, Comrade Roberts?

The "Report on the State of the Party" explains the state of records in the Party at the time of the National Convention. One of the first administrative acts of the leadership was to establish an air-tight system of checking membership figures. By September we had a reasonably accurate record and issued our first tentative census. In my letter of October 11, I stated, on the basis of our established facts up to that date, that we had 425 members on the books, but that I con-

sided the "actual" membership to be about 400. As we know today - positively - the obviously tentative figure of 425 on September was slightly low. There was no effort to inflate. The estimate of 400 represented the contrary.

The "figure-juggling" leadership established a new category. The National Office, in going over the books, was of the opinion that a minimum of 25 members being carried by the branches should be dropped from membership. We challenged branches to show cause why these should not be dropped. We established the category of "doubtful" members. Hence, the leadership which set up a system of membership records, set up a system of triple check on all membership figures, which waged and continues to wage a campaign in the Party to drop dead weight, to clean the books of ineffectives, thus "reducing" the "apparent" total membership; issued accurate and detailed figures on membership and recruitment; is charged with figure juggling. Again - on what facts? This very serious charge, we are happy to say, has not been pursued, but it stands today on the records of the Detroit branch. The charge should either be sustained - or repudiated.

Now, let us see if the charge that we juggled the colonization figures has any more validity than the other charges which we have put to the test of facts.

Comrade Roberts writes: "Comrade Gould further informs us that 23 people had left N.Y. since the convention." Actually the letter said: "A total of 23 have been colonized since the convention, of which 20 have come from N.Y." (Oct. 11) Comrade Roberts then adds: "He broke down the colonizers among the various cities, 7 we were informed had gone to Buffalo (My error - it was 6 to Buffalo since the convention. N.G.) However, the catch in this and the figure-juggling lay in the fact that of those seven, 4 were only returning to their old branch. Therefore, by our reckoning (and Gould's no doubt, if he were pinned down) not 7 but 3 were colonized in Buffalo." (Actually, only 2 since 6 instead of 7 were colonized. N.G.)

Good. Comrade Gould has been pinned down at last. Comrade Roberts finally has a point. Of course, there are only 2 or 3 things which suggest error in this point also, to-wit: the facts about colonization of Buffalo. Comrade Roberts would have us believe that the colonization of Buffalo merely consisted of 4 comrades, away for several years, returning to the Party, simply resuming membership and activity in the Buffalo Branch. These are the facts: All the comrades concerned returned not to Buffalo, but their original home - N.Y. They did not stay a day or a week or even a month and resume work in Buffalo. With the exception of 2 (and these were scheduled to go to San Francisco) all the comrades resisted (to put it mildly) returning to Buffalo. Meanwhile, the Buffalo Branch was in a state of deterioration. The Secretariat conducted a special campaign for Buffalo alone. For several months it refused to assign to a branch in N.Y. some of the comrades concerned. They were members of the Party without a branch; more accurately, their assignment was Buffalo but they remained in N.Y. The Secretariat pressed its campaign over several months, dark and heavy months as Comrade Murrain will testify from Buffalo. The Secretariat was "splitting up" families and breaking up homes left and right. We did everything but take organizational action, which we refused to do on the basis of the excellent Party record of each of the members involved. That, Comrade Roberts, is how the Buffalo comrades merely returned to their branch. Make no mistake about it. Buffalo was colonized. It was the toughest colonization job we had. If there was any test of the leadership's determination to carry through a colonization program, it was Buffalo. And if there is any test of the wisdom or our program and our tenacity, it is Buffalo. It is the best example we have thus far of how a branch builds upon a colonized force.

Comrade Roberts points out that 4 Detroit comrades "returned to N.Y. during this period." One might draw the inference from this that instead of colonizing, the leadership in connivance with the "N.Y. membership" was pursuing a decolonization program. True - 4 comrades did "return" to N.Y. But that's a little unfair, is it not? Comrade Judd was added to the Editorial Board of the 8-page LABOR ACTION and hence returned to N.Y. with his wife. A new member and his wife requested permission of the Detroit branch (the N.O. was not and need not have been consulted in

this case) to come to N.Y. to continue his schooling. The branch granted permission. In listing the delinquencies of the leadership, Comrade Roberts omitted to mention that in the case of 2 other comrades in Detroit on whose proposed transfer to N.Y. the branch was evenly divided, the P.C. intervened to keep these comrades in Detroit despite some weighty factors favoring their request.

To demonstrate conclusively the decolonization plot of the leadership, Comrade Roberts, referring to my letter of October 11, says: "The P.C. asked Chicago to send several papable people back to N.Y. because of the aforementioned shortage." What Comrade Gould actually reported in his letter of October 11 was: "We addressed many letters to the Chicago Party on colonization requesting that it spare a few qualified comrades." Comrade Roberts, skeptical and convinced that the leadership was violating the convention decisions concluded naturally that my statement could only mean colonization from Chicago - to N.Y.

Letter from Gould to Ferguson (July 24, 1946): "We are asking Chicago to consider colonization of at least one, possibly two or three comrades from Chicago to St. Louis. We are concentrating on sending N.Y. colonists to Frisco, Cleveland, Buffalo."

Letter from Gould to Ferguson (August 21, 1946): I requested that you look over the Chicago personnel with a view to colonizing one or more comrades in St. Louis... ..Please write me about this immediately."

Letter from Gould to Ferguson (August 30, 1946): Same point, etc.

The leadership of the Party has no objections to being called to task. It is the right and the duty of the membership and of every member to speak out on any occasion when the branch, city or national leadership "steps out of line." But, at the same time, it is the responsibility of the comrade making the charge to be fairly sure of his facts. The facts must hold together and substantiate the charges; they should not be the product of imagination proceeding from a priori judgment, emotion or skepticism. This is especially true when so serious a charge as "figure juggling" is attributed to the leadership. A leadership which engages in the deception of the membership should be peremptorily removed. What earthly good is a leadership which has good policies but which engages in the deception of its members? Because of the seriousness of the charge, it must be well grounded in facts. Comrade Robert's charges instantly fall apart at the seamsthe moment they are subjected to the test of facts.

We hope that Comrade Roberts will, in his future contributions, exercise greater care with his facts and not allow emotion or skepticism be the father to his conclusions. But as his article stands at present, it is evident that for Comrade Roberts "Nothing is, but what is not."

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(NOTE: When originally submitted by Comrade Gould, the above article was twice its present length. Despite the fact that it exceeds the 8-page limit (even after the use of elite type), it appears now only after having been returned to him and cut drastically by him. We hereby offer our due apology for "violating" our rule. - Editor.)