

PARTY . . . ORGANIZER

• AUGUST • 1937 •

SPECIAL ISSUE • • •

• • • ON PARTY BUILDING


EXCERPTS FROM PLENUM SPEECHES

BY

EARL BROWDER • ROY HUDSON
W. W. WEINSTONE • F. BROWN
M. CHILDS • LOUISE THOMPSON
WM. SCHNEIDERMAN • ROB HALL
R. WORTIS • JACK JOHNSTONE
JOHN WILLIAMSON • BOB WOOD

J. FIGUEREDO

CONTENTS

Building the Party and the Daily Worker By Earl Browder	1
Building the Party in Marine By Roy Hudson	6
How an Auto Shop Unit Functions By T. G.	12
Recruiting Among Trade Unionists By W. W. Weinstone	15
A Section Organizer Reports By J. Figueredo	18
The Party and the Daily Worker in Strike Struggles By M. Childs	20
Negro Women in Our Party By Louise Thompson	25
Establishing the Party in the South By Rob Hall	28
The Party Among National Groups By F. Brown	31
 How a Steel Unit Functions By Jack Johnstone	35
Recruiting in Ohio By John Williamson	38
Organization Brings Results By Rose Wortis	40
Oklahoma Tells Us How By Bob Wood	42
New Advances in California By Wm. Schneiderman	45

All the articles in this special Party Building issue are from speeches and reports made at the Plenary Meeting of the Central Committee of the Communist Party, U. S. A., held June 17-20, 1937. In consequence, the usual New York State section is omitted. It will be resumed next month.

PARTY ORGANIZER

ISSUED BY CENTRAL COMMITTEE, COMMUNIST PARTY, U. S. A.

Vol. X

AUGUST, 1937

NO. 8

Building the Party and The Daily Worker

By EARL BROWDER

THE essential instrument for carrying out every task is our own Party organization and its main mouthpiece, the *Daily Worker* and *Sunday Worker*. Here we must say very sharply that all is not well. A most serious situation exists in the slow growth of the membership and, for a time, until the last weeks, even a decline in the circulation of the *Daily Worker* and *Sunday Worker*.

This situation is particularly alarming because it arises in a period of greatest activity of the workers and of the growth of the responsibility and influence of our Party as a result of its highly successful activities. A frank recognition of this intolerable situation is the first condition for remedying it . . . With favorable conditions among the masses, with the Party already armed with adequate policies, the answer to this serious condition therefore must be found, first of all, in the fact that the Party leadership and the Party organization do not give adequate, systematic and constant attention to these tasks. This work is systematically neglected. Only since the February conference do we see some signs of a serious turn to the question throughout the Party.

This beginning is still entirely insufficient. Without the thorough solution of this problem the Party cannot move forward and perform the growing tasks with which it is

faced. The problem of Party growth is, first, to recruit increasing numbers of new members and, second, to keep them actively engaged in Party work so that they will not drop out after a few weeks or months.

A Favorable Situation for Recruiting

Does a favorable situation exist for recruiting? Unquestionably, yes. Conditions have never been so favorable. The potential members around our Party are tenfold the number of a few years ago. They feel our Party as a guiding force more than they ever did before. Our Party's authority among them has never been so high. Only these potential members do not receive from the Party that final impetus which carries them over the line that separates sympathizers from Party members. The Party members, units, committees and fractions are not conscious of their tasks as recruiting agents for the Party. It is a very serious step for an individual to join the Communist Party. Such a serious event does not take place spontaneously or automatically. It only takes place when it is prepared and organized by the conscious work of our Party and its members.

Who must solve this problem? The entire Party without exception, from the units to the Central Committee. The problem must be concretely examined in each place and everywhere. All the imagination and initiative of the members must be brought into play to find the concrete solution. No formula worked out here can fit the thousand variations of the problem. The Central Committee can only give a general guidance, stimulate the Party, encourage its initiative. The whole Party must be creatively engaged in finding the practical solution.

Methods of Work

How must we work? Teamwork, plans, check-up and control, with socialist competition—these are the means that must be used to organize the initiative and enthusiasm of the members, and direct their efforts to definite goals. Without resorting to assignment of quotas from above,

which is too mechanical and will not work, we must stimulate every unit and fraction of the Party to set for itself a definite number of new members which it engages to recruit within a definite time. This should not be the assignment of quotas. It should be the voluntary assumption of a task by a decision of the unit itself.

How shall the old members introduce the new ones into Party work? First of all, the old members must abandon all airs of superiority, all remnants of that attitude of the old priest who is initiating a novice into the mysteries of a religion. We shall not keep our new members unless we wipe out all traces of arrogance and know-it-all snobbishness in our approach to them . . . Modesty is demanded from old members especially . . . The relations of old and new members must be those of teacher and pupil on both sides, not teacher on the one side and pupil on the other . . .

How to assign work to new members? Two widely-prevailing errors must be avoided. First, there is the error of mechanically loading up the new members with a dozen tasks of a purely routine and mechanical character, monopolizing his free time without giving him anything that engages his interest or gives play to his initiative . . . Secondly, there is the error of neglecting the new member and giving him no part at all in the Party life, or so little that he is not drawn into this life and absorbed by it. The new member should be officially welcomed into the Party, made to feel at home as an equal among equals, given his share of the work and of the responsibility, and given attention to engage his special knowledge, his special abilities or his special contacts, to advance the Party tasks in such a way that he can see his own contribution.

How to assist the new members in their tasks in the trade unions or other mass organizations? The first task of a Party unit in relation to a new member is to learn to make use of, not to hinder or destroy, his connections in all kinds of mass organizations. The greatest crime that can be committed against the Party is to restrict the mass activities of the new members. The Party unit must find

the way to help the new member in this respect, but never on any account put any obstacles in his way.

Overcoming the Red Scare

How shall we dissipate the "Red scare" from among the Reds? It is a fact that much of our weakness in recruiting is due to the Red scare, not among the workers, but among our own comrades, especially some of those recently emerged as mass leaders. Some of these comrades hide as a shameful secret their Communist opinions and affiliations; they hysterically beg the Party to keep as far from their work as possible. It must be admitted that very often this is only a wrong answer to certain wrong methods of work on the part of the Party, and the fault is not always on the part of the comrade who has the Red scare; perhaps the Party has created the Red scare by wrong methods of work, or some of its leading people have brought it about. This often happens by making excessive demands and mechanical assignment of tasks, by an inconsiderate approach to the problems of the mass organization—the idea, for example, that mass organization problems can be settled off-hand in the Party office by a decision of the Party organizer. It is such things that create the Red scare among the comrades. On the basis of a careful and considerate approach to the problems of the individual leading comrades and his mass organizations we must now begin to demand more from such comrades on behalf of the Party. We must work out with them how to "legalize" the positions of the Communists as *known Communists*, and how to make their prestige contribute to the growth and authority of their Party—how to make the authority of the Party strengthen their position as mass leaders. This can only be done with full effectiveness when the Party *helps* in a decisive way to solve the problems of such comrades, and the problems of their organizations.

Developing a Healthy Inner-Party Democracy

All these questions involved in Party growth are de-

tailed aspects of the development of a healthy inner-Party democracy. We can already say that the Party has learned much in this respect. We are without question the most democratic organization in the United States; there is no other organization of forty or fifty thousand members which has even a small fraction of that active participation in the decisive questions by the entire membership that we have.

But from the viewpoint of what we should be, to realize our vast opportunities for growth, we are only beginning. We must, above all, learn in this respect from our great brother Party of the Soviet Union. We must learn especially from Comrade Stalin's speech and summary at the March Plenum of the Central Committee of the C.P.S.U.* This will greatly help to raise the initiative and activity of our lower organizations, stimulate and promote healthy self-criticism, and bring forward new, reliable, trusted and capable comrades into the leading work. We must make ours also the slogan of "Mastering Bolshevism" which Comrade Stalin raised.

Our practical work must be more illuminated by the theory of Marx, Engels, Lenin and Stalin—those greatest educators of the people known to history, the leaders of the realization of socialism. This can be achieved only by systematic educational work, education for the masses, and especially intensified education for the most responsible leading people.

*Joseph Stalin, "Mastering Bolshevism," Workers Library Publishers, New York. 5 cents.

Building the Party in Marine

By ROY HUDSON

I WISH to deal with some of our experiences in the marine industry in relation to the present problems of the building and functioning of the Party. The solution of these questions, in my opinion, is decisive in determining whether or not we will continue to give leadership to the masses.

Today, in the marine industry, the militancy of the workers is high, the consciousness of their strength is increasing. Powerful unions have been established which, generally, have a wide degree of democracy. There is mass sentiment for and support of militant policies, progressive measures, and for the C.I.O. In this generally favorable situation, our Party members have a chance to work with tens of thousands of workers. We are an influence in determining policies. Large numbers of seamen, longshoremen and other workers from the industry have joined the Party in various ports from coast to coast.

Activizing Our Party Members

How are we going to activize our Party members, increase our influence, and build the Party? The leadership of our Party, the entire membership, in fact, must first of all understand more clearly than we do now what our tasks are in the present situation. Masses are in motion, fundamental changes are taking place, but all forces of labor of a progressive character are not yet utilizing their full strength to rally great masses of the people to combat and defeat reaction in this country, are not yet the backbone of the peace movement, and so forth.

We Communists know that the masses cannot consolidate their present gains, increase their strength and continue to march forward unless their support for these questions is won, and unless out of the struggle for such issues there emerges a movement that will unite all the forces of labor, progressive and democratic, in this country.

What is clear to us must be made clear to the masses. That is our task. We cannot influence the great movement of the people, we cannot give leadership solely through improving and strengthening our work within the mass organizations of the people. We must also learn how to develop more the independent activities of the Party, to establish the legality and citizenship of the Party, as Comrade Browder put it.

Because of our weakness in this respect, I say that the development of our independent activities is the key to the question at the present time, not only for the correct functioning of the Party organization, for increased recruitment into the Party, but for finally establishing leadership of our Party among the masses. This is one of the conclusions we have come to in marine in tackling the problem of how to improve the life of our units and increase the effectiveness of our work.

Our Party's Work to Aid Spain

Let us take one example, the campaign for Spain. Up until a short time ago, Spain had not been made an issue among the masses in marine. We finally decided to raise the question, and let the Party directly take the initiative. Through our Party unit we got out a pamphlet; we issued a number of leaflets in the name of the Party, telling the marine workers concretely what they could do. We started a campaign openly in the name of the Party. We tied up this work especially with the activities of our individual comrades on the docks, on the ships, and among the unemployed.

What results can we report? Take New York. Remember, the masses of the workers, and particularly the seamen, knew it was the Party that took the initiative in raising this question. The union has now taken official action, has established an official seamen's committee in support of Spain. Large numbers of ships are taking up collections of funds. And if you will read the *Daily Worker*, next to the I.W.O. in New York, the seamen's union is leading in the collection of funds for Spain. Nearly every

other seaman on the waterfront is wearing a Lincoln Battalion button at this time.

Among the longshoremen, where our movement is weakest, where the fear of intimidation exists, here it is very difficult to work; nevertheless, substantial sums of money are being collected.

Developing Independent Activity

In developing our independent activity it seems to me that agitation and propaganda will be of tremendous importance. To a certain extent the *Daily Worker* has been one of our main means of popularizing the role of the Party among the maritime workers. This can be reflected in a number of places, at least in the East, where on nearly every major problem that has confronted the workers in the industry, the Party had made clear its position of the *Daily Worker*, which in the struggle has been pretty well distributed and accepted by the workers. As a result of this systematic presentation of the Party's policies on major questions, the Party has established quite an authoritative position among large sections of the seamen.

Take an example in connection with the recent change here in establishing the new union. A ship came in on the Pacific Coast whose men couldn't understand the change which seemed to have happened overnight. The information they got from the union members there did not convince them. One of the workers on the ship, a non-Party worker, happened to get hold of the *Daily Worker*, in which there was an article explaining the policy. He took the article aboard the ship, where others read it and the policy was cleared up.

Or take the example of a statement made by one of the workers in the union who is not too friendly toward the Communists, who occasionally Red-baits. When the men were confronted with difficulty and a complicated situation in which the workers were uncertain because they weren't clear on policy, this worker made a remark, "It's time the *Daily Worker* came out with an article tell-

ing us what it is all about and what we should do." Large sections of workers are beginning to look towards the Party for some explanation of the policies confronting them.

On the other hand, while we can report in strikes and struggles a real utilization of the *Daily Worker* and mass distribution of it, systematic efforts to build the *Daily Worker* do not exist. The fact that there is not a mass sale of the *Daily Worker* upon the waterfront is due mainly to neglect of this point. We must convince our comrades that we can establish the Party among the workers openly.

For example, about eight or nine months ago we had a situation in New York where the rank and file came into control of one of the unions. The workers elected new officials, among whom were some Communists. These had been active as Communists on the waterfront for years before the elections. What was the first thing that happened after they were elected? Some of them came forward with the idea that a separate unit of officials only should be organized so as not to be exposed. We did not accept this proposal. We said that for us the time is past when, in order to maintain our position, we have to hide; the time has arrived when we are able to maintain our position only on the basis of establishing the right of the Communists to function in the union and to occupy posts when elected by the workers. For the Communists have no interests separate from those of the workers. The Communists have been in the forefront in efforts to strengthen and build the unions of the marine workers.

The comrades remained in the unit and we recruited many new members. Strange to say, these comrades are not on the spot. With the help of the new members they are being more effective in their work.

Establishing the Legality of Our Party

We have got to convince our comrades on two points. First of all, when the work reaches a certain stage in the union, we must establish the "legality" of the Party

—the right of the Communists not alone to belong to the unions, but to hold positions. This is the most effective means of preventing the Red scare from arising, and of defeating it when it does arise. We must show our comrades that after a certain period, concealing our identity deliberately breeds distrust among workers. They cannot understand why we are ashamed; why we hide the fact that we are Communists. This makes it possible for the reactionaries to raise the Red scare and conduct a campaign against us. But once we establish the fact that we are Communists, especially through leading people who have previously shown fighting ability and have prestige among the workers because of their activity in building the union, we don't have to take a negative position but can take the offensive.

Secondly, we have got to convince our comrades that only through the Party taking the initiative on many questions, systematically coming forward as an organization, will we be able to win the workers on many important issues and thus improve the work of our comrades in strengthening the union.

Let us take one example. A few weeks ago in New York a small ship with three comrades aboard held an open meeting on the ship which most of the crew who are not Communists attended. A discussion was held on the ship regarding the Party and as a result of the discussion three of the members of the crew were recruited.

Comrades, when we begin to see even isolated cases like this, it is important for us. It shows that our Party members on the job felt that they had the confidence of the workers who were not Communists and knew that the workers had the strength in their union to give them protection. They were not afraid to come forward. Furthermore, all of these comrades had joined the Party in recent months and were proud of the fact. They were convinced they had the right to belong to the Party; they wanted to bring the Party forward and show the Party to the workers. The new comrades are showing more in

initiative in bringing forward the Party. They avoid antagonizing the workers, and increase our influence.

Recruiting

I want to deal now with recruiting and the functioning of the units. One of our units which had not been functioning properly during the last few months began to function better as a result of developing independent activity. We then decided to strengthen the leadership of the unit and to give it a plan of action. Too often we come before workers with general tasks, with nothing specific. When we come to them with specific proposals the unit can become active in establishing leadership. Then we considered establishing more democracy in the unit. My opinion is that aside from the question of proper people to lead units and more clarity as to our tasks, the next thing is democracy, greater democracy, in the unit. I know that in the unit I belong to, the election of an organizer was rather formal. Until recently we did not even bother to elect an auditing committee to go over the finances of the unit and we did not bring the financial problems of the unit before the membership. We have begun to do this now and can note some change.

The Party, for the first time, is beginning to establish itself on the job as a result of the work of the Communists on the ships. On one passenger ship a unit of about six people recruited ten new members. On another large passenger ship a Party unit of two or three people has grown to sixteen. A number of the people recruited into the Party are a direct result of our work on the ships by the comrades who are on the job.

During the strike in New York among the seamen we recruited between 250 and 300 new people into the Party. Following the strike some dropped out in the first month, but during the following three months fifty new members were recruited by the seamen, with a steady increase each month.

Who are recruiting these people? The rank and filers are the main forces who are recruiting at this time, but

leading comrades also participate. The Negro comrades, in the past four or five months, have shown the most initiative in recruiting. Eight or nine months ago the seamen in New York had only one Negro comrade in the Party; now we have forty.

During the strike we had open unit meetings a number of times. Sometimes we had as many as five or six hundred seamen at these meetings. Party leaders would speak on the program of the Party. At these open unit meetings leaders of the strike would act as chairmen. We not only recruited people, but the Red scare wasn't raised on the waterfront.

On the question of education and training of forces, I want to speak about the idea of organizing training schools on an industrial basis. Following the strike here we had a three-week marine school, to which we sent the most capable people who were in the strike. We found that it enabled us to teach these comrades more effectively, to get more results. In the future, I think that we should not only have these schools in marine, but in steel, auto and other industries.

How an Auto Shop Unit Functions

By T. G.

THE question of recruiting in our unit in the Fisher Body branch in Cleveland, which is the oldest shop unit in the district, has been a big problem continuously and somehow we were not able to solve it before the strike. We began to solve the problem systematically during the last strike of auto workers when the district, and particularly Comrade Williamson, paid personal attention

to the work of the unit, meeting with the unit every day during the strike. The question of recruiting was raised very sharply, not simply in a theoretical way, but by pointing out the necessity of recruiting, how to recruit and very concretely raising with every Party comrade the questions: "Comrade whom can you recruit; how many members can you bring into the Party; how can you recruit," etc.

At every meeting every comrade was approached and asked to report on those workers they had contacted and to report their progress towards bringing them into the Party. We succeeded as a result of this, during the strike, in recruiting approximately twenty members. Recruiting is still a regular point on the agenda at the meetings of the unit.

Our Standard Agenda

We have a standard agenda worked out in the unit. It does not change from one meeting to the next. At every meeting, we have on the agenda the initiation of new members. The new members are accepted into the Party by a vote of the membership. After they are accepted, there is an initiation (whether it is one, two or three members), with a five to ten minute talk accepting and welcoming the new members into the Party.

On the standard agenda, education is always one of the points. It is the first item after the reading of the minutes, and is not treated mechanically but as something that the members realize is vital to them. Under education comes talks on various problems: the Supreme Court, articles in *The Communist*, questions about the Labor Party, Spain and various political questions that come up in the Party and in everyday struggles; articles and editorials in the *Daily Worker*. These subjects are assigned even to district or sections leaders, who lead the discussion.

The executive committee of the branch decides on the educational topic from meeting to meeting. A comrade is assigned to lead the discussion. The report itself does not take more than fifteen to twenty minutes, and then

we have discussion. At least forty-five minutes altogether is taken up with the particular subject.

The usual agenda is: (1) Reading of the minutes; (2) Education; (3) Initiation of new members; (4) Report of the executive committee of the branch; (5) Report of committees; (6) New and old business; (7) Good and welfare.

We invite comrades from other auto units to sit in, and ask them to express their opinion on the work we are doing in the unit. We have a membership of fifty-two, but on the average only thirty-five to forty members attend.

During the strike we recruited twenty-two members. After the strike we recruited eighteen, bringing the total membership of the unit to fifty-two. Out of the new members recruited, ninety per cent are American-born. *We have not lost a single member since the strike.* Our Party members are active builders of the union. Some of them participated in the delegation to the General Motors' conference in Detroit, having been elected by the workers out of 250 candidates proposed from the various departments.

A form of open activity of the branch is the shop paper—*The Sparkplug*. The paper plays an important part. However, our unit has been lax during the past two months. *The Sparkplug* did not come out. The workers themselves are asking the question: "What is the matter, why don't the Communists think it necessary to come out with their paper now that we are organized?" This shows how necessary it is to continue to get the paper out and what a tremendous effect this Communist shop paper has on the workers.

The Problem of Holding Meetings

The main problem we have in the unit is the question of meetings. This is not an unimportant question, nor can it be solved mechanically by saying we *must* have meetings and that the comrades *must* attend meetings. The shop works on three shifts, consequently meetings can be held only on Saturday or Sunday (or Friday—because the shop is now working four days a week). Most of our

comrades are active union members, and union meetings are held on Saturday or Sunday. During and since the strike some of the comrades in the unit have not had a single weekend free. We have not solved this problem yet and this is one of the reasons we do not have good attendance at meetings.

We have discussed the question of shift meetings, but we have not decided definitely to adopt this plan. We may have to have a general meeting once a month. Perhaps that would solve the problem.

Recruiting Among Trade Unionists

By W. W. WEINSTONE

I WANT to deal with practical questions in regard to Party recruiting. We recruited from January to May 1, 272 members; from May 1 to June 15, 300 members, in the period of six weeks about fifty a week and, last week, eighty members. Why did we recruit this considerably larger number? The answer is because we have raised the question of recruiting and brought it to the attention of the entire Party. For example, during the first strikes, there was no Party building carried on by the Party units or Party members. Last week, in a relatively insignificant strike, our comrades doubled the membership of their unit, an increase of from ten to twenty members in one week. This indicates that when the question was taken up and the matter of recruiting hammered into them the comrades responded.

Recruiting Assignments to Leading Trade Union Comrades

One thing we did which served to intensify recruiting—

we got 133 members in two weeks' time—was to give assignments to leading trade union comrades. We had a meeting with Comrade Foster and set for the Party comrades who are active in trade unions the task of recruiting so and so many and bringing them to a special meeting. In this way 133 new members were recruited in two weeks.

At that meeting we checked up on the trade union comrades the tasks which they had promised to fulfil. It had a good effect, because these comrades come in contact with thousands of workers. This meeting had another favorable effect. It brought about 150 comrades together, and I would say that about fifty of this number were leaders in shops and unions. The 150 got together, were introduced to one another, and a friendly relationship was brought about. They found that here was an organization with real working class leaders, a fact which had never been brought home so vividly; that they were in the company of people who were building the unions, who were active not only in the organization of struggles, but as leaders of large shops of hundreds of workers or of departments

Such a gathering—organized under special conditions, with Comrade Foster present, at which reports on recruiting were given and active union builders were called upon to tell why they joined the Communist Party, what recruiting they had done, and even criticized in a friendly way—had a very good effect and the whole campaign was stimulated.

At another such affair, a get-together of old and new members was arranged with just one leading speaker and about ten comrades influential in the unions who spoke up to tell what they had done regarding recruiting. We had food and refreshments and movies, the party lasting late into the night. Here we succeeded in establishing a friendly relationship through a meeting of comrades who were leaders among the workers, and this brought people close to the Party organization. At the meeting itself, one of the main topics dealt with was why we need the Party, in the

light of the class struggle and the happenings during the last nine months. One got up and said, "I am proud to belong to such an organization, and well tell the whole shop about it."

We have one comrade who recruited thirty into the Party in a period of six weeks. A team, one organizer and one comrade, who is the educational director of the unit, recruited twenty-five. A Negro comrade recruited fifteen into the Party in a period of three weeks.

How Our Comrades Recruit

One comrade, not a very young worker, a leader among the strikers, prominent in the shop, well-liked and who speaks well, recruited thirty. How did he do it? Well, this is the way he puts it: "I told everybody immediately after the strike, 'I am a Communist. If you want to consult me about any problem, come and see me about it'." As a result, he went out individually and recruited thirty. He states that he is known now in the local as a Communist. Workers who have been on strike come to him and ask, "What do the Communists really believe about religion?" He becomes the center of information in the shop in respect to many current questions.

Another comrade attends shop stewards' meetings and department meetings, and meets active trade union workers. He tries to get them to attend educational meetings and has already recruited about twenty-five members.

So it is possible to recruit through such methods. But here we find a number of our leading comrades who do not recruit. For instance, take Comrade X, a very prominent leader in two locals of about 7,000 each. He has recruited very few, and continually states that he has no time to recruit. He says, "I can recruit them, but I haven't got time to see them. Where am I going to get the time to sit two hours with this and that fellow?" This is a problem for active trade union builders in these big trade unions. We have offered some solutions to the problem. For instance we said we would assign Party builders for those leading comrades in order to follow up their con-

tacts. We also proposed that they get about ten or fifteen of these people, have them addressed by an outstanding person, and in that way line them up. I think these methods must be applied.

A Section Organizer Reports

By J. FIGUEREDO

THE Ninth Convention of our Party gave us the basic orientation, the basic methods of work, the basic kinds of activities in respect to building the Party. It would be interesting for us to analyze to what extent the Party decisions have been applied in the localities. I will cite two Party branches in the section I am in; one that has hardly done any recruiting, and one that has.

Experiences of Two Branches

First of all, in the branch that does no recruiting, the comrades, who came into our ranks around 1928, are convinced that the Party cannot grow on a mass scale, consider Party building at the rate of one Party member every year as a big accomplishment. The other Party branch consists mostly of new members, members who have joined during the last two years and some only five or six months ago. It is interesting to note that in this branch, after the first branch meeting, when the question of recruiting was raised, their first question to me was "Can you attend a meeting with some of my friends who can be recruited into the Party?" Many of our Party organizers take advantage of these invitations, and in this branch, on the basis of such invitations, we were able to recruit a number of additional members. Some of our organizers imagine they have no time to do this, which is wrong.

We discussed the question of tying up Party building

with the building of the textile union. Our Party must train Party comrades for union activity, especially in an industry not long organized. Our comrades are not yet accustomed to working in these newly organized unions. We have not enough trained comrades in the various departments of the mills in order to offset the drive of the manufacturers. We decided that each comrade submit the name of one textile worker as a potential Party member. Teams of two were formed to visit these people and to report at the next meeting just what had transpired—what the workers had said, etc. On the basis of constant check-up on the method our comrades were using in recruiting people and upon the comrades themselves involved in recruiting, we believe we will be able to make much progress.

Now, in the branch that does not recruit, we have no membership committee. The branch that does has a membership committee which functions well.

We also use the method of following up *Daily Worker* readers. In this, of course, we concentrate on the key mill in the city, where our comrades have been able to assist in organizing the workers, and as a result recruited three Party members, laying the basis for a good Party organization in the mill. We also make a practice of giving Comrade Browder's book to new members. Browder's book, as simple as it may be to us, still is not simple enough for the textile workers themselves. The religious workers, whom we also want in the Party, after reading Comrade Browder's article on religion in his book, still want a lot of clarification on this point.

The best method we have found to recruit in our territory has been for the Party organizer to know every Party member, his life, his contacts, his difficulties, etc., and to establish a very good personal relationship with each one. This encourages the Party comrades, and stimulates their activity—especially Party building.

The Party and The Daily Worker in Strike Struggles

By M. CHILDS

WHEN it comes to the question of recruiting, we must admit quite frankly that this is the weakest link in our work. Our discussions in the district show that we must improve the work of the units and branches; that we must involve branches in neighborhood activities; that we must improve our educational activities in the branches; that we must solve the problem of assignment of tasks to suit the various individuals; that we must train and develop forces for the lower organizations. These and a number of other problems interfere with the building of the Party, with the getting of new recruits and holding those who join.

A Real Solution to Our Problems of Recruiting

Yet it is my opinion that the solution to this problem is more than organizational. To find a real solution it is necessary for our comrades to understand the role of the Party in the class struggle. Our slow recruiting is not due to a lack of activity or lack of contact with the masses. On the contrary, in our district we are fairly well entrenched in the unions, on the strike committees, in the mills, etc.

I believe that it is not out of place to raise here some elementary problems of Leninism. This is necessary precisely because the theoretical understanding of many of our leading district cadres is limited.

In our district we have an excellent corps of trade union organizers and they are not of a second category. They are our best comrades, Negro and white men and women. But somehow these comrades get lost in administrative work. Comrade Stalin spoke about living in a narcotic atmosphere of economic successes, "bogged" in some administrative detail, etc. I do not want to make mere mechanical analogies, but it is a fact that many of our leading

comrades in the trade unions and mass organizations like the I.W.O. and the others and our Party branches and units are lost in some detail.

Comrade Stalin, in this same speech, stressed that economic successes are combined with successes in Party building and the developed political work of the Party; that unless there is a strong Party organization, successes are built on sand. I want to emphasize that unless we understand this fact and the role of the Party we will be unable to build it. It is very easy when we are involved in a struggle like a strike, let us say, to lose sight of perspectives. Yet we Communists do not believe in the theory of spontaneity; we believe in giving a movement a deliberate and purposive character.

The recent cab drivers' strike in Chicago proved that it is possible to recruit during struggles. We increased our unit there from five to twenty-six because our comrades were active workers in the strike. As a result of this the influence of the Party among the cab drivers also increased. In the Hospital Workers Union, the Party is growing at a rapid pace because we started to recruit people right from the very start of the organization campaign. And we were able to do this only because our Party members are active in building the union and are known among the workers.

At a recent Party conference in Chicago, after prolonged discussion, we decided to set up special recruiting commissions in the fractions of the mass organizations. We believe these committees will be necessary until such time as the fraction membership as a whole understands the importance of Party recruiting. Then it will become a part of our daily work.

At the present time we are holding small group meetings of workers who are prospective recruits for the Party. We are doing this especially in the steel areas. In the packing trade we are conducting educational circles among non-Party workers, from among whom we hope to recruit into the Party. In addition to our regular school, we are conducting a special Sunday class for trade unionists, em-

phasizing the role of the Party in the class struggle. Within a short time we will open two full-time training schools, one in southern Illinois for the miners and one in Chicago for the district generally.

Problems of Daily Worker Circulation

I want to deal with a few questions concerning our experiences connected with the circulation of the *Daily Worker*.

Why is it that in spite of a number of resolutions and quotas and meetings, our lower Party organizations did not increase their bundle orders? Our discussions show that this was due to a lack of concreteness in approaching the branches and units. Instead of outlining a task for each particular branch or letting them set tasks of their own, we would outline a general task which somehow or other never penetrated below. As long as the importance of this question in a concrete form did not reach the lower organizations, the problem of distribution remained unsolved. These weaknesses prevailed and still prevail in some places. Only when the County Central reached the branches and together with them worked out the concrete possibilities for increased circulation was the situation changed to some degree.

We can cite a number of examples to prove that when an effort is made to distribute our press the workers will receive it and read it. On the day that the Supreme Court delivered the Angelo Herndon decision, we sold hundreds of copies of the *Daily Worker* on the South Side of Chicago in an hour's time. The only obstacle preventing a greater sale was an insufficient number of people to sell them.

At a recent organization-education conference in Chicago, a comrade related a very interesting story. One issue of the *Sunday Worker* contained a brief article dealing with a certain strike in Chicago. A Party member picked up a bundle of these papers and deposited them at the strike headquarters without making provisions for distribution of these papers. One of the strikers who voted

for Landon in the 1936 election accidentally happened to pick up a paper and read the story about his strike. He liked the story so much, finding it so different from the articles in the capitalist press, that he took it upon himself to sell all the papers.

During the last three weeks our Party membership in the Chicago district has seen the possibilities of increasing the circulation of the *Daily Worker* on a scale unthought of a few weeks prior to the steel strike. The day before the strike was officially declared, the district bureau took a bold step and launched a one-page Chicago supplement of the *Daily Worker*. The response of the steel workers was great. Places where we used to sell ten copies now sell hundreds of copies. Thousands of workers who never saw a *Daily Worker* before, now read the *Daily Worker* regularly. In the steel area the *Daily Worker* is one of the most widely-read newspapers.

The Semi-Official Organ of the Strike Committee

In South Chicago and in Indiana Harbor the *Daily Worker* has become the semi-official organ of the strike strategy committee. The committee voted to bar the sale of anti-strike papers on the picket line. And the same resolution gives recognition to the *Daily Worker*. The picket captains were ordered to permit the sale of the *Daily Worker* on the line. At all big mass meetings and gatherings, the *Daily Worker* is sold by the hundreds and thousands, while the capitalist press newsboys stand idly by, unable to dispose of their papers. We now have a mass sale of hundreds of copies each day at the largest steel mills in the Chicago-Calumet area. In Indiana Harbor, most of the taverns and restaurants keep copies of the *Daily Worker* for their patrons and customers.

At the present moment it is difficult to get subscriptions in the strike area because the workers have no money. The comrades, however, are laying the basis for subscriptions as soon as the strike is over.

We have spread the *Daily Worker* through nearly every section of Chicago. At the beginning of the strike, we used

to limit ourselves to the steel area. The spreading out, however, has brought us face to face with a number of problems and obstacles that we will have to solve if we want to have a steady circulation. As I stated before, our Party membership responded to the call of the district committee and mobilized every night for the sale of the *Daily Worker*. A week ago there were sections in the city, like the West Side and the mid-city section, that would each sell from eight to fifteen hundred copies of the paper. But these sections have been unable to keep this figure steady. Even in the steel area we began to notice a drop and the danger of the piling up of unsold copies. We immediately took steps to prevent any such situation.

What reasons did we find for such fluctuation? We have found the following:

1. That we cannot depend upon a steady sale of the paper if we rely on volunteers only.

2. That it is better to pursue a policy of concentration for the time being than to spread out. It is better to tackle five or six mills in the Chicago area that employ 125,000 people than to scatter a few copies here, there and everywhere. This does not mean discontinuing the sale in other parts of the city, but putting forth our greatest efforts at the point of concentration.

3. We cannot expect the Party membership to mobilize for the sale of the *Daily Worker* every single night, but we must, rather, build up a special apparatus and a corps of people who will steadily handle this job. At the present time school children on vacation are selling the *Daily Worker*. We have also put on a few adults and made it possible for them to earn something by selling the paper. This does not mean that every Party member is exempt from spreading the *Daily Worker*. On the contrary, it is the duty of every member to spread our paper among his shopmates, neighbors and friends.

4. We will have to find ways and means of utilizing capitalist distribution agencies.

We must strive by all means to prevent a repetition of the past mistake of showing a lot of activity in a certain

situation or strike and when it is over finding ourselves back again where we had started with very little to show for our pains and efforts. This goes for the sale of the *Daily Worker* and for the building of the Party.

Negro Women in Our Party

By LOUISE THOMPSON

A CONFERENCE on Negro women was held in New York City a few weeks ago. This conference was considered historic, because it was the first such conference held. It was an historic one also so far as the composition of its delegates and the quality of the discussion that ensued there were concerned. It was held on June 6; there were 92 official delegates and 75 visitors. Fifteen of these delegates were Negroes; two non-Party women were invited and both joined the Party at the conference. One was the sister of Alonzo Watson, the first Negro to die in Spain. The topics of the conference were:

cf. these delegates were new; 2/3

- a. The Negro woman in industry.
- b. Organizing the unorganized, and neighborhood and church work.
- c. The role of the Negro woman in the Party.

Recruiting was discussed freely and during those seven and a half hours which the conference lasted, not a person left the hall until the conference was over, and it was one of those intensely hot days. There were 43 women and one or two men who participated in the discussion. They discussed very frankly and freely all the problems concerning Negro women.

The Promotion of Cadres

The main emphasis in the conference was on the promotion of cadres. It was proposed that special attention be given to Negro women on the basis of their spe-

cial problems; that special classes be organized where necessary; that more women be brought into the trade unions, the peace movement, and the Party.

I want to speak about the sewing project, where some of our best Negro women comrades are working. There are some 3,700 women of all nationalities on this project, Negro and white. We found at the beginning that Negro women were not given leading positions, were not given promotions. Through the work of our council we now have a number of Negro women who have the respect and are the leaders of all of these nearly 4,000 women. It is not insignificant to note that among these thousands of women, many of them are Italian women. The relationship that has developed between the Italian and Negro women on the sewing project is a splendid demonstration of what can be done by correct work.

A few remarks on building the Party among the Negro women. I think that if we examine our work we will see the necessity of finding special ways of recruiting Negro women in the Party. I know from experience—not personal, so much, but by observation—many times Negro women, because of extra special conditions that have kept them up to now out of the labor movement entirely, feel quite strange when they come into our movement. Perhaps we recruit some of them into the Party. Many of them feel strange. When they come to our meetings or affairs, they do not feel that they fit in, they do not feel as much a part of it as even our Negro men comrades.

Perhaps this is not the basic point to consider when we talk about the recruiting of Negro women into the Party, but I think it is an important consideration in helping to keep them in the Party.

I think, too, that Negro men comrades should place emphasis upon bringing Negro women into the Party. It seems to me it should be in a sort of personal way. Our women have been so cut off from the labor movement; I know they feel strange. Many times we have to win them in different ways—with some sort of human approach.

How to Recruit Negro Women

For example, I think that often, when we have affairs, dances, etc., if we went around we would find young Negro girls who would be glad to attend. If they got there and found they were given consideration, danced with—not made wallflowers—we would find that these are the things that count. These are the things that hold a lot of Negro women back from the Party. They are not so political, but they do mean a great deal.

As Comrade Browder said, as Bolsheviks we have to transform our lives in every way. It is true that political life and personal life tie up together. We have won over young Negro girls by bringing them into our personal circles, showing them that we are just like everybody else. It does a great deal to break down their antagonism and makes them interested.

Then there is the question of education. It is my opinion that even if we take such an example as we have of the development of the Party in Harlem, where our movement is cited always as an example, there are far too few Negro women in positions of leadership.

I think it will be necessary to take up as a special problem the ways to develop women cadres. When it can be seen that we have Negro women in our Party capable as leaders, as speakers, it is going to do a great deal for the Party.

I think that until we have a representative and large group of Negro women in the Party, our work in the Negro territories is going to be seriously hampered. Getting large sections of Negro women is going to root the Party among the Negroes. I think it is true—get the Negro women into the Party, and not only will the men follow, but we will see that we will have a Party among the Negro people that has its roots among them and is a very vital part of their lives. I think the important thing is for us to see that special attention is given to bring them in, hold them, train them. This is essential to our Negro work.

Establishing the Party in the South

By **ROB HALL**

IN OUR district we are now convinced that we must fully establish the legality of our Party. We have in fact been suspended between two worlds—the one illegal, underground; the other legal. For a long period we were not able to solve the problem of how to adjust our apparatus to that half-and-half situation. We were not able to keep in close contact with sections and units, and we were able to get only a poor representation at organization department meetings.

Our work was surrounded by an atmosphere of conspiratorial methods for months after there were no raids, no arrests, no police terror. Our district bureau decided that we should work more openly, but the psychology of our comrades, built up by a long series of police raids and arrests, could not be changed so easily.

Our Two Tasks

We decided that we faced two primary tasks: First, to adjust our apparatus to the new conditions, taking advantage of the increasing legality of our Party to maintain closer contact with our lower organizations; second, to break down the psychology of illegality.

These two tasks are going hand in hand.

When the Party in the North instituted branches instead of units, we all felt that this new device was not applicable to the South. So we watched our units dwindle, our sections almost cease to function. Finally, we decided that branches were suitable in the South and we have begun the experiment. We established one branch in East Birmingham which has been so successful that we have no doubt now as to the correctness of this policy. By July 4 we expect to have made the change completely and will utilize the Fourth of July to instal charters in the branches.

Meeting in larger branches, in fraternal and trade union halls, the comrades naturally feel more free and more legal. They bring their wives, and even their children. The children participate in the programs and then are taken out to play by one of the older girls.

The first requisite for leadership in Birmingham now, since we have started branches, is the ability not only to sing songs, but to write them. Already several songs have been written and are sung in the branches. When we started we found that our comrades had never heard the *Internationale*. So we bought a victrola and a few records, and now the tune is becoming familiar.

We decided that if units hold better meetings in halls than in bedrooms, committees would also function better in this way. So we hold our district bureau, fraction, etc., meetings in halls. We have done away with seven section lines that cluttered up Birmingham and have set up one county committee with direct contact with units. We find that we get the best results even there if we conduct the meeting somewhat along the lines of the branch. We open with a song. We have a political lecture, and we close with a couple of songs.

It was just a couple of weeks ago, however, that we put on the crowning touch. We held a banquet in a downtown restaurant, under the auspices of one of the branches, to bid farewell to several comrades going to join the Lincoln Battalion. The attendance was excellent, and there was a completely new spirit. One old comrade who hadn't been to a Party meeting in several years was there with his wife. "I've stayed away from my last Party meeting," he said.

Naturally, the workers employed in the steel mills and by the big corporations run an unnecessary risk of exposure in such a relatively loose organization as the branch has to be. Industrial units are obviously necessary.

The Growing Legality of Our Party

The question has been asked: What is responsible for the growing legality of the Party in the South? There are several main reasons:

1. The whole national situation as a result of the election of Roosevelt and the defeat of Landon.

2. The cleavage in the Democratic Party, even in the South, where the liberal and progressive elements are beginning to part company with the reactionaries, a cleavage which is expressing itself in every primary election now.

3. The growth of the C.I.O.

4. The correct line of our Party nationally; that is, the line of mobilizing all the forces of progress against reaction, fascism and war, and the utilization by our Party of the liberal and democratic institutions of our country. The national prestige of our Party is a real factor.

5. The Supreme Court decisions in the De Jonge and Herndon cases.

6. Correct work by our Party in the district around the campaign for the freedom of Jack Barton and for the punishment of the floggers of Joseph Gelders.

The work of our Party nationally also in the cases affecting the Negro people is a part of this picture. As a result of the work of the Communists on the Scottsboro case and in the general fight for equal rights for Negroes, we have posed the question of Negro liberation in such a way that decent citizens, even in the South, are forced to admit that we are at least seventy-five per cent right.

The fact that the C.I.O. unions have accepted the principle of trade union equality for Negroes, which the Party has been the leader in advocating, has made the Party more acceptable in the minds of many white trade unionists. It is much more difficult now for the reactionaries to attack the Party in circles of white workers and white middle classes because of our position on the Negro question. This has played a tremendous role in making for more legal conditions for our Party.

How to Bring the Party Forward

A natural problem is how to bring forward the Party through our branches. Our recent sales tax campaign showed us how to do this and incidentally gave our comrades a great deal more confidence in themselves. We

printed petitions for the repeal of the two per cent sales tax and labeled them, "Issued by the Communist Party of Alabama." These were circulated in the neighborhoods, but the best results were obtained by leaving them in the small stores in the neighborhoods. The small merchants told our comrades that they hated the sales tax so bitterly that they didn't care who circulated the petitions, they would be glad to cooperate. We did not succeed in forcing the governor to call a special session of the legislature to repeal the sales tax, but we did establish in the minds of many people the realization that the Communist Party was fighting for the interests of the people. We received some excellent publicity on this campaign. One Birmingham paper headed an article, "Look out, Sales Tax, Communist Party is after you." A Mobile paper started an article with the sentence, "The Bolsheviks were the first to take concrete action against the Alabama sales tax."

We have not solved the problem of building the press and circulating our literature, but we are making some progress. We used to have a rule that no literature could be brought within a block of a unit meeting. Now we have literature at every unit meeting, and also at every committee, fraction and even bureau meeting.

The Party Among National Groups

By F. BROWN

IT WOULD be wrong to believe that we are going backward in our work among the national groups. I think we are moving forward. The trouble is that we are not keeping pace with the big developments in the labor movement. While we were moving forward, while we were building a series of united front movements around various issues that in certain national groups took the

character of small People's Front movements, we did not stabilize our forces sufficiently; we did not utilize this movement to build our Party among these masses and to move these masses a step forward. Which means that at this plenum we are confronted with the problem of how to extend the People's Front among the national groups. If we want to achieve this aim, we have to take into consideration a few questions.

Is the Americanization process going on in this country? Yes, it is. It is an Americanization process which, while growing out of economic and social conditions, is at the same time forced from above by the ruling class. The ruling class would like to speed this process to such an extent as to get rid of the problem that the foreign-born masses still represent in this country.

But, besides this type of Americanization process, there is another going on, a healthy one, which I would call the "proletarian Americanization process, the Americanization process that develops with the development of the American labor movement.

The fact that millions of workers are streaming into the C.I.O., foreign-born and Americans, foreign-born of all kinds of nationalities, and that these thousands are fighting shoulder to shoulder for democracy, for better economic conditions, shows that we are confronted with an Americanization process and a healthy process. At the same time that such a process is going on, however, something else is happening in this country. Here you will find a very interesting contradiction that we must take into consideration. While the foreign-born masses today are moving in the United States and are fighting not only for industrial unionism, but at the same time are fighting for democracy, these same masses, or part of these masses, are supporting reactionary forces bound up with reaction in their home country.

This means that while we have this healthy Americanization process going on, at the same time we find that the European events have a great repercussion among the foreign-born masses in this country. This sometimes

even takes the character of building national consciousness. So much so that Comrade Browder was absolutely correct when he said that you will find Italians or Germans of the second generation stating that they are proud to be Americans, but at the same time, are proud to be Germans, Italians, etc. These things developed in the last two years under our own nose. The masses that feel discriminated against fall prey to fascist demagoguery: that their prestige will rise with the prestige of their country of origin.

Who took advantage of such a situation? Here we must confess that we did not take full advantage, but that the reactionaries, the Liberty League and Hearst, working together with the agents of the fascist countries, took the advantage, not only mobilizing the old generation, but even raising a national consciousness in the second generation of this country.

A Weapon to Defeat the Fascists

Did the Party give us a weapon, some instrument to defeat the maneuvers of the fascists? Yes, the Party forged a weapon two or three years ago, when the Party took a correct Leninist line in regard to the revolutionary traditions in this country. The moment that the Party developed this correct Leninist line it was necessary, it was logical, that we should have developed the same line among the national groups; but we didn't, we continued along the same sectarian line, and by continuing along this sectarian line we remained separated from the foreign-born masses.

It is true that we succeeded here and there to break through by developing the campaign for social insurance. This gave us a splendid basis to build a broad united front movement, but later on we remained hanging in the air. We were waiting for some other issues around which we would be able to unite these masses. Today we have all kinds of issues around which we can unite these masses and build all these People's Front movements from among the national groups. This, in the final analysis, will build

not only a broad united front movement among the foreign-born masses of this country, but will become part and parcel of the broad People's Front movement of the country.

How can we mobilize the foreign-born masses in the trade union drives? We have to find out the demands that we can raise among these national groups for the purpose of uniting them, for the purpose of preparing the ground to bring more of these groups into the broad People's Front movement. Is it not a fact that the foreign-born as a whole are discriminated against? It is a fact. Then why should we not raise certain demands around which we can mobilize these masses? Not only these masses, but these masses with the support of the labor movement of this country. We will have to do it.

The central question is the C.I.O. movement. It is to the extent that the foreign-born masses are entering the C.I.O., and the work we do among these masses, that we will carry on the healthy Americanization process of which I spoke before, utilizing all the national traditions of these groups.

Utilizing Revolutionary Traditions

A Polish worker, for example, will become a good fighter for industrial unionism, for democracy, if we will not only utilize the revolutionary traditions of the American labor movement, but even the revolutionary traditions of Poland. They will then be proud alike of the American and Polish revolutionary traditions. And by doing this not only will we bring them into the trade union movement, but we will check the advance of the fascists here.

There are tremendous possibilities before us, but the one problem we have to solve today if we want to develop the movement of which I am speaking is the problem of forces, of strengthening the bureaus. One thing is positive—we are not recruiting sufficiently; we are not developing new forces. The work of the language bureaus is restricted to a few people. We must get away from this

and we can; otherwise it will be impossible to do the tremendous work that is before us. *This means that the question of recruiting must be on the order of the day.*

Another question which must be discussed is the relation of the language bureaus to the district committees. If we want the language bureaus to do good work, put their shoulders to the wheel, they must feel that the whole Party is behind them, that their work is considered and appreciated, that the work of winning influence over millions is not an insignificant task. I believe if we will try to establish in our largest districts commissions for work among national groups, and in the small districts have at least one of the leading comrades in charge, we will achieve a great deal.

How a Steel Unit Functions

By JACK JOHNSTONE

OUR trade union comrades, with the help of the district and county committees, are doing very good work in the struggle in steel, in building the steel workers' union, in mobilizing the masses against the forces of fascism, in winning the support of the middle class for the strike.

But what about the functioning of the mill unit as a Party organization, what about utilizing this splendid work of our individual Party members in the strike, of the tremendous influence of the *Daily Worker* and of our Party in order to recruit new members into the Party, what about the independent role of the Party mill unit?

Mistake of Neglecting Party for Trade Union //

First, the tendency was to liquidate the unit by merging into the union and strike apparatus. This has been largely

overcome, due primarily to the concentration work of the district and county leadership in helping the sections in the steel area overcome this weakness by sending in emergency forces.

Here I will examine one unit, my own unit—one of the strongest mill units in steel, with a membership of seventy. This unit did not meet for the first week during the strike, and when it did it had five members present: two members of the unit bureau, myself and two others. Why did this happen?

In this unit, we face a number of problems not at all easy to solve. First, our comrades were active in the committees of the union. Together with this came added strike tasks, and consequently most of our comrades were lost in the tasks of the union and the strike, and the unit for a moment collapsed as an independent Party organization.

Again, as in all such cases, our Party is the one selected for neglect. The basic cause of this is the lack of theoretical training; the lack of understanding the role of the Party as a vanguard Party, and not a mere emergency helper in the struggle for immediate demands.

Theoretical Training Necessary

This will not be overcome by mere decisions to recruit, by giving recruiting quotas and tasks. Comrades cannot effectively recruit if they have such a wrong conception of the Party. They are good hard-working Party members, with whom we must have the greatest patience. We must overcome this problem and combine the practical work of our Party members with a theoretical understanding so that the trade union is not separate, but becomes a part of the task of building our Party.

In this unit, for the past six months, we have reduced the agenda of the unit to two main points: (1) a political discussion, and (2) the main tasks which flow from the political discussion. This has worked out fairly well.

This is a shift unit; that is, it meets in two shifts, morning and evening, with one unit bureau, one discussion and the same outlined tasks. The political discussion is de

cided by the unit bureau, which meets a few days before the unit meeting for two hours. They have the same agenda as the unit: a political discussion for one hour, assignment of tasks for another hour. A member of the unit bureau leads the discussion in the unit, as well as in the bureau meeting. Sometimes a comrade from the unit leads the discussion; if so, he also attends the unit bureau meeting, to get the benefit of the political discussion there.

The tasks are generally limited to a few of the most important ones, including check-up, listing of new names for recruiting to the Party, the *Daily Worker*, literature, Party shop paper, etc.

In our political discussions we deal with up-to-date analyses of the present strike, what forces are at work, the fascist elements, need of unity and independent political action, the role of the press. We discuss how to strengthen the work of our Party members to make the strike effective, to build the union, to unite the masses of middle class elements with the workers so as to gain support for the strike and weaken the fascist forces.

These political discussions are good, so are our trade conferences for the training of our comrades, so are the district schools. But we must do something more than that if we really want to build a Party in these mills, if we want to save the new members who drop out and who will not attend these classes.

A Weak Point in Education

In my experience, I am of the opinion that one of our weakest points in the education of our Party members is that of the new members. I dare say that there are few, if any, new membership classes in most sections; there are none in our steel area. Half of the members of these steel units are new in the Party and have received no training at all. They just come into the unit full-fledged but very neglected comrades. Left alone, they may leave the Party.

Every outline I have seen are for teachers, with most of the points of a university course, ostensibly a long vari-

ety of points which the teacher can choose from. What is needed is not an outline for teachers, but for some comrade to write out a document for each night of the class, containing what the education department thinks should be told or taught to the new members at that class. These should take no longer than thirty minutes to read, and they can be supplemented by one pamphlet, or at least not more than two pamphlets, to be read during the week's interval between classes.

Such a document is needed, which the center I am sure can produce. If necessary, the unit can change this to suit its particular situation.

Recruiting in Ohio

By JOHN WILLIAMSON

AS TO the status of Party building: This is our main weakness, although we do see some beginnings in overcoming it. During the first five months of the year, only 336 new members were recruited. Comrade Foster visited our district the first week of June. Comrade Foster, as you know, only dealt with the question of Party building in those districts he visited. Immediately we saw results, the second week of June seventy-one new members being recruited. We should draw the conclusion of the need of continuing this policy nationally. This will help to bring about the change which we need.

Building the Party During the Strike

To what extent has the Party been built during the strike? In Cleveland, in one of the large plants where the Party comrades are active as builders of the union the strike is most effective and sixteen workers have been recruited into the shop branch so far; in Youngstown

twelve comrades, and in Canton seven or eight. We expect to recruit many more.

There are a few bright spots which I want to mention. In the Ohio Valley, in five months we recruited eighty-five new members, of which thirty-six are in steel and eighteen in the coal mines. In the two cities of Weirton and Steubenville, two terror-struck cities where the fascist forces of the steel barons are most active, our comrades have done a splendid job. From three Party members in Steubenville we grew to fifty-two in three months; in Weirton, from twelve members to twenty-five. This is really outstanding as far as this district is concerned, as these are steel territories where there is no strike.

In Cincinnati, we recruited sixty-two new members during the first five months. A significant thing is that the two section organizers in these areas are new comrades, in the Party from one and a half to two years. In Fisher Body, Cleveland, we grew during and after the strike to fifty-two in the shop branch. I might add here that I would like to correct any impression that we are satisfied, or that we have no weaknesses even there. These are just examples of bright spots which are by no means typical.

What conclusions can we draw?

First, we see that these new section organizers are more receptive to the constant emphasis and hammering upon Party building, with consequent good results; the same is not yet true of all our leading comrades.

Secondly, the Party leadership must fight for recruiting and make it a political struggle. It is not enough to just hammer away with negative speeches. It is necessary to visit important branches and conduct this political struggle right there. Also it is not enough merely to say to leading functionaries: recruit by example. We had the sad experience after one spectacular drive, when we found we had very little left at the next control. But where our leading comrades went to shop branches and met with them and recruited with them, there we have had definite results. This is true in Fisher Body, Cleveland, and in certain steel mill nuclei.

Thirdly, our Party comrades who are active trade union workers must be convinced that they can find the way to bring themselves forward boldly. Where this has been done, there have been good results.

We still have tendencies among some leading comrades, especially the comrades who are actively building the trade unions, to be too selective in recruiting of people into the Party. This very correct idea of recruiting key people is being vulgarized, so that any ordinary worker is considered as of no value. This question of bending over the other way must be corrected, so that we may really create a Party with substantial foundations.

Organization Brings Results

By ROSE WORTIS

I AGREE with the comrades who say that the reason our Party does not grow faster is not because of the objective difficulties, but because of insufficient attention to the work.

In transport, we have a unit which has been in existence for a year and half, but the membership of the unit is stationary although the Party members in this unit are among the foremost builders of the union.

In another unit in a power house, which started with only one comrade, the unit in a short time grew to five. The members in this unit helped to carry through the first sit-down strike in the city. As a result of this good work, the unit today has grown to a membership of fourteen, and at a recent meeting the comrades pledged themselves to recruit another twenty members by July 30.

We have a similar situation in the shipyards. In one shipyard where a strike is now in progress, the comrades are selling five to ten copies of the *Daily Worker*. They

said that more could not be sold because of the "Red" scare. In another yard, where the same type of workers are employed, comrades are selling from 800 to 1,000 copies of the *Daily Worker*. This shows that it is not the difficulties of the "Red" scare, but the kind of work we are doing, the kind of organization we have, that determines the failure or success of our work.

A word on fluctuation. We have this kind of a situation in the Party: We follow up a sympathizer for months, visit him at his home, become friendly, etc. But the moment he is recruited, we pay no more attention to him, and the consequence is that many of the new comrades drop out. Especially is that true of the new type we are recruiting in our district. We have a sort of business relation with them. For example, we have Irish workers. They come to a meeting and after the meeting they go back to their Irish circles, to an atmosphere removed from our Party; and we remain among ourselves. This is wrong.

In addition to the formal meetings, we should begin to give attention to meeting more frequently with these comrades, to mingle with them socially. This will help to stop fluctuation. The assigning of our best comrades for the personal guidance of new comrades should be seriously considered in our district. By doing this, we shall be able to keep those we recruit and to increase recruiting.

Oklahoma Tells Us How

By BOB WOOD

IN OKLAHOMA we had no Party about eleven months ago. We had 28 "unconscious" comrades, mostly isolated in rural sections. In Oklahoma City we had a few, disconnected from the masses. This was the situation in August, 1936. I saw then that we had to become Party-building conscious or we would not have a Party. I do not think that there is a comrade in the district who has attended any of the district plenums, committee meetings or been in contact with district comrades, not fully aware of the need for constantly recruiting and constantly adding to our small membership. I think our results today have been fair. We had 107 Party members at the time of the December, 1936, Plenum, today we have over 225 members.

Recruiting in the Trade Unions

How did we recruit? We established contact with men active in the trade union movement. We convinced them that the Communists were sincerely, devotedly concerned with building and strengthening the progressive trade union movement and helping the workers gain better conditions of life.

Here is an example: In one city we recruited a man with considerable influence among trade union people. Here is what he did. A local union planned an organization drive, but its organization committee did not know just how to proceed. This comrade said to them:

"See there, imagine that's a red door, painted all red. I can open it for you or keep it closed. If I open it, you'll get advice on how to get up leaflets, get out publicity and plan mass meetings, everything you want to know in order to carry through your organization drive." They told him they sure wanted to get through that "red" door. He brought the committee members to the Party office. We helped them with all the work of the drive, helped them

to draw up leaflets, releases for the newspapers, suggested speakers for several mass meetings that were held. The drive was a success. Almost three hundred new members were brought into the local. Our assistance in the drive won respect for the Party. And subsequently 18 members of the union joined our ranks.

In addition to concentrating on recruiting, we have vigorously emphasized the sale and the reading of literature. We sell literature in Oklahoma on the average of \$65 a month, which is a pretty good average for our small Party. We sold 1,000 copies of Stalin's speech on the new Soviet constitution. We are now selling 62 copies of the *Party Organizer* a month. We set up literature tables at all meetings wherever possible. We have, in the past six months, built a very modest bookshop, which helps to bring people closer to us. We have contributed a number of books and pamphlets to a Baptist Church circulating library, which will reach hundreds of people who are members of the Baptist Church.

We sold about \$9 worth of literature at the State Convention of the N.A.A.C.P. at Tulsa held a few weeks ago. We systematically advertise our literature in the *American Guardian* in Oklahoma.

On the question of women comrades: we have had considerable success in building very excellent women cadres in our Party. Unfortunately, we have had no Negro women come forward, but we have at least seven women comrades who are taking full responsibility and are involved in eight or nine different organizations. We have a full-time woman organizer in Tulsa and one in Oklahoma City.

Utilizing Local Newspapers

Another thing that we utilize in bringing the Party before the workers in Oklahoma City is the use of the *Letters to the Editor* columns of the newspapers. A reactionary professor in the University of Oklahoma wrote that in the Soviet Union there was no religious freedom, and a liberal minister answered him back; and then I

entered the arena. With my letter came an avalanche of letters for three weeks. Almost every day three or four letters appeared in the paper. The final letter was from a fellow who wanted to know who we were, when we had arrived, who paid us and when we were going to leave. He signed the letter "Anonymous." I answered this contributor and told him I was very much interested in his questions and I would be very glad to answer him at the Party headquarters, giving the address. The news paper published the address of the Party, which again was a good thing.

One thing I have tried is not to do everything myself. We have worked very hard to develop a collective leadership. There was some discussion here about no bureau meetings for weeks in one or two districts. In our small district we do not have the problem of 20,000 workers going out on strike, but we have had problems and we have had the temptation to slide the bureau meetings. But we haven't done this. We have probably missed two or three meetings in the last ten months. We have a functioning district bureau, and I think we are on the way to building a real collective leadership in Oklahoma.

New Advances in California

by WM. SCHNEIDERMAN

WANT to deal with the question of Party building. It was reported here last night that the Party in California has a registered membership, together with its recent recruits, of 4,700 members. Our dues payments for May reached an all-time high of 3,700, which is a thousand more than the dues payments of some six months ago. We have had a few successes in our experiences in building the Party. The main question which we have tried to solve is the problem of making recruiting a part of the daily life and activity of our Party, of the units and of every Party member.

We tried to utilize a whole series of methods in order to accomplish this. One of the most successful was that of developing socialist competition between the sections, between the units and between the individual members. The practice of giving prizes, the Party Builders' Congress which we held, dramatized for the whole Party the fact that the Party leadership considers those comrades who recruit into the Party comrades who are doing vital political work.

The Party Builders' Congress

We found at this Party Builders' Congress, that although we had a very successful recruiting drive by which we brought some 1,900 new members into the Party, only one-third of our Party membership participated in recruiting. The main thing we stressed at this Party Builders' Congress was that these active Party builders and recruits be the ones to activate the other two-thirds of our membership in order to make every member of the Party one who daily carries on recruiting. We also insisted that every leading member of the state committee and of the county committees give personal attention and guidance to the work of some particular Party unit or group in one,

two or more closely allied industries. It is obvious that we cannot cover all the units of the Party, but the examples and experiences that we obtain in some are popularized throughout the whole Party in order that they can follow the same examples.

Our Industrial Units and Sections

One of our chief reasons for the ability to recruit among the most decisive section of the workers in the trade union has been the establishment on a wide scale of industrial units and industrial sections. In San Francisco, two-thirds or more, perhaps three-fourths of the Party membership is organized not on a geographical basis, but in industrial sections. First, we organize a general industrial section and later, as the Party grows, we divide these into sections which correspond to some particular industry or group of industries. We know that there are a lot of difficulties connected with this. But we found that, first of all, the industrial units, where shop units couldn't be established could give immediate attention to the problems of the new Party members in the unions. And then, industrial sections made it possible for the leading section committee to give direct attention to the work of the Party units and fractions in the trade unions, which the whole section leadership and the trade union departments of the Party could not possibly do.

However, we find that, particularly in a city like San Francisco, where all the best forces of the Party are organized into industrial units and sections, it is extremely difficult to mobilize the Party for political issues, and particularly to carry out work in the neighborhoods. We have withdrawn almost all of the best forces from the neighborhood branches and the assembly district branches and we have the problem of not having the necessary forces to carry on political activity on the local and neighborhood political issues. This problem we have not solved yet.

Methods of Good Recruiting

On the question of recruiting, we have devised a number of methods that have been very successful for continuous recruiting. For instance, we have compiled a large list of active trade unionists, and have sent them three months trial subscriptions to the *Western Worker*, Party bulletins, trade union letters and so forth, following this up with individual contact for the purpose of getting subscriptions and contacts for the Party. As a result of this, we have had in some places very good recruiting at the top and almost none at all at the bottom. In some small industrial towns we have recruited the majority of the Central Labor Council delegates into the Party and little or nothing down below. We are trying to get comrades that we have recruited, who are in the leadership in the labor movement, to help break down the Red scare and lay the basis for broad recruiting into the Party..

Nevertheless, our achievements in recruiting have been spotty and we have a number of serious shortcomings, the major one the enormous fluctuation. This fluctuation is to some extent being cut down in recent months, but we find that we still lose the majority of new Party members within a few months. This probably is so in all districts, but where we do such a large amount of recruiting it becomes a serious problem when over a period of six months or a year hundreds and thousands are lost to the Party. We find that one method to cut down fluctuations is the organization of new members' units which function for a period of from four to six weeks or longer, and to which all new members are attached until they have an elementary understanding of the Party before they are assigned to a unit.

We also have a serious situation in some of the most important industries, where we must combat a tendency of our comrades against recruiting new people into the Party. An outstanding example is in the longshore unit of San Francisco, whose members have been most active forces in building the longshoremen's local in the Marine Federation.

We have had a long and stubborn struggle in order to try to convince these comrades of the necessity of bringing new forces into the Party. We are having serious discussions with some of our comrades who are leading workers in the maritime unions, to convince them that they must take the initiative and draw in other workers into the movement. For at this stage it is absolutely necessary that we broaden the base of the Party if we are going to solve the tasks which face us in the West Coast labor movement.