

PARTY

C A M P A I G N E R

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OCTOBER 1963 -- I

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Provisions Concerning Material to be
Published in the Party Campaigner

1. The Party Campaigner is intended to provide a vehicle for the exchange of experiences in various fields of party work; the object being to give all branches the benefit of methods of work devised by one or another sections of the party that have been found to achieve satisfactory results, or of proposals designed to make more effective the campaigns in which the party is engaged.
2. The Party Campaigner is not a political discussion bulletin but is specifically intended as a medium to aid in implementing the decisions of the party convention.
3. Material submitted for publication in the Party Campaigner shall be selected, edited, accepted or rejected by the Secretariat of the Political Committee which shall act as the editorial board of the publication.
4. Publication of the Party Campaigner shall be at irregular intervals depending on the material received, the availability of technical personnel to publish the material, etc.

Ed Shaw

Ed Shaw,
For the Secretariat.

Introductory Subscription Campaign

In this first (1963) issue of the Party Campaigner, published to provide a forum for the exchange of experiences in the various fields of party activity, the focus is on the current introductory subscription campaign.

Our aim is to add some 5,000 new readers to the list of Militant subscribers within a three-month period beginning September 15. The concentration is on expanding the circulation of our press within the Negro community of the various cities throughout the country.

This, succinctly stated, is the task we have undertaken as an implementing action to the Freedom Now resolution adopted at our recent convention. The convention policy decision as embodied in the resolution signalled a sharp turn in party work. Taking note of the radical mood and consciousness of the Negro masses heavily engaged in the Freedom Now struggle, the convention press and literature panel projected a campaign comparable only to the immediate post-war sub drives.

This proposal was in line with the party task set forth in our convention resolution: "To expand and improve the party press's treatment of the Negro struggle and expand the circulation of our literature among Negro militants."

The comrades at the press and literature panel were prepared to propose an even higher quota than the 5,000 figure finally arrived at but decided to test their estimate of the existing potential through actual experience. It was later decided to run a more concrete test and the Chicago branch agreed to accept a tentative quota of 750 and proceed immediately to test potential reader response by undertaking a pilot project in that city.

The outcome exceeded the expectations of the most optimistic of the comrades. At the first Sunday mobilization in Chicago, with some 23 comrades participating, a total of 176 introductory subscriptions were sold in selected Negro housing projects. Subsequent mobilizations for sub sales established that the initial response was no accidental manifestation. As a result of a number of regular mobilizations the Chicago branch was able to pile up a total of some 600 subscriptions by September 15 -- the official opening of the campaign.

The experience in Chicago has since been duplicated in other cities, thereby demonstrating that there is no qualitative

difference in response in different geographical areas.

Attached is a list of branch quotas and subs already received by The Militant business office as of September 26. It is apparent from a glance at the list that some branches have underestimated the potential response in their areas and will, after testing reader reaction, substantially increase their quotas.

Karolyn Kerry

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Sept. 26, 1963

Quota's Accepted and Total Subs to Date

<u>Area</u>	<u>Subs to Date</u>	<u>Quota</u>
1. Chicago	743	750
2. New York	321	1,000
3. Detroit	177	500
4. Boston	149	250
5. Newark	73	150
6. Cleveland	46	100
7. Twin Cities	45	300
8. Philadelphia	34	150
9. Oakland-Berkeley	29	375
10. Seattle	27	100
11. Madison	16	---
12. San Diego	13	50
13. Milwaukee	12	100
14. Los Angeles	8	500
15. San Francisco	5	250
16. Connecticut	4	75
17. Baltimore	3	---
18. Indiana	1	---
19. Denver	---	---
20. St. Louis	---	15
21. General	40	---
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Totals	1,746	4,665

CHICAGO

Reports and Comments from Chicago on Introductory
Militant Subscription Campaign

Dear Karolyn and Sylvia:

August 9, 1963

The Exec met last night and decided to tentatively accept the quota of 750, the final decision to be made pending a trial run we are planning in the Negro community within the next few weeks.

This, as you realize, is an enormous number, as we are losing some of our youth who are being transferred to other areas. (Our emphasis, Editor)

We want to set a quota that we can realistically get while still conducting our other minimum activities such as our weekly forums and some campus activity.

Signed: Bev

Report on "Trial Run" Two Weeks Later

August 26, 1963

Dear Karolyn and Sylvia:

If Tom's already home by the time you get this, you will have heard, but we had a fantastic mobilization on Sunday. A total of 23 went out (3 of whom were adult comrades) and we got a total of 176 subs! Adding this to those I've already sent in or am including in this letter, I figure we have a grand total of 224, almost one-third of our quota and the drive hasn't officially begun yet.

We had varying results in different areas and with comrades ranging from much experience in sub work to none at all. On the west side of Chicago we didn't do nearly as well as the south side -- probably due to lower income brackets (many we spoke to had been unemployed for long periods) and perhaps a lower level of consciousness as compared to the south side where there have been several community actions. On the west side we averaged 5 ~~subs~~ in 2 hours and ~~visited~~ approximately 40 people each.

On the south side, the average was about 9 to 10 subs in two hours and the comrades estimated that approximately one out of every four bought a sub -- although there were a few exceptions. Bea sold nine subs while visiting 15.

In addition to the subs sold, we sold 235 single copies which has almost paid for the cost of our bundle order. Of course, we're also giving a paper away with each sub sold so it takes a lot of papers for a mobilization...

Signed: Bev

Another Two Week Period Elapses

Sept. 9, 1963

Dear Karolyn:

We had a mobilization yesterday for subs. Bev was on vacation so Joyce took it over and we got 100 subs... The whole atmosphere is so different from the last sub drive they had here that the kids can't get over it. The response was very good even though it was a smaller mobilization. A number of the kids have left Chicago after the summer and we are now down to the hard core. But the best thing for me is to see new people who have never sold a sub before go out and come back with seven or eight subs!

M... went out for subs yesterday for the first time and though she thought she spent too much time talking at first, she said she really learned a lot. It is quite a wonderful experience to talk with people around the city about your ideas and get their reactions. She came in with 15 subs!

The last few weeks have been quite hectic...

Signed: Bea

Two Weeks Later

Sept. 16, 1963

Dear Karolyn and Sylvia:

We're sending in another 227 subs. According to our figures that makes a grand total of 583 subs -- and the drive officially began yesterday!

We have a couple of suggestions: (1) While the Freedom Now slogan in blue which is printed across the sub blanks looks nice, it is difficult to read addresses when writing over it, especially if comrades' pens or pencils are light. Would suggest it be omitted when printing more blanks.

(2) Also, if printing more blanks, would suggest providing space for apartment numbers -- sometimes comrades neglect to include these with address when working large projects.

(3) Also, if possible, please send us the tapes on gummed paper so all we have to do is cut, wet and stick. Two of us spent three hours gluing tapes on cards.

* * * *

Some statistics on our mobilizations... A total of 34 have gone out at one time or another giving us an average of 17 subs per person. This is somewhat misleading as some went out only once and got three while others have 35. A total of six unaffiliated youth comrades have participated and one party contact, recording a total of 92 subs.

Seven affiliated youth have gotten 132 subs. Our top four at present have 38, 37, 34, and 32 subs each. Yesterday's mobilization was probably quite typical -- a total of 19 went out for approximately two hours and got 115 subs, average of six each or three per hour.

We have concentrated our sub work in four main areas. One at the site of demonstrations this summer, one in the Hyde Park district (fairly well off) and two areas of housing projects, one on the west side and one on the south side.

We probably have the most subs in the south side projects. A lot of the people are poor but it is possible to speak to so many people in the period of an hour that you find a good percentage that do have the money and are interested enough to buy a sub.

One interesting thing... In this area, two projects were covered early in our campaign and we got 50 subs as well as selling a large number of single copies. Then, last week, by mistake a team went back to the same project and got an additional 30 subs. Now, out of 300 families, 80 are Militant subscribers.

We're thinking of organizing Militant discussion groups in these areas in the near future and perhaps going back to projects that have already been covered for a higher concentration of subs.

Signed: Bev

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NEWARK

Comment on Introductory Subscription Campaign

From Newark Branch

September 16, 1963

Militant Business Office
Dear Comrades:

Enclosed find 32 new introductory subscriptions. Six people went out Sunday morning for about two hours and sold an average of five per person.

All of these subs except one were gotten in a Newark housing project.

Signed: Ruth

NEW YORK

New York Sub Campaign Report

If anyone in New York needed further proof of the upsurge of the Negro struggle over the past year and the resulting increased receptivity to radical ideas in the Negro community, the first experiences on the Militant subscription campaign have furnished this proof. The greatly increased interest in political questions and the high level of political consciousness among the Negro people is apparent to anyone who has gotten subs in the black ghetto in the first weeks of the sub campaign.

Most of the comrades in New York approached the campaign with a certain skepticism and perhaps even fear, fear of the unknown. Although we were fully aware of the Negro upsurge and had seen it reflected in picket lines and rallies, we couldn't be sure that the Militant would get a much friendlier response than in recent years.

We decided, in view of our election campaign in Brooklyn this year, where we are running the only Negro candidate for Councilman-At-Large, to concentrate our efforts in the Bedford-Stuyvesant community, the Negro area in Brooklyn. A list of low-income city housing projects was secured, and several of these projects, in the Negro area, each containing from 1 to 2 thousand families, were selected for our work.

We scheduled our first large-scale mobilization for a Sunday morning at 10 A.M. On that Sunday about 30 youth and party comrades collectdd 200 introductory subscriptions and sold nearly 100 single copies of the Militant in about 2½ to 3 hours of work. In the project where we achieved the best results, we now have over 70 subscriptions, which represents nearly 10% of the doors knocked on, and well over 10% of the families we got a chance to speak to. At the conclusion of the drive we hope to have 100 subs in each of several large projects, and from these introductory subscriptions we can begin to develop important contacts in the Negro community.

We have found that the paper's coverage of the Washington March, particularly the censored speech of John Lewis, is very instrumental in getting subs. The articles on the need for armed self-defense and the proposal for a Freedom Now party have also gotten an extremely friendly response.

A factor which has helped us to increase our sub rate has been the prior distribution of sample copies of the Militant at the projects. When we return we have less of a problem trying to catch the attention of people, since they have already seen the newspaper and will listen more readily to the introductory subscription offer.

The residents of the ghetto have responded in a very friendly way to the Militant, as a socialist, working class newspaper committed unequivocally to the total emancipation of the Negro people. They have shown a deep and immediate understanding of many of the transitional demands we have raised in our press.

For the first time in years, we are getting a friendlier response in a working class area than in a general liberal intellectual and student area. This is not to suggest that we discount the response in the student and intellectual area, but that we are enthusiastic and inspired by the response to our program among an advanced section of the working class, where it counts most of all. The branch is enthusiastically proceeding to fill its entire quota of 1,000.

Signed: F.M.

* * *

SAN DIEGO

September 17, 1963

Dear Comrades:

After our first door-to-door sub selling campaign, which netted the enclosed 11 subscriptions, the San Diego branch feels we should increase our bundle from 30 to 75 papers -- we ran out in two hours.

We want to keep up the pace and show Chicago that we also know how to sell subs -- even in a Bircher town.

Signed: John H.

* * *

MADISON, WISCONSIN

September 16, 1963

Dear Comrades:

Please double our Militant bundle order from 40 to 80 effective as soon as you receive this note.

I sold three subs on the bus out to Madison. I now have 12 and will send them along in a day or ~~two~~ when I get a check made out.

Good luck!

Signed: Walter

From the Detroit Branch

Sept. 15, 1963

Dear Karolyn:

Enclosed are our subs for the week. We had 13 comrades out for an average of 1½ hours each -- more than 1 sub for every 15 minutes.

We also sold 38 single copies which was almost all we had. There are 77 subscriptions this week which is more than what we got door-to-door all through last year's campaign. Seventy-five of our last years total of 150 were obtained at forums.

Everyone is greatly encouraged at the response.

Signed: N.L.

* * *

From the Cleveland Branch

September 3, 1963

Dear Karolyn:

Please send us a batch of the special 50 cent sub blanks airmail. We have a very special forum, first in our fall series Saturday night, and want to be sure we have sub blanks for it.

I'm trying hard to restrain myself in making predictions, but just between you and me, this is one campaign I believe we'll complete over the quota we accepted. Prospects look good both in terms of contacts and avenues in the Negro community, the mood and struggles going on, and -- for once -- the possibilities of mobilizing manpower, both comrades and friends, to do the selling.

September 9, 1963

Dear Karolyn:

The sub blanks did not arrive in time for our forum but we had such a good attendance -- biggest we've had in our headquarters, couldn't seat all even with borrowed chairs -- that we launched our special sub drive anyway, changing the price on old sub blanks we had on hand.

A big poster at the front of the room announcing the special introductory sub offer and a good plug by the chairman, followed by some hustling afterwards by some of the comrades, resulted in the sale of eight new subs.

This so inspired some of our youth that three of them and two contacts went out for an hour the next day and sold three subs and 25 single copies of the paper -- using the August 19 issue, since we have not received a later copy.

The new subs, by the way, were sold to some of the leading militant activists in the local Negro C.O.R.E. and periphery, who were present at the forum.

POLITICAL CAMPAIGNS OTHER THAN ELECTORAL

by George Breitman

Twice this year the Detroit Branch has almost undertaken campaigns of a somewhat different character. Perhaps other branches can benefit from our experience and adapt it to their own circumstances.

In the spring it became clear that the Detroit city administration was going to introduce and pass an ordinance establishing a city income tax (1%, minus minor deductions based on the number of dependents). It was a matter of routine for us to publicly oppose the ordinance and have our organizer appear at a hearing to denounce the tax, as had been done on previous occasions when the tax was being considered.

We thought, however, that the dissatisfaction with the tax would be so great that something besides making the record would be justified. So we made a serious study of the city charter (local constitution) and discovered that it contained provisions that might be used to mobilize action against the proposed tax and perhaps even defeat it. The charter had been adopted toward the end of, or shortly after, the period of "progressivism" around World War I, when efforts were made to democratize state and local governments through provisions for initiative, referendum and recall.

The referendum provision in the Detroit city charter contains the following procedure which may be used to obtain the repeal of any city ordinance or law: Within 30 days after the ordinance is adopted by the city council and signed by the mayor, the collection of a certain number of petitions asking repeal compels the city council to either repeal the ordinance or to submit it to the voters of the city for a referendum vote.

The number of petitions, signed by registered voters is 10% of the votes cast for mayor in the previous mayoralty election. This would be 36,000 valid signatures, and our experience with previous petitioning locally indicates that this would mean around 60,000 signatures, to allow for bad and challengeable signatures and be on the safe side. In a 30-day period, that would average 2,000 signature a day.

We discussed the possibilities very carefully and soberly. We knew that the collection of so many signatures would require organization of the campaign before the ordinance was passed, because no time of the 30 days allowed could be wasted. So far

as we could discover, this provision had never been used to knock out a law, but that did not settle the matter for us, because (1) we knew this particular law would be very unpopular and (2) we have some very experienced and able petitioners. We also believed that it would be ten times easier to collect petitions for such an issue than petitions to place a revolutionary socialist party on the state ballot. (The last time we did that, in 1959, we got around 32,000 signatures in around six weeks -- but that required travelling all over the state, while the petitions now being considered would all be collected on home ground, in Detroit alone.)

We weighed the question: should we run such a campaign in the name of the party, or should we seek to help organize a non-partisan committee through which we and others would work? A minority of the branch members favored the first course, pointing out that such a campaign in the name of the party would greatly redound to its credit. But a majority decided that it probably would not be possible to obtain the necessary signatures if it was done in the party's name, and that the campaign could be undertaken only if other forces would join us in it, which necessarily meant a non-partisan campaign; they also felt that even in this way the party would still get a lot of credit because we would become known as the real initiators and main sparkplugs.

Having decided this, we began to explore more than a month before the probable time that the tax ordinance would be voted on. For the sake of brevity, I will condense this aspect, although it was very revealing. Nobody, among the radical and progressive groups we approached, was willing to collaborate. The main reason was political -- even the most progressive elements, willing to work together with us on occasions in the labor movement, were unwilling to get into a fight with the newly-elected liberal Democratic city administration "until it has had a chance to prove itself." A secondary reason was pessimism that a project of this type could be carried out successfully.

Reluctantly, therefore, we decided we must abandon the project. A few weeks later the tax was adopted.

Around Labor Day we began to consider a second project involving petitions. It arose because of the combination of three things:

(1) In the recent period, during which the Negro community has been giving rise to a great variety of new movements, a group has been organized, with a small weekly paper, that seems

to us to represent the most militant section of the Negro community. Its main emphasis is on Negro representation in government, and it has been falsely denounced by the press, government agencies and old-line Negro leaders as "racist" because of its adherence to the principle that Negroes have the right to organize and fight for Negro candidates in areas where they are a majority. Unfortunately, their main arena so far has been in the Democratic Party; but at the same time they are more critical of the Democratic Party, openly, than any other Negro group in the city, and have been moving in an independent direction. Watching them, we have been watching also for some project which would enable us to approach them for joint activity (naturally, outside the Democratic Party).

(2) Our previous study of the city charter had shown us that in addition to the referendum provision it contains an initiative provision -- a method whereby voters can introduce an ordinance or law and compel a vote on it. It works like this: Instead of petitions with 10% of the vote cast for mayor, it requires only 5% -- in this case, only 18,000 valid signatures (or 30,000 to be on the safe side). They can be collected over any period of time (not just during 30 days). However, they must be submitted at least 120 days before a regular election. The latest regular election in 1963 is April 1, so if the proposal was to be voted on at all before 1964 the petitions would have to be submitted by December 1 of this year. After they are submitted and validated, the city council has to act on the proposed law, either pass it or vote it down. If they vote it down, they must submit it to the voters for action in a referendum.

(3) At the end of August, the Wagner administration under pressure, introduced a city minimum wage bill in New York City, with all signs pointing to its passage. (It was passed in Sept.)

These three factors clicked together in our minds and produced the following idea:

Let us approach the leaders of the above-mentioned militant Negro group and propose that they, with our collaboration, organize a non-partisan committee, to be headed by them but from which no group would be excluded, to collect the 30,000 signatures to place a minimum wage law on the city books by Dec. 1.

The advantages to us would be numerous and obvious. It would initiate collaboration with a group we are most interested in, which has access to over 30 Negro churches where their paper is distributed every Sunday. It would open up a new method of independent political action encouraging rank and file

initiative from below; once achieved, this provision would be taken up for other laws. And so on.

The advantages for the Negro group would also be many. For one thing, it would utterly demolish the charges of "racism" directed against them, because this would be a law affecting all low-paid workers. (At the same time, the fact is that it would affect mostly Negro workers.) It would enhance their general prestige enormously and put them in undisputed leadership of the Negro community; the other Negro groups would either have to follow them on this or discredit themselves.

I think I should also mention some of the problems:

(1) The New York City law is much better than the national or state minimum wage laws. It covers hundreds of thousands of workers not included by national or state laws, and its minimum is a little higher (\$1.25 this year and \$1.50 next year for the city law as compared with \$1.15 this year and \$1.25 next year for the others). Nevertheless, it is still inadequate by SWP standards. But in the end we decided that it was necessary to think of the Detroit law on the lines of the New York law; to begin with a higher minimum would make it more difficult to get support.

(2) There is the question of constitutionality. Only one city had ever passed a minimum wage law before New York; that was Phoenix, and its law was declared unconstitutional by the state courts. New York's law will also be tested in the courts after it goes into effect. Expert legal advice is needed in such situations, because the law must be drawn up before the petitions can be collected. (Michigan, the so-called welfare state, does not even have a state minimum wage law; this would strengthen the move for a local law, but complicates the legal problems.)

(3) Any group conducting such a campaign would have to prepare itself for all kinds of harassment. In Michigan the Democratic Party as well as the Republican Party would be violently opposed to such an initiative petition movement. Passage of a law like New York's would cost the capitlists millions of dollars each year. Opposition from these forces would be much stronger and better organized than to our ordinary campaigns to put the party on the ballot.

This does not exchaue the list of problems by any means, but I want to keep this report short.

Anyhow, we approached the leaders of the Negro group and outlined our proposal. They showed interest and asked for time to discuss and think it over. At the end of a week they said they agreed it was a worthwhile project and intimated they would support it if it was started but that they could not at this time undertake the leadership of it themselves. They did not tell us the reasons for this decision. It was unfortunate that the decision had to be made so soon, but ~~the~~ Dec. 1 deadline required a quick decision if it was to be on the ballot before 1964.

Following this, the branch had to decide whether to go ahead without the Negro group. With great reluctance we decided not to (and a quarter of the branch voted to go ahead by ourselves). We have not given up the project for good; maybe we will be able to revive it or something like it in 1963 or 1964.

This report is submitted for the consideration of other party branches and locals in the hope that it will inspire some new thought and investigation about methods of political action other than election campaigns. (The two, of course, can be combined, and in this particular case we also considered the possibility of running a candidate for city council next spring who would be able to campaign in the name of the SWP, in favor of the minimum wage, among other things.)

Sept. 18, 1962

THE DETROIT FORUM

by George Breitman

The Friday Night Socialist Forum in Detroit has been in continuous existence since November, 1954 -- almost eight years. As its name indicates, it meets virtually every week; on an average, 45 times a year. The total number of forums since the beginning is therefore around 350.

When it began, there was considerable doubt in the branch that it could be sustained as a regular institution. We did not have many experienced speakers; our periphery was small; and the witch hunt then was at its height, with FBI and local police often stationing themselves at our door to intimidate people from entering. But the forum was able to survive, and now has become such a central feature of the branch's activity that no one ever thinks of doing without it.

A shortage of qualified speakers can be solved in two ways. One is to obtain speakers from new sources, the other is to develop speakers from the forces you already have. We began by concentrating on the second method.

A certain amount of psychological inertia had to be overcome. There were many good and active members who just could not imagine themselves as speakers. They were used to situations where only a few branch leaders, usually NC members, were the branch spokesmen and educators; these leaders specialized in speaking for the party, and other members left them to this specialization. In addition, many members were genuinely inexperienced as speakers and lacked self-confidence in this field.

Unfortunately, no one in the branch was skilled at teaching public speaking. So there was no alternative but to decide to go ahead, pick speakers, find suitable subjects, give them some advice and encouragement, and let them have the floor.

It worked out quite well. Almost every member of the branch gave at least one forum during the first year. Most of the speakers were at least adequate, some turned out to be good, and others proved to have a real bent for public speaking. Some who had never given a public talk before we started the forum today compare favorably as speakers with anybody in the party.

(There is a lot of talent in the party. In a different period, like the 30's, this talent would have had an opportunity to develop in mass organizations and activity; in recent years

the soil for development has been harder to locate. In many cases we can discover these talents and put them to use for the party only by looking for them and giving them an initial prod.)

We could not rely only on branch members to speak at the forum: first, there aren't enough to go around, and second, there is the problem of "overexposure" (even the best speaker can outstay his welcome and the audience wants new faces once in a while). Occasionally there are national tours, but very occasionally. So we had to turn to non-members, which includes two categories: people who are sympathetic to our ideas, and people who aren't. We found some of the former among people who attended the forum, and had to go out and hunt for the latter.

It should be explained that the Friday Night Socialist Forum is not an SWP institution. It meets in the same hall where the SWP meets, which is named Eugene V. Debs Hall, and it is a forum where socialist and radical ideas get a friendly hearing, but it is not a party forum and is not run as one. With this approach, we sought out various people and invited them to participate in symposiums, debates or regular forum talks. It took a while to break the ice, but once that was done it was easier, because thereafter it was always possible to tell prospective speakers that Mr. So-and-So and Prof. This-or-That, who are not socialists, had already spoken at Debs Hall.

So we have been able to present many non-members and non-socialists drawn from various quarters and circles -- union leaders, union rank-and-filers, teachers, students, lawyers, preachers, journalists and representatives of different organizations and political tendencies. On the whole, attendance is higher at such forums because the speaker hasn't been heard before or because he has some standing in the community. A rough guess would be that the forum has non-SWP speakers at least once a month.

There is always a problem about what non-SWP members will say. This is easily taken care of when there is a debate or panel discussion in which one of us participates. It's a little more awkward when the speaker has the floor alone and presents ideas strongly opposed to our own. Then we have to be content with countering their ideas during the discussion from the floor, which works out satisfactorily most of the time, but not always. Even if we don't always have the last word, however, it has become known in Detroit that we have a real forum, where one can really hear more than one point of view.

One obstacle we had to combat concerned expectations about the size of the audience. Most branches have public meetings irregularly or not frequently -- usually when there is a national tour, and on other special occasions. They throw a lot of energy into promoting ~~these~~ meetings and aim at a maximum turnout. This is good and proper. But a regular forum is not a mass meeting. Expectations of big turnouts can lead to big disappointments if you view a weekly forum as you do an occasional "mass" meeting. Weekly forums require regularity of effort, more sometimes than others, but you cannot sustain maximum effort every week. Your expectations should be more modest and realistic.

Attendance at our forum varies, depending on the subject, speaker, weather, time of year, amount of Friday night competition, amount of advertising, size of mailing, number of leaflet distributions, etc. The low attendance is in the 20's, which we rate as "poor" and which corresponds roughly to the size of our branch. (Unlike attendance at branch meetings, attendance at forums is not compulsory, except for four members who take turns each month serving on the headquarters committee; but most responsible members attend forums regularly.) Attendance in the 30's we consider "fair", in the 40's and 50's "good", and in the 60's "very good." We have had audiences of more than 70 only a few times.

Sometimes there are no new people in the audience, sometimes a dozen or even a score. After eight years there are hundreds of people who have attended the forum at one time or another, and thousands who know about it.

The main benefits and advantages of the forum are:

1) It provides a place where **contacts**, regularly and frequently, can come into touch with us as a group and as individuals.

2) It is a good method for educating contacts (and also for further educating ourselves, both as listeners and as people who prepare and give talks.)

3) It is a source of income (not a major source, but enough to be important in maintaining a headquarters.)

4) It is our best avenue for the sale of literature.

5) It provides a certain amount of social life for the movement and its periphery.

6) Our ability to maintain such an institution (unrivaled by any other radical group in the state) enhances the prestige of the party.

The above report is not intended as self-congratulatory bragging about the Detroit Branch. Its aim is to ask other branches and locals of comparable or greater strength why they do not have such a forum and to encourage their members to explore the possibilities.

Sept. 20, 1962