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PARTY WORK IN THE YOUNGSTOWN NAACP

By Chalmers Alexander

Being the most severely oppressed minority in America, the Negro masses have begun to show a tendency towards developing a revolutionary spirit. For this reason, it is important that our party begin to intensify its efforts to utilize that tendency by recruiting, directing, and developing Negro militants for leadership in the class struggle.

This task can best be accomplished through trade unions and Negro mass organizations. Our work in the trade unions has shown a marked degree of success in some areas, but activity in the largest Negro mass organization in America, the NAACP, has not developed to any appreciable extent. There must be a reason and a remedy for this, which we shall try to determine through an examination of the characteristics of the NAACP.

The leadership of the national and state organizations is composed of groups of bourgeois and petty-bourgeois Negroes, and white liberals, who control and direct the activities of the NAACP in an extremely bureaucratic manner. The local, or city branches are in the main manned in a similar manner. Recently, the membership has grown by leaps and bounds, but by and large, takes no part in shaping the policies of the organization. The proletarian section of the Negro race has been excluded from activity in the organization because the struggle for equality for Negroes has been carried on in what is to the workers, a remote way, through legalistic means. There have been practically no mass demonstrations and no pressure developed from the masses. The struggle has been confined to court fights, legislative and congressional lobbies, while the workers and small business Negroes, the most powerful section of the Negro race, have been maneuvered into becoming the "cheering section" of the struggle.

The Youngstown branch of the Party realized the conditions related above, and seized the opportunity to gain a dominating influence in the Youngstown branch of the NAACP through its Negro fraction. The Negro comrades were able to take over because of the failure of the bureaucrats to establish a base large enough to keep them in power. With the aid of Negro trade unionists, their wives, and friends, the Negro comrades were able to elect as Chairman of the local branch, a trade unionist, and to place themselves and some of the white comrades in other important posts which will enable the party to be instrumental in shaping the policies and directing the activities of that branch.

The membership has become disillusioned because of its inactivity and the very obvious use of the branch by the bureaucrats to advance their personal interests. Our first task has been to formulate a program which will show the membership that the organization is really theirs, and to stimulate them to activity. We were able to take hold and handle an issue which aided the movement in that direction, viz: The City Chief of Police assaulted without any justification three Negro workers. The Labor and Industry Committee, headed

by one of our comrades, demanded of the Mayor that the chief be removed from office. While the Mayor hedged, the issue was taken into the CIO Council via the anti-discrimination Committee of the Council which is headed by another comrade. A second committee waited upon the Mayor, who in the meantime is trying to sidetrack the issue into a race-relations committee of his own choosing. At the same time the NAACP is pressuring its Legal Redress Committee to prefer criminal charges against the Chief through the courts. In this way we tie the issue up with the labor movement, and at the same time gain publicity to show the Negro masses that the NAACP is an organ of struggle.

Our work in the NAACP is comparatively recent, but already we have made the following progress in the local branch:

1. We are beginning to arouse the organization out of its impotent inactivity and convert it into an organ for struggle.
2. We are moving the petty-bourgeois element into the background and are activating the most militant Negro trade unionists into NAACP work.
3. We are, as much as possible, tying up NAACP work with the trade union movement.
4. We are making the mass of Negroes conscious of the NAACP as an organ for struggle.
5. We are making contacts for recruitment and projection of the influence of the Party into the NAACP.

Because of our experiences and accomplishments in Youngstown, and because of the similarity of conditions in many other branches, and because the Negro soldier will return with a militant spirit hitherto unknown, looking for the NAACP to be his organization of struggle, I am convinced that in this period the NAACP can become an important base for recruiting and putting into action many phases of our program for revolutionary struggle on a national scale.

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THE LOS ANGELES ELECTION CAMPAIGN OF 1945

During the war our local movement has had a steady growth. In the last year the pace was accelerated; We were able to organize two new branches, South Side and West Side, and found it necessary to divide the overgrown Central Branch into the East Side and Central.

This growth of our party gave us the organizing forces for fruitful participation in a municipal election campaign.

In addition, the success of our Militant subscription drives gave us a new sympathetic periphery with whom we had direct and regular contact.

I. The Political Character of the Campaign

Having concluded that it was possible to participate in the election campaign, we consulted with the National Office for their agreement and to decide the political character of the campaign. We first conceived it as a "record" campaign with a programmatic statement of our position on the war as the central theme, as in the Carlson campaign in Minnesota. However, the latter campaign and especially the trial of the 18 had fully achieved this task. We concluded that the next step in this period of growing unrest in the labor movement was to develop an agitational campaign on the basis of our transitional program.

The section membership met to discuss our participation in the campaign and its political character as recommended by the Local Executive Committee in consultation with the Political Committee, and to plan the organizational work of the campaign. A campaign committee was set up and we turned to our first task:

II. The Petition Drive

Our first job was to meet the legal requirements for putting our candidate on the ballot. We had to secure the signatures of 500 registered voters on our nominating petitions and file them with the \$200 fee required long enough before the deadline to give us time to supplement the petition if too many of our signatures were disqualified.

Comrade Collins, in charge of the petition drive, immediately called a meeting of the comrades assigned to circulate petitions, and instructed them on the technicalities to be observed. Experience quickly demonstrated that the most fruitful places to circulate the petitions were the areas we had already found best in the Militant subscription campaign six months earlier -- the housing projects and the Negro neighborhoods.

Within three weeks we filed 930 signatures. The elections office disqualified 340, but that still left us more than the required

number, and we were certified for the ballot.

Our experience in the petition drive indicated the importance of conducting an intensive drive to register all our friends as a first step in any election campaign.

III. Election Rallies

Our first election rally on February 3rd opened our campaign two months before the primary and well in advance of the other candidates. With an audience of 130 persons, we held a brief meeting with three speakers, then adjourned for dancing and refreshments. The collection, consisting largely of election pledges of members, totaled \$371.70.

The election campaign gave us the best opportunity to experiment with public neighborhood meetings organized not with the forces of the whole section, but by our separate branches. In each of the neighborhood rallies, halls were rented; leaflet distributions, ads, contact work, decorations, etc., were handled by the branch.

In San Pedro we had the largest meeting we have ever held there, with approximately 40 persons present.

The Watts rally, organized by our South Side Branch, marked a new and very important development in our local work in that two of our Negro comrades made their debut as party speakers. As in San Pedro, we could not expect the larger audiences we have at section-wide meetings, but were quite satisfied with our success in holding a modest neighborhood meeting. This rally had an audience of approximately 30.

The West Side Rally was characterized by careful advance arrangements to bring aircraft workers to the meeting. Here we had about 50 workers.

Our final rally on April 1st was again a section-wide affair with an attendance of over 100. The well-organized usher and guard system and the chorus contributed to the success of the meeting, but a major feature of this as of the Watts rally, was the radio broadcast by our candidate and the air of expectancy created by the lapse of time until her arrival from the radio station.

IV. Other Election Audiences

The moment we qualified for the ballot, we began to receive invitations for our candidate to speak with the others to various audiences. As we were not familiar with these organizations, the size or type of audiences they could provide, we decided to cover as many as possible.

Miscellaneous organizations included the following:

<u>Organization</u>	<u>Attendance</u>
Los Angeles Women's Club	50
15th District Democratic Club	50
Business Women's Club	50
Greater Hollywood Taxpayers' Ass'n.	50 - 200

At each of these meetings we received some expressions of sympathy despite the generally unfavorable composition of the audience, and no voicing of hostility except at the Taxpayers' Association, where the chairman had to rap for order when our speaker spoke in defense of the Japanese-Americans who are being persecuted in California.

<u>Forums</u>	<u>Attendance</u>
Public Affairs Forum	75
Towne Forum	<u>150</u>
	225

At both of these meetings we were permitted speaking time and a question period. Although we had no known friends in either of these audiences, our candidate's speech was interrupted several times by applause at the Public Affairs Forum, and at the Towne Forum several of the speakers for opposing candidates found it necessary because of the interest aroused by the speech of the Trotskyist candidate to refer to it in their remarks. For example: Mayor Bowron's representative began by pointing out that before his candidate had been elected the previous speaker would have been picked up by the "Red Squad," and finally concluded "so vote for Mayor Bowron."

<u>Unions</u>	<u>Attendance</u>
Consolidated Steel Local	100
General Motors UAW Local 216	<u>100</u>
	200

We sent a written request for speaking time to many unions, but received no answers. Where we followed the written request with a personal request, we were granted time. Stressing our trade union and transitional programs we received a very warm response by these workers. This list could have been longer had we realized sooner how difficult it is to refuse a candidate who really wants to address the workers, time to speak. However, even in these unions where there was no follow up by us, the communication announcing our candidacy and requesting time to speak had value, as we have since discovered in a few cases, in raising questions by non-Stalinist workers on executive board's at least. In one such case a prominent Negro union leader, unsatisfied by the Stalinist answer; "We don't interview fascists!" sought out a Trotskyist trade unionist some time later to ask questions about our program.

<u>Political Groups</u>	<u>Attendance</u>
West Side Branch of Socialist Party	8
Jewish Zionist Group	<u>18</u>
	26

Here our candidate had the full evening for discussion, won their support, and a good contact from the latter.

<u>Negro Organizations</u>	<u>Attendance</u>
Shipyard Workers Committee for Equal Participation	75
Rendezvous Club Rally	75
	<u>150</u>

These organizations were completely dominated by Stalinists, but by pressing our way in with the aid of candidate fetishism, we succeeded in speaking despite all the efforts of the Stalinists and received a very friendly response. At the latter meeting a prominent Stalinist periphery front man who admitted our candidate despite his friends, remarked that he thought the "Communists were tough, but you Trotskyists are tougher!"

The total audience provided us by the election without effort or cost to us was approximately 800. Add this to our own audiences and we have 1150 people who, many for the first time, heard who we are and what we stand for.

V. Radio

For the first time locally our party "went on the air" with its program. We took one of the smaller stations for a series of four 15-minute Sunday evening broadcasts at 8:45 to 9 at a cost of \$108.00. With the program well prepared in advance, Comrade Collins opened the broadcast with professional competence, the candidate spoke, announcements were made directed toward our rallies, our literature and our headquarters, and the program closed with a recording of the International.

We had no way of knowing the size of the accidental radio audience on a small station, so we undertook to organize our own radio audience. We advertised on San Pedro and Wilmington bus lines for a month at a cost of \$53.50. We issued 10,000 cards with the radio schedule on one side and our election platform on the other, for distribution by the comrades in plants, on sub mobilizations, etc.

But most important, we organized listening parties in homes all over the city. Comrades invited neighbors, friends, workers from the shops, to informal gatherings at home to listen to the broadcast and to discuss. In some cases light refreshments were served. These small groups of contacts organized around our radio program established the ideal form of contact work. Approximately 35 listening parties were held altogether.

Supplementing these carefully organized listening parties, were spontaneous ones. Comrades with groups of friends would tune in and begin discussions without advance preparation. One comrade turned on the radio in his shop so all the workers heard our broadcast. Another comrade returning from an affair with his friends, tuned in with the simple comment; "I want you to hear the candidate I support," and reported that a deep impression was made.

In addition to our radio series, we bought two spot announcements on station KPAS the final week of the campaign, at a cost of \$14.40. And when Clifford Clinton, one of the candidates for Mayor, publicly announced an offer of free time on his radio programs to all his opponents, we took advantage of that means of being heard in five minute transmissions -- five times over KMTR, and once over a major station, KNX.

VI. Leaflets and Publicity

The quantity and quality of printed leaflets and cards advertising meetings and radio broadcasts, and leaflets on political questions and our program which we issued during the campaign constitute another major achievement of the campaign. The list of printed material below makes that clear:

1.	Leaflet advertising February 3 rally	--	
2.	" " San Pedro "	--	
3.	" " Watts "	--	21,000
4.	" " West Side "	--	
5.	" " final Embassy rally	--	
6.	" " May Day Meetings	--	5,000
7.	" on critical support of Bass	--	5,000
8.	" on support of Bass and Allen	--	5,000
9.	4-page platform	--	20,000
10.	Radio cards	--	10,000
11.	Bus cards	--	100
12.	Tabloid paper, Trotskyist campaigner	--	10,000

This total of 76,100 pieces of printed matter represents a tremendous mailing and distribution job by all our comrades.

When we consider that this activity was conducted in conjunction with the Militant subscription drive and its Red Sundays for the latter half of the election campaign, we can see that this was the most intensive period of activity we have ever experienced.

In addition to the printed matter we issued considerable mimeographed material; four issues of the "Trotskyist Campaigner," a special bulletin sent to a selected list; seven press releases to about 40 local newspapers; and two mailings on listening parties and their organization.

Finally, we bought a limited amount of paid newspaper advertising for the San Pedro, Watts, and May Day rallies, and for the final radio speech by our candidate.

Last, but by no means least important was the excellent coverage by the Militant of all phases of the campaign. This had the two-fold effect of bringing the news of the campaign regularly to thousands of new readers in this area, and of helping sell subscriptions to the Militant by making it possible to point to its news coverage of the local campaign.

VII. Our Critical Support of Bass and Allen

We entered the election campaign as the only active independent working-class participants, with complete apathy in the labor movement as a whole for the local elections. The CIO and AFL endorsed two different boss candidates and limited their participation to little more than endorsement. We thought that there was no movement of masses and that our campaign could be only a broad propaganda campaign touching only the vanguard.

However, through our presence in the election arena and through our work in the Negro neighborhoods, we discovered a mass interest in the candidacy of a Negro woman for City Council from the 7th District. We recognized the movement to elect Charlotta Bass as an expression of the needs and desires of the Negro people, the most radicalized section of the working-class in this period, for independent representation.

Mrs. Bass, publisher of a Negro newspaper, was nominated by a meeting of Negro organizations which had agreed in advance to unite behind a single candidate to campaign for Negro representation in the City Council. The united front committee meeting, however, was packed and dominated by the Stalinists, and the candidate selected was a stooge for them. In the Negro community she was distrusted by many. The Los Angeles Tribune, a Negro newspaper, withdrew its support of the united front candidate in a rather shamefaced way, and The Sentinel, the third major Negro newspaper in the community, gave her very critical support. But despite her record of betrayal, there was a strong sentiment among the Negro masses for her election on the grounds that the Negroes should have representation in the City Council.

Some of our Negro comrades and a few others at first opposed our proposed tactic of critical support to Bass on the basis of our programmatic struggle against her and the Stalinists. Such opposition from some of our newest comrades was almost a prerequisite for this tactic, since it clearly demonstrated that within our own ranks there was no question of programmatic confusion. We had only the task of teaching Bolshevik tactics, that is, in this instance, how we participate in the day-to-day progressive struggles of the masses and win them away from Stalinist and other misleaders.

After several discussions with our Negro comrades, discussions in the branches, consultation with the National Office, and a section membership meeting devoted to that question, we adopted the tactic.

The primary election demonstrated conclusively the correctness of our analysis of the Bass candidacy, since the size of her vote and the absence of other serious contenders for the Negro vote made clear the nature of the movement to elect her, and since some four out of five voters in her district demonstrated the critical nature of their support for her by refusing to vote for Mayor Bowron, whom she and the Stalinists endorsed. Moreover, the fact of the existence of a movement for independent representation was further demonstrated by the size of the vote for Fay Allen, Negro candidate for Board of Education. The same united front committee which had endorsed Bass found it necessary to endorse Fay Allen, for the same reason.

We continued our support in the runoff election, campaigning with leaflets, advertisements, speeches at our May Day rally in the Negro neighborhood, and in house to house campaigning with the Militant.

Moreover, in the runoff we broadened our campaign (since the Negro workers had already demonstrated their intention of voting for Bass and Allen) by calling for a broad united front of action to elect these candidates and by placing responsibility where it belonged, on the labor movement, the workers organizations.

While neither Bass nor Allen was elected, our participation with critical support of Bass and Allen, demonstrated in action our principles of support of the struggles of oppressed minorities and our clearcut programmatic intransigence. Our principled policy was in sharp contrast to the betrayal of the Stalinists, who gave lip service to support of Bass, but actually betrayed the movement for Negro representation. The CIO Council which the Stalinists dominate, endorsed Bass for City Council, but the Political Action Committee, which they also dominate, endorsed her white opponent Rasmussen. Moreover, neither through the Communist Political Association, nor the CIO, did the Stalinists mobilize workers, as they could have done, to elect Bass and Allen. Here, in this election, the Stalinists again subordinated the needs of the Negro masses to their own class collaborationist policy of actual support to capitalist politicians.

It is not too soon to recognize that our critical support of Bass and Allen was a milestone in the development of our Negro work. It injected us into the Negro community as an element to be reckoned with and to watch. The Stalinists clearly understood our tactic and fought it. They attempted to bar our candidate from speaking at several Negro workers meetings, and they succeeded in pressuring the manager of radio station KFAC into censoring all mention of our critical support of Bass from our broadcast. The anti-Stalinists among the Negro leaders in the community understood our tactic and welcomed it as a correct one. They developed a genuine interest in us and our ideas. We are continuing to reap the rewards of that correct tactic.

VIII. The Vote

We received 581 votes for our candidate for mayor. We recognize that these votes represent persons whom we were able to reach with our campaign and convince of the correctness of the Trotskyist program. We were permitted no political designation of our candidate on the ballot, so these votes could only have been conscious votes for socialism.

In the light of this, the vote breakdown is particularly interesting. The vote by councilmanic districts was as follows:

<u>District</u>	<u>Number</u>	<u>District</u>	<u>Number</u>
1	9	9	77
2	21	10	23
3	16	11	36
4	28	12	39
5	31	13	51

<u>District</u>	<u>Number</u>	<u>District</u>	<u>Number</u>
6	13	14	27
7	60	15	94
8	52		
			<u>577</u>
			#4 (on Missing Precint sheets)
		Total --	<u>581</u>

The first thing that is obvious from this breakdown, is that we penetrated every district of the city with our campaign. While our vote was small, in no district were we completely unknown. In the largest city in the country in area, that in itself is no mean achievement. We can probably credit this to our radio program and our distribution at plant gates to workers from all parts of the city.

The other important observation is that we received our greatest support in District 15, which includes San Pedro and Watts. The precinct breakdown, which is a little too detailed to repeat here, discloses that most of this vote came from San Pedro war workers housing projects and some from Watts projects which are predominantly Negro. The features of our campaign which were different in San Pedro than in other parts of the city were the bus advertising and the more intensive petition signing campaign.

The second largest district vote came in No. 9, which takes in Boyle Heights, with its predominantly Jewish and Mexican population. The size of the vote here was something of a surprise since we had not conducted a large part of our campaign activity in this neighborhood. However, here the considerable party activity of previous years probably played a role.

In Districts 7, 8, and 10 our vote was the result of our activities in the Negro community, since that is the neighborhood these districts comprise.

The vote, then, is confirmation of the correctness of our concentration on workers housing projects particularly in the Negro neighborhood, since such work gets results.

The extent to which our vote was affected by the designation of our candidate as the "Trotskyist" candidate cannot be determined conclusively, and there are different opinions on the subject based on different experiences. Some comrades in aircraft plants, dealing with workers new to the radical political movements, felt that the designation "Trotskyists" in our campaign limited our approach to wide layers of the working class. Others, working with more experienced CIO unionists and the radicalized Negro workers, found the designation no handicap, but rather an asset.

In this connection it should be pointed out that the emphasis on the term "Trotskyist" was no accident of the campaign. We considered the various possible advantages and disadvantages in advance, and

decided to characterize our candidate as the "Trotskyist" candidate instead of simply the candidate of the Socialist Workers Party because we felt "Trotskyist" more clearly defined us as internationalist and differentiated us from the Socialist Party, the Stalinists, etc.

IX. Conclusions and Perspectives

The experiences of our first local election campaign were extremely valuable, and will serve us in good stead in future campaigns. There are a number of propaganda devices we failed to use in this campaign and a number that we will use more effectively in the future. Our technique will improve. Financing was one of the weak points. Our campaign fund appeal mailing brought few returns, and there was inadequate follow up. Our financial records were not well kept. Regular financial reports during the campaign would undoubtedly have helped our handling of that aspect of the campaign, and we should remember that in the future.

Our major conclusion is that participation in the election campaign proved extremely fruitful in publicizing the party and its program and we must have a perspective of participation in future election campaigns whenever feasible. We are already investigating the possibilities for next year.

Our chief limitation in reaching the broadest sections of the working class was the general apathy of the labor movement in this election. When the development toward a Labor Party and independent labor political action takes place the fruitfulness of our participation in electoral activity will be increased a hundredfold.

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LOS ANGELES LOCAL ORGANIZER'S REPORT, July 1945

At this convention we conclude a year filled with great events. We celebrated the release of our 18 comrades from prison; and as the war in Europe drew to a close, we renewed contact once more with our European comrades with whom relations had been severed for so many years. With the growing revolutionary struggle in Europe and the increased militancy in the American working class the most favorable objective conditions exist for our parties growth and expansion.

The very fact that we are holding a convention instead of a membership conference is graphic testimony to the growth and maturity the party has achieved in the last year. Until now it has been possible to review and plan our work with the full membership assembled together. Now such a method would be awkward and we have taken the convention form of organization, enabling the comrades to participate more thoroughly through branch discussions and elected representatives. A little over a year ago we held a section conference and marked the addition of one new branch to our ranks, the South Side Branch. This year we have added two more branches, giving us a total of five. As will be seen in the financial report, initiations increased 212% over the previous year's figure.

The tremendous expansion of our forces has forced us to consider new organizational forms. Our old apparatus and administrative methods no longer suffice to meet the needs of this rapid expansion. Thus, the primary task of this convention is one of re-organization, shifting many responsibilities from the section Executive Committee to the branch Executive Committees. In this way, we shall facilitate and prepare for the even greater recruitment and expansion that lies ahead.

TRADE UNION WORK

The long period of work in the unions in which we functioned under very difficult conditions and under threat of bureaucratic reprisals has now given way to a new period. This has been carefully analyzed on a national and local scale. Los Angeles, once the open-shop city of the west, was on the way to being fully organized when the war began. With the collaborationist policies of the labor officialdom, this development was interrupted. Attempts to organize the new war industries ended in defeat or feeble compromises after the smashing of the North American strike. And with the Stalinist stranglehold on the CIO the trade unions lay dormant and prostrate before the rising cost of living and war profiteering. With the resurgence of the working class throughout the country, Los Angeles has not yet seen strikes in any of the major industries. The rising militancy is in its first subterranean process, in the growing opposition to the oppressive rule of the Stalinists and their co-bureaucrats. It is our task to organize and lead these struggles, and we have already begun. Our experience in the steel union will be reported to the convention. From this experience we saw once more that we can expect no blueprint on how to organize a left wing. We must take the forces at hand, and with a sober estimate of the existing relationship of forces, proceed to develop the struggle. The leadership and initiative in most cases will have to be supplied by us.

With 47% of our members in trade unions, we begin with thorough organization of our fractions. Two of these are meeting on a regular basis: auto-aircraft and steel. Our shipyard fraction two years ago was our largest. With transfers from this industry to others, it has been reduced to half its former size. Auto-aircraft is now our largest fraction built to a large extent with workers recruited from the industry rather than colonized comrades. The great struggles for unionization of the aircraft industry lie ahead and converge with the struggle against the effects of cutbacks. They will of necessity be militant ones. This fraction has increased its members 68% and we can see the development of small plant nuclei of two or more comrades. The functioning of these single plant groups should be watched for possibilities of new basic units of party organization.

Fractions to be constituted or re-organized are shipyard, garment, musicians, longshore, maritime, and a miscellaneous fraction for comrades who do not have the forces to constitute separate fractions.

Our political campaigns have broadened and developed the work of our trade union fractions. In the earliest stages the CRDC rallied militant forces together in the unions. The Election Campaign,

stimulating and voicing the militancy of the steel workers, aided them in their opening struggles. The militant subscription campaign developed good contacts for our fractions and where hundreds have been sold in the plants will help to organize the forces for the left wing. And finally the Anti-Fascist campaign pressed through the unions, has accelerated the process of left wing development. The successful political campaigns of the party will continue to play an important role in our trade union work.

To aid and direct our union fractions it becomes necessary to establish a well functioning trade union department for the section. This department will coordinate the work of the various fractions and assist comrades wherever necessary. It will undertake the organization of new fractions when these are feasible. With the establishment of this department, our fractions will be better organized and coordinated.

RECRUITMENT

Last fall we adopted a method of carefully organizing our contact work using the system of "hot lists" consisting of the closest contacts. The SEC began with a section "hot list" and set the pace for the branches. These lists were then worked on by the Executive Committees of the branches where they became a routine activity. By this method we succeeded immediately in increasing the rate of recruitment in the section.

We have developed some new and very effective methods of contact work. The most outstanding of these has been in the West Side Branch where small groups of contacts were organized in homes for classes, climaxed with recruitment of the group. Another interesting method was the listening parties organized during the election campaign. Both the West Side work with contact groups in homes and our radio listening parties closely converge on the building of our Militant Discussion Clubs as recommended by the National Plenum.

Thus with our Militant subscribers and shop contacts we should endeavor to build group discussion classes through which we can draw them closer to the Party and eventually recruit the best elements. The Basic Training Classes, originally conceived to meet the task of integration of new members, were broadened to include close contacts and also proved a source of recruitment.

Recruitment in the last year has been predominantly from among the workers. 63% of the new recruits in the last year belong to trade unions. 33% are women and we have recruited 10 Negroes and our first three Mexican comrades.

As we succeeded in the last year in more than doubling our rate of recruitment, we can now begin a recruiting campaign to more than double the pace we have already set. The convention should launch a local recruiting campaign with a goal of 50 new members by the end of the year, January 1st. Recruiting campaigns are possible when we have accumulated contacts over a period of time through our political campaigns and activity. We can step up the pace when recruitment has been established as a conscious element in all our

activity. Through the excellent campaigns of the winter and spring our "hot lists" have grown considerably. A goal of 50 new members in a recruiting campaign is realistic, and achieved, will be a great step forward.

COMPOSITION

Our membership has increased 52% in the last year. A comparative study of composition gives us the following approximate picture:

	<u>1943</u>	<u>1944</u>	<u>1945</u>
In Industry	64%	54%	45%
Office and Professional	11%	13%	16%
Women	34%	39%	41%

Ten comrades were dropped and one was expelled.

With 41% of our membership women; 54% of these are housewives, 21% are office and professional workers, and only 13% are in industry. The proportionate fall in industrial comrades can be accounted for in part by the recruitment of youth and students and the very important success we have had in recruiting the working class housewife with the worker in the shop. The revolutionary housewife is often in a position to work full or part time as a professional revolutionist. These comrades contribute heavily to all our activities. Distributions, organizing, office work, project work, is often handled by these comrades.

Absolute figures on composition will be given in the oral report of the organizer at the Convention. Let me note here that the process of proletarianization of the party has considerably deepened and taken root in the last year although our percent of industrial comrades has fallen; we have built our party with workers indigenous to their industry which more than compensates the shifts among some of our colonized comrades.

WORKERS OF OPPRESSED MINORITIES

In the past we have succeeded in recruiting a considerable number of Negro workers to the party but we have had great difficulty in integrating them as members. Making the first step toward becoming a black and white party is of course the most difficult. But as we sum up this past year's activity we can see that we have the beginning of a strong corp of Negro comrades who have developed as active revolutionists and thus a door to the Negro worker as a whole has been opened.

Through the election campaign we succeeded in developing for the first time in Los Angeles some Negro speakers. And through this campaign, our anti-fascist campaign, and our Militant subscription drives we have broadened our base among the Negro workers far more securely than in any other section of the working class. Our press releases seldom go unnoticed in the local Negro press. At all our meetings we now have Negro workers in the audience.

We have three discussion groups in the Negro neighborhood, in Watts, on Central Avenue, and in San Pedro. The West Side Branch is now working on a meeting for their Negro Militant subscribers. We are

beginning to become recognized in the Negro community as a whole as a party which stands with them not only programmatically, but in their immediate and local struggles. Our tactic of critical support to Charlotta Bass in the municipal election demonstrated our willingness to go through their experiences with them. To develop and accelerate the very promising beginning we have made in this field we have put a leading comrade in full charge. It may be possible for us to look forward to our next new branch being established in the Negro neighborhood.

With the recruitment of three new Mexican comrades we have the possibility, with their assistance, of developing our propaganda and agitation in the direction of the large Mexican population in this city. We have already many Mexican subscribers to the Militant and have begun to interest some of our Militant contacts in the paper of the Mexican section, Lucha Obrera. It is possible for us to obtain further literature supplies in Spanish from our Mexican section and by this work, aid in recruiting Mexican workers in Los Angeles and aid financially the work and activity of the Mexican section.

With the developing struggle against American fascists, we have great opportunities of renewing our work and increasing our recruitment in the Jewish neighborhoods. Our recent anti-fascist street corner meeting in Boyle Heights gave us a picture of the militant response we can expect from the Jewish workers and youth who are most alive to the danger of fascism.

THE BRANCHES

The basic and most powerful unit of the party is the branch. At this time we can report that notwithstanding a host of problems and weaknesses, 5 secure and well-established branches now exist. We have had five branches before, yet these have never consisted of as indigenous neighborhood groupings, nor the sizeable forces, as now.

To realize the necessary re-organization of work, we shall need strong leadership in the Branch Executive Committees. The branches have already assumed many responsibilities. Educationals, classes, and even public meetings have been successfully organized by branches. Recruitment and contact groups have been organized and developed. The Literature department proposes a shift of considerable responsibility for this work to the branches. And in the Section on finances in this report we propose to increase the responsibility of each branch for party finances.

CENTRAL BRANCH

The Central Branch is still the largest from which will continue to shoot new groups for more indigenous branches. This branch has experienced growth in many directions and is second in the Section in recruitment. The weakness is still in its administration and finances. Although the largest branch, it is only second in finances.

EAST SIDE BRANCH

The most important development in the East Side Branch has been the major role it has played in the development of our youth group. The East Side Branch has proved to be well organized and active and has set the pace for the Section in obtaining regular donations from sympathizers. This branch should play an important part in the development of our Mexican work, and agitation in Jewish districts. It must look toward building contact groups, and Militant Discussion Clubs in the Eastside proper.

SOUTH SIDE BRANCH

The building of the South Side Branch has great importance for our Section because it is located in the heart of industrial Los Angeles. It's industrial base is primarily in Auto and Steel. Yet it is here that we have had our greatest turn-over in membership. Of the ten comrades dropped in the Section six were dropped from the South Side and one was expelled. We must analyze the reasons for this turn-over. This branch was built primarily with advanced union militants, accustomed to the broader trade union milieu of struggle when stymied by the collaborationist policies of the labor bureaucracy and primarily the Stalinists who control the CIO, turned to the revolutionary movement. Yet they had not the political development to work patiently for a longer perspective and with fitful tries fell by the way-side or turned opportunist as in the case of the worker we expelled. The best of these union militants we fully integrated and they now undertake the building of the left wing in the developing struggles against the union officialdom. This turnover, of course, was aided by secondary factors such as the closing of the plant in which most of them had mobilized around the party. The shutdown of G.M., the Trotskyist stronghold, was a blow not to be underestimated. Now with its re-opening on a reconverted basis and with forces once more in the plant, we can hope for the revival of the great U.A.W., G.M. tradition.

With a new period beginning in trade union struggles we can expect to recruit, and through these struggles succeed in teaching and integrating the militants. We have hundreds of auto and steel subscribers. Our party is well-known and respected. Though we have had periods of tough sledding our future work is indeed very promising.

The Southside branch like San Pedro and the Central branches, has made great progress in its work among our new Negro subscribers. Having recruited 4 Negroes they have also organized a Militant Discussion Club in the important Negro and Mexican community of Watts.

WEST SIDE BRANCH

The West Side Branch is our newest and most vital branch. Recruits are made in batches and new contact classes begin after each group is won to the party. Although it has only existed for about half a year, it has recruited 36% of all our Section recruited in the past year. This branch has given us our first real base in the aircraft industry. The fresh new layers of workers from the middle west can combine the various stages of development of the working class into one process. They can become union and class conscious and revolutionary together.

In the West Side Branch can be seen the outlines of future branches based on a more narrow neighborhood location. With contacts being made in many small towns the possibility of dividing this branch appears.

SAN PEDRO BRANCH

The San Pedro Branch, which for a long time was considerably isolated has now developed a very excellent periphery through their subscription campaign and in the Longshore and Shipyard unions. With the recruitment of some new Negro comrades, possibilities of growth are much greater than at any time in the history of this branch. The San Pedro Branch has also proven to be the best organized and leads the Section in the conduct of its campaigns and activities. Although it is only our third largest branch, it has the highest pledges in the Section.

THE YOUTH

For the first time since the split with the Shachtmanites five years ago, we have a youth movement. Only this time, we really have youth. Mostly of high school age, these energetic young students come to the party to learn, not only from the great Marxist literature, but also to learn from experience by playing an active part in all our campaigns and activity. The Socialist Youth Club will play a great role in training cadres of the revolutionary party.

We have begun discussion on the relations of the youth movement to the party. Continuing these nationally and locally, and by simplifying these relations to enable experience to teach us more, our formal problems will be solved correctly. In the meantime we must continue to give all the aid and guidance from the Section that is possible.

The Socialist Youth Club developed as a youth movement in the Eastside of Los Angeles. With possibilities now developing for a branch of the youth in the Westside, we can look forward to a youth movement expanding as a city-wide organization. We have attracted and can win many more youth to our cause for it is to them that the new world will belong.

CAMPAIGNS

We have learned the campaign method of activity in the full sense of the word in the past year. Our many campaigns, financial, Militant subscription, CRDC, electoral, and now our anti-fascist campaign have shown us the tremendous value of the Bolshevik campaign principle. Setting ourselves a goal, developing branch competition and planning the work from beginning to end, has enabled us to accomplish far more than would otherwise be possible. Our tremendous expansion in the past year has largely been made possible by our excellent campaign style of work. It is in this way that we have utilized most fully all our forces. Our campaigns have proven to be very successful and where quotas were established they have been invariably surpassed. No movement in the working class has met with such tremendous success with their campaigns as has ours. Goals which seemed

to be "fantastic" when originally conceived have proven to be easy of accomplishment. The success of our campaigns have been assured by the careful organization and untiring energies of our comrades both nationally and locally. The election campaign, the most ambitious we have conducted in Los Angeles, made us known to many new thousands of workers and opened the door to the recruitment of many new members. With the help of the National Office we were able within a few months to bring our views to a far wider audience than we have reached previously. With the writing of this report we are in the heat of another campaign, our anti-fascist struggle. We can already see far-reaching results from this work and it will be studied at the Section convention.

EDUCATIONAL WORK

This aspect of our work is being reported separately by our Educational Director. Here I wish to make the following general observations: At the last Section conference we discussed the rapid rate of recruitment and the problems of establishing a Teaching Staff large enough to handle the work of integration. The Teaching Staff and the Basic Training Courses our new teachers organized were a tremendous success. Study in the movement was considerably intensified, particularly among our women comrades. Individual work on projects with the aid and direction of the Educational department are preparing comparatively new comrades for leadership in our growing movement. Individual study groups have developed even spontaneously and these comrades who have shown serious desire to prepare themselves for our struggles ahead will be given every assistance possible by the S.E.C. and B.E.C's.

The summer school, a project we had long hoped to establish is to be realized this summer. From the early registration that has taken place it is apparent that we shall have a well represented west coast summer school. We have now the opportunity of developing more rapidly and into closer life with our movement many of our contacts and new members and we should try to make our first summer school such a success that it will guarantee future projects. The classes are being carefully organized and the sports, entertainment, and life of the camp are being worked out in advance. We will not only have the benefit of concentrated work in Marxist education but shall have the opportunity to live in the communist spirit.

ADMINISTRATION

The rapid expansion of our movement has made difficult the administrative aspects of our work. Previously, we had achieved a high degree of efficiency giving careful attention to details. But in reaching out to achieve the "impossible" we were forced to improvise all along the line. This was particularly true in the course of the election campaign and it has meant the loss of some of the excellent habits that we formed in the previous period. We must begin now to reorganize and reconstitute administration on a higher plane. Our activity shot ahead of our administrative forms and routine. We must now bring this aspect of our work up to the level of our expanded activities. We must raise our standards of disciplined and efficient functioning. Tardiness, failures on assignment, sloppiness in details, must be seriously combatted. Every meeting that is organized, and

every social should be carefully planned and we must never be satisfied with the clever improvisations we have had to resort to in the past. We must demand of all comrades a careful respect for details as is the Trotskyist tradition. No task is too small to be done right.

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LOS ANGELES LOCAL LITERATURE REPORT, JUNE 1945

By Al Lynn

This report is divided into two main sections, the first part containing a discussion on the literature work of the Section and the latter part dealing with the subscription campaign which ended last month. I have devoted the major portion of the report to this campaign which occupied the major portion of our work in this last period, and will submit it to the national discussion on this campaign.

It was not a surprise that literature work as such declined during the period of the campaign. In the preceding period we had been able to devote a great deal of attention to the problems connected with it such as internal party education and as a consequence we had what amounted to a "boom" in the literature sales. This was further increased by the nature of our party work for that period which in great part consisted in visiting our former subscribers and selling literature to them, especially the trial sets of which we sold several hundred.

We had had a period of intensive recruiting and the eagerness of the new comrades to understand Marxism expressed itself by greater sales of literature to party members. This was not confined just to these new members, however, as the spirit of study pervaded the party. The older comrades also availed themselves of an opportunity to obtain Marxist works which had not previously been made available through the literature department.

Finally the formation of the series of classes, including the Teachers Training Course kept up the literature sales.

With the beginning of the sub campaign the drop in sales began, due to the lesser amount of time available to study and similar factors. But the drop did not reach the previous low level. Our organization had grown by leaps and bounds during the year and this reflected itself in the fact that the drop in literature sales brought us to a point which was still about 200% over the average of the previous year.

Our newsstand sales reflect this very well. The average sales of Fourth International have reached a point which is twenty percent higher than total section sales of two years ago. In December, a record breaking month, it reached a new high of 85 copies which is almost twice the circulation of two years ago in Los Angeles.

And since the end of the sub campaign we have once more resumed our forward march. Meetings and lectures are bringing in increased sales, and the formation of the new beginners classes have had an influence. One class alone, for instance, has been selling an average of a dollars worth of literature a week with the members of the class buying literature for their friends. The shift in emphasis to bringing our subscribers closer to us rather than concentrating on new subscribers will mean a large expansion in such types of pamphlets as the trial sets and the Labor Party. The West Side Branch and San Pedro Branch, for example have indicated that they will need increased quantities of these pamphlets to meet the needs of contacting these new subscribers as well as the ones who will be asked to renew their subscriptions.

FOURTH INTERNATIONAL

The Fourth International, our theoretical organ, has a circulation of less than 200 in the Los Angeles area at the present time, certainly far below being proportionate to our real strength. It is true that the circulation has increased relatively with the growth of the party locally but in terms of possibilities we have only scratched the surface. In the last few months we have made an effort to increase the circulation but while certain gains were made in the form of a number of new subscribers, we were forced to forego a full campaign because of the press of other work. As soon as is feasible it would not be too much to place one comrade in full charge of the task of building up the circulation of the Fourth International in this area. It would be his task to work out the visiting of what amounts to actually hundreds of former FI subscribers, to see to it that the work of obtaining subs from our contacts is pushed, and to expand the circulation of the magazine to its maximum among the party members.

RECENT PUBLICATIONS

The party put out two new publications during this period in addition to reprints of former material. These were The History of American Trotskyism and the Labor Party pamphlet, both of which have played an extremely important role in our internal education and in our propaganda work.

The "Labor Party" which approaches the workers on a point very close to their desires has sold a total of 256 copies in Los Angeles in the last 6 months. Sales were very high on the newsstands where we have sold more than thirty copies, at the meetings of the Longshoremen, and to the workers in the shops. The latter point represents a new stage in the development of our literature work as did the current sub campaign in our drive to increase the circulation of the Militant. This is the first pamphlet that we have sold in the factories in any quantity and it has made a great impression. The comrades of the West Side Branch who have sold most of their pamphlets in their shops have announced a forthcoming drive to sell the Labor Party pamphlet to even greater numbers of workers basing themselves on their initial successes.

The History of American Trotskyism has proven to be the focal point for the building of innumerable study courses teaching the history and methods of our party. Prior to the publishing of this work a new party member had to depend for the information he obtained on the history of the party upon the length of time those comrades he knew had been in the party. Now we are able to study this topic scientifically. The great interest in the book brought the sales in the first six months to a total of 80.

We had set ourselves a goal of 125 and will probably be able to reach this goal within the next six months with the closer contacting of many of the thousands of new party contacts.

NEWSSTANDS

I mentioned previously the increased sales of Fourth International on the newsstands. In addition to this the stands have sold over thirty copies of the Labor Party pamphlet, many sets of the Trial pamphlets, copies of The History of American Trotskyism, Fascism and Big Business, and Maritime. A situation has also developed whereby we may be able to place the complete works of Pioneer Publishers in a bookstore with an attractive display.

Our main task in the development of newsstands however, is along the road of placing the Militant on the stands along Central Avenue and Vernon Avenue. Here the problem is not one of having to work to build them up, so much as it is one of getting the individual to place the Militant each week. As with many of the other projects the potentialities are so much greater than the forces that we have to meet them.

BUILD THE BRANCHES!

Partially because of this lack of manpower at the center and partially because it will place greater responsibility on the branches to expand their sales of literature, it is proposed at this point that we decentralize the responsibility, or to put it in another way, to increase the branch autonomy in relation to literature.

The proposal is that the branches will buy their own literature, keep all records of what they buy and sell and of how and where they sell it. The Section office would act as a central agent for the branches in the buying activities for purposes of convenience, discount, and maneuverability so that literature could still be shifted around to the points where it is urgently needed for specific occasions.

The branches will receive the lists of expired Militant and FI subscribers and should establish an administrative apparatus to handle these automatically. The branches will also handle all newsstands in their vicinity although this question hasn't really been posed as yet, due to the fewness of these stands.

Here too, the role of the Section Office is by no means ended. But it will change from one of routing the various tasks to one of co-ordinating the work of the branches and in giving them needed assistance. The experience of the sub drive illustrates this very well.

SUB CAMPAIGN REPORT, 1945

July 1, 1945

The Militant sub campaign just concluded, demonstrated two main things. First that our estimation of leftward shift in the working class was a correct one, and secondly that our party has the ability to meet the needs of the situation.

The tripling of the amount of subs obtained, both locally and nationally in a similar period of time demonstrated the continuation and increased rapidity of the development of this trend. At the same time we observe that the workers have shown an ability to discriminate between our revolutionary program and the lines of those who call themselves revolutionary and working class parties.

We have followed closely the subscription campaigns of the Socialist Party, the Workers Party and the Communist Party. In no case did any of them come even close to the successes of our campaign. Even the much larger Communist Party was unable to get more than about one third of our total in a similar period of time. The so-called Workers Party had to extend their campaign a month to reach about one sixth of our total, and the Socialist Party has a goal one half as large as ours in twice the time.

All our experiences in the campaign pointed to the same thing. We sold subs to almost every individual we met who subscribed to an opponent paper and a tremendous amount besides to those who hadn't bought subs from the other organizations.

As far back as the campaign of a year ago we had found that the most subs were sold when we came out with our full anti-war socialist stand and this was even truer in the campaign just concluded.

COMPOSITION OF THE NEW SUBSCRIBERS

The very size of the campaign made it difficult to get more than just general statistics. But the reports were so consistent that we were able to give a realistic analysis without an intensive study of the statistics.

We can definitely state that a minimum of 60% of our Los Angeles subscribers are Negro industrial workers. This of course, corresponds to our understanding that the doubly oppressed Negro masses are closest to our program.

At least 75% of all subscribers are industrial workers. With this figure as with the last I am giving an absolute minimum. The possibility that the figure is closer to 90% exists. Five percent of the subs sold in Los Angeles were sold by workers on the job to their shopmates, over 30% of the subs sold by the West Side Branch, for example, being sold through this method.

Subs sold at plant gates did not reach as high a proportion as in the 1944 campaign but over thirty subs were sold in two attempts at meetings of the Longshore Union despite frantic attempts by the

Stalinists to stop this.

Of the industries the shipyards predominate heavily with aircraft coming next. Steel workers are also well represented among the three thousand subscribers as are the longshoremen.

As against the 1944 campaign we made a conscious attempt to spread the Militant among the three hundred thousand Mexican population in this area. The East Side Branch concentrated a large portion of its activity in this direction with a degree of success. Most of the approximately 200 Mexican subscribers are industrial workers.

WHITE WORKERS MOVE LEFTWARD

While we concentrated the major portion of our activity among that section of the population most receptive to our ideas, the Negroes, the work of the election campaign which involved building up election rallies in various parts of the city brought us into more contact with the white population in our sub work than before.

The results of this work provide us with some revealing information. This information again coincides with what our analysis of the political situation would lead us to expect. In the non-proletarian sections we were many times threatened with violence if we didn't leave in a hurry, but in proletarian sections such as for example, the white project covered by San Pedro the results were actually very good. They averaged about one half the subs per hour as in the Negro areas but were able to sell to almost as great a proportion. Very few people were antagonistic in this particular project and the conclusion indicated is that they are receptive to our ideas but that necessity doesn't force them as yet to see the need for immediate action.

GEOGRAPHICAL EXPANSION

In our first campaign we limited ourselves more or less to one or two sections of the city. Outside of San Pedro almost all of the sub work was done in what corresponds to Zone 11 on the postal map. In the current campaign, factors such as working out an area, needs of the election campaign, and the development of new branches caused us to spread out. We covered such important areas as the Mexican projects on the East Side, projects in Watts, section of Long Beach, and the area in the West Side which contains many of the aircraft workers. The Central Branch at the time of revolutionary developments among the industrial workers of Northern Italy covered an Italian area.

A number of comrades from the East Side Branch went on a trail-blazing expedition to the nearby city of San Bernardino as an experiment. We selected this city because of its industrial composition, and the fact that as the railroad hub of Southern California it is relatively very important. 70% of those visited, almost all of whom were Mexican industrial workers bought subs. To show the possibilities I might mention that one team of comrades sold subs to each of the ten people visited.

ELECTION CAMPAIGN

The sub campaign came at an opportune time for us locally. We had just embarked on an election campaign which in any case would require the distribution of a great amount of literature. The relationship between the two campaigns immediately became clear. We would use the sub campaign as an instrument for building up the election campaign. This would be much more effective than leaflets as it would provide an automatic follow-up for the contacts that we gained. This would correct one of the main defects of most election campaigns, the failure to follow up on those who received the propaganda material.

In building up a local election meeting we could at the same time sell subs to those visited and keep them as active contacts even if they were unable to attend a meeting.

LESSONS OF THE SUB CAMPAIGN EXPERIENCES

From the experiences that our sub-getters had with individuals, and from the general results obtained we have a wealth of material from which to draw conclusions. Side by side with their role of sub-getters the comrades are acting as political observers. All experiences demonstrate the leftward shift in the masses which I have mentioned before. They test out our slogans, gauge the response and reaction.

In addition to this we are able to make an observation which we were not able to make at the end of the last campaign. And that is, that on an average of at least one experience a week we found that comrades would report back an extraordinarily great result. A comrade would sell subs to 27 out of 30 people visited, or we would have a block on which almost every house bought a sub, or where one team averaged 14 subs per hour for four hours.

To attribute this to good luck is to miss an important point. These are symptomatic phenomena. In our next campaign they will undoubtedly represent the average. They show that among certain sections of the population our ideas are extremely popular.

ORGANIZATION OF THE CAMPAIGN

As against the 1944 sub campaign when practically all the work of organization was undertaken by the Section, this campaign saw the major burden of the work taken over by the branch organizations. This was in line with a perspective of developing the branches as the working units of the party, and was made even more necessary by the greater number of branches in existence during this campaign as against the last. It allows the branch to work out their campaign in line with perspectives of branch work for the period following the campaign. At the same time our methods of organization are flexible enough so that at any time during the campaign we were able to shift our forces to indicated spots for building up meetings or for carrying out a tactic like the one of critical support for Charlotta Bass.

The branches also are able to give greater consideration to the problem of getting out the individual members due to their closeness to the membership. This played a great role in developing our local point to where we had a greater number of participants than ever before, almost twice as many as in last years campaign to be more specific.

Another point at which the branches increased their effectiveness was in the ability to get the comrades out for other than Sunday mobilizations. Pedro, for example had many mid-week mobilizations. This phase of activity, however, has much to be improved as the Central Branch experience indicates. We have not had many occasions on which to get the comrades out for mid-week mobilizations and so the initial attempts did not yield very good results. In revisiting, however, we shall have ample opportunity to correct this.

The system of branch quotas, which placed responsibility for a definite amount of subs with each branch played a role in focussing attention of the branch members on the amount needed and in arousing a competitive spirit. The Central Branch, for example, was far behind the others with two weeks of the campaign to go. In those two weeks they put on a drive which brought in 60% of their branch quota bringing them well over the top.

DEVELOPMENT OF THE CAMPAIGN

The nation-wide opening day mobilization of February 25th helped add interest to our local campaign. The experience in the last campaign as well as in this campaign demonstrated that the opening mobilization because of the great interest, the build-up in party communications, in branch meetings, and in letters to the membership, is able to bring out a greater number of comrades than any subsequent day except the last which also receives the same build-up.

The graphic records kept during the campaign illustrate this point by showing a big rise the first week which is not again reached until the end. Another thing observed from the graph is that alternate weeks show big rises followed by slight ones. This illustrates the prevailing form of branch organization which provided for a mobilization every other week. The graph also shows the point in the campaign during the first month at which the National Office informally called for 200% of the original goal. From that point every week showed a great rise.

In working out the campaign we concentrated on getting out a maximum number of comrades as against trying to get a corps of high sub getters. We felt that this would give us a two-fold advantage in at the same time integrating all the newer comrades. Each week of the campaign anywhere from 1 to 17 comrades participated in addition to those who came out for the initial mobilization.

From the first mobilization to the final one, each branch averaged a total of 3 Sunday mobilizations. The final one which was also organized on a nation-wide basis was another big triumph for the party, exceeding all expectations.

During the course of the campaign the youth played a prominent role in obtaining almost 300 subs or 10% of our total.

Another prominent role was played by the sympathizers. We found that many sympathizers sent in subs for friends and shopmates. We had the experience of a worker who sold 21 subs to fellow workers after he had been reading the Militant for a period of three months. Another friend of the party locally turned in a total of 47 subs. A few who started the campaign by helping us sell subs joined the party.

Hoping to draw many other sympathizers into the campaign we sent out a letter for the final mobilization to our contact list giving them a vivid illustration of the campaign by enclosing a report to the national sub director. Unfortunately we did not get any responses. This would seem to indicate that although many Militant readers are very close to the party they have not yet reached the stage of active participation.

Other preparations for the final mobilization worked out very smoothly and we were able to end the campaign by going over the 150% mark with 618 subs on one day.

LESSONS OF THE CAMPAIGN

The tremendous scores on the Sundays when mobilizations were scheduled by all five branches gave us an indication that a shorter campaign which was more intensive could give us similar results to the ones obtained in the three month campaign.

On innumerable occasions we were asked to address club meetings, lodges, churches and friends of the subscribers. We also found many gatherings of groups of friends where three or four subs could be sold at one time. Every comrade met up with politically advanced workers who were very close to our program.

Our big problem in the coming period is to recruit from among these workers who are so interested in our movement. And for that we must utilize methods of drawing them closer and explaining our program to them.

Outlined in a recent national communication is the suggestion for the building of innumerable "Militant Discussion Clubs." These will be utilized also for raising funds and other peripheral activity. Our major task in this period will be to carry out this perspective as the best means of building the Party.

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THE SUB-CAMPAIGN IN DETROIT

Forty-two comrades and thirty-five sympathizers participated in the campaign. Sixteen comrades obtained 50 subs or more. Our concentrations were based on our trade union fractions, all of them surpassed their quotas. These included Briggs, Fleetwood, Hudson, Ford Rouge, Fisher Body. We also concentrated on a large Negro and Italian neighborhood near our headquarters. We would estimate the area as four miles square. Included in the area is the large Negro housing project in which we have over 200 readers.

Besides this area, we covered, in all, three colored projects and four white projects. About 50 percent of our new readers are white; the overwhelming majority of them are UAW-CIO members. In the last mobilization we obtained a large number of steel workers. A sizeable group of the new readers consist of stewards, chief stewards, committeemen and officers of local UAW unions.

In the course of the campaign we held mobilizations every Sunday and several comrades went out once during the week. The largest number of comrades participated in the first mobilization and next in size was the mobilization on the last Sunday of the campaign.

Comrades had a keen understanding of the importance of the campaign. We found it totally unnecessary to use any forms of pressure other than our weekly reports. We did find that this particular campaign was about two weeks too long.

A good number of the new readers are Stalinists, primarily Negro Stalinists. The reaction that we have had to date is excellent. Several of our new recruits joined us as a direct result of the sub campaign.

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EXCERPTS FROM A LETTER FROM DETROIT

May 29, 1945

During our last mobilization we went to River Rouge and Ecorse which lies just outside of Detroit. These 280 subs we obtained come from Ford Rouge, Great Lake Steel, Fleetwood and Fisher Body workers. For the week we have 319.

Of the 41 comrades who participated in the campaign 15 scored over 50 and of the 15, ten obtained over a hundred.

The ten are:

Kirk.....	415	Horton.....	147
Mason.....	277	Kennedy.....	141
Logan.....	248	Brady.....	121
Drake.....	247	Marsh.....	111
O'Brien.....	161	Woods.....	103

In our final mobilization we had 18 participate and they averaged 15 subs apiece.

Ernie Drake ran across some friends and he called another comrade into the house with him. They signed up six new subscribers in that house and walked out with a couple of drinks apiece to bolster their morale.

Our last mobilization tripled the score of our first even though we had three more out on the first. You can chalk it up to experience, a better looking paper and longer hours of work.

In one hour nine comrades signed up a hundred new readers. That's doing it on a mass production basis.

If Detroit is any example then the campaign shows that we have engaged many of our new comrades and friends in the campaign and that is another successful achievement.

We had 35 friends participate which is a little short of the guess I made at the beginning of the campaign when I estimated that as many friends as party members would participate. It is still a good record.

All of our fractions met their quotas and most of them went way over the top.

Jerry Kirk

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TOLEDO REPORT ON MILITANT SUBSCRIPTION CAMPAIGN

June 29, 1945

During the recent Militant subscription campaign, the Toledo Branch experienced concretely the growing interest of the workers in the Militant and in the program of the Socialist Workers Party.

Nationally, our success in selling 22,437 new subscriptions did not come about through some sort of super-salesmanship on the part of the comrades, but because the workers found in the Militant a realistic program for the solution of their problems. After the poisonous lying, the hostility, the deliberate sowing of confusion by the bourgeois press, the Militant is like a clean bath to new readers. The questions most continuously in the minds of the workers are answered in the Militant. Problems are posed without sham and answers given which make sense. It is little wonder that the Militant "sold itself" during the campaign.

From the beginning of the campaign in Toledo, in shops and in house-to-house canvassing, selling the Militant, 10 to 15 subs at a clip per comrade, was only a matter of how much time the comrade could

contribute. And the incentive to contribute time became a vibrant quality when it became more and more obvious that proletarian doors were only waiting to be knocked on, that workers at machines were only waiting to be asked.

Comrades whose knees knocked together like castinets on the first Red Sunday and whose sales talk ran something like "You don't want to buy a subscription to the Militant, do you?" suddenly found their knees under control and their sales talk more in the nature of political oratory. They found it silly for knees to knock together when confronted with someone who is sincerely and intelligently listening to what you have to say. Among the most oppressed sections of town, the Negro neighborhood, comrades found they could talk Socialist Revolution and the seizure of power by the workers to an eager audience -- to an audience which understood these things because the conditions of their lives had so educated them.

In the shops, where our comrades are recognized as militant unionists with a consistently realistic trade union program, subscriptions were sold primarily through this prestige. "Give me a quarter and I'll send you a six-month sub to a real labor paper" was all the sales talk needed in most cases. The spade work had been done over a period of time in which workers had come to respect the judgment, the reasoning and the progressive ideas of our comrades. They could be counted on to make sense on the union floor, to satisfactorily explain things and to give realistic answers to the acute problems facing the workers. When a comrade approached a worker for a subscription, he almost invariably signed up on the comrade's recommendation.

Toward the end of the campaign when many workers had begun to receive the Militant, a general picture of the receptiveness in the shops began to crystallize; time and again, the comment. . . "Say, that's one damn good paper!"; or the picture of several workers in a hot argument, one of them completely snowing under the rest with facts and arguments taken from the Militant; or a worker taking time out to bring six subs down to party headquarters; or workers unexpectedly handing dollar bills to our comrades with the remark. . . "Here's a dollar. You can sign up four other guys for that paper."; or a worker seeking out a comrade after a meeting dominated by the bureaucrats, asking, "Say, about that paper. . ." and being signed up for a one-year combination subscription; or several cynical Ex-Stalinists, completely discouraged with the radical movement, finding a revived interest in the Militant; or a union official who had received the Militant for only a short time calling a comrade aside to have the meaning of fascism explained to him.

The most unique refusal reported was of a worker who, after reading a copy of the Militant, said no, he didn't want a subscription because it made him so mad at the capitalists it gave him indigestion, or words to that effect.

The breakdown of subscriptions sold tells the concrete story of the workers response to the Militant. Out of 786 subscriptions sold in Toledo, 300 were sold in one shop alone. Altogether, 400 were sold in shops throughout the city, and 386 were sold door-to-door. 85% of the new subscribers are unionists and about 70% are in

the UAW-CIO. About 50% were sold to Negro militants. Twenty-one subs were sent in directly to the National Office by enthusiastic readers and by those receiving one copy of the Militant and clipping the coupon.

The Toledo Branch feels that great progress has been made in Toledo as a result of the campaign. Sympathizers in the shops have been brought closer to the party and many actively participated in the campaign. Eight comrades joined the party from March 1st to June 1st and, although not all of these were recruited directly as a result of the campaign, many had sold subscriptions previous to joining.

During the next campaign, the results of this campaign should become even more clearly defined. Our new circle of Militant readers will broaden and contribute greatly to the spreading of our ideas. Finding in the Militant the only real solution to workingclass problems, workers will tell their friends -- and their friends will tell their friends -- and through their own life experiences with the boss and all his pals, they'll accept the Militant as their paper, its program as their program, and they'll carry out that program to make their Socialist society.

Maggie McGowan

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THE SUB-CAMPAIGN IN SAN FRANCISCO

July 9, 1945

In the recently completed sub campaign we found an increasing interest in the Militant. Workers who formerly would have shown no interest in a Socialist paper, now begin to make comparisons between what the daily press has to say and the Militant. All of the subscribers were aware of the fact that, the daily press is playing a role of deception.

Most of our subs were gained through house-to-house work and about 85% were union members. 10% of our total subs were turned in by friends of the Militant.

In the main we presented the paper as a workers paper defending the interest of the workers. And emphasizing the fact that the Militant prints only the truth in contrast to all other papers. Also pointing out the program of the Militant for solving the many pressing problems of the workers.

One friend of the Militant who was particularly active during the campaign is now a member of the party and we also recruited two others during the campaign.

The San Francisco Branch has now launched a recall and contact drive. We expect eventually to call on every subscriber, get their reaction to the paper and provide them with literature to fit their particular interest.

All of our subscribers are regularly notified of our forums and socials. The coming week end we are having a "Friends of the Militant" dinner which I am sure will be a success.

J. L.

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THE SUB-CAMPAIGN IN SAN DIEGO

July 5, 1945

Our 116 subs were procured during three Sunday afternoons. Due to the fact that several comrades had to leave and didn't return until after the campaign, our work was thus cut short. Five people participated in this work.

Among the Negro people we found an excellent reception. Many took "gift subs" for friends and relatives. (A new way to organize the deep South!) The most successful "line" touched upon the following:

"We have a paper that we're introducing into this neighborhood that I'm sure you will want to see. It's against Jim Crow and discrimination. . . in the army, navy, defense plants, and housing projects. I'm proud to be able to bring this paper to you because it tells the truth. . . There's no advertising in it, see? and therefore no advertisers to tell us what to say. (Point to Jackson's column and part of transitional program where "Down with Jim Crow" is mentioned). When you realize that it's only 25¢ for 6 months, I'm sure that you, like all your neighbors, will want to get a subscription, too."

Then came their questions, cross-conversations, etc. This was the gist of my own approach and in the campaign both here and in San Francisco I only got one refusal from the thirty-four Negroes I approached.

Our attitude, both among white and colored, was not so much to propagandize but to sell the subscription and let the paper do the work over a period of time.

Among the white population also the most successful method was one which arouses interest, but not any antagonism. We touched mainly on postwar problems of employment for civilians and returning veterans. Our reception in the white neighborhoods was only fair, although our percentage was high for the number approached -- one out of every three or four. Yet we must admit that subscriptions were often taken as a courtesy or curiosity or just because they were only a quarter.

We're just beginning to work back and consolidate any gains, so we cannot report the results at present. But we have gained one close contact and several sympathizers.

I want to add one more word about the paper -- the improvement is wonderful. I wrote a resolution for the last convention that was passed by San Diego and also the San Francisco Branch pleading for such an improvement. I believe the campaign was in a way responsible for this. It made us realize we had a "door-to-door" paper, not for just advanced workers, and we had to make it readable for ordinary people. The only immediate suggestion I can make is in regard to Jackson's column. I think the set-up could be improved, making it easier to read. The people who are reading it are usually not too well educated and we can help them get the content by simplifying the form. More sub-headings, more sub-titles, variations in the print, etc., should be added.

Nadine Collins

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REPORT ON THE SUB-CAMPAIGN IN PHILADELPHIA

We ended our sub-campaign on Red Sunday with a social which turned out to be a fitting reception for our new Branch Organizer, Max Goldman, who had just arrived here. Of the sympathizers who participated, four have already become members. It is certain that the concrete activity and success of the campaign helped them make a favorable decision at this time.

The campaign brought us numerous benefits. All the comrades took part enthusiastically and without urging or pressing. Some of them experienced for the first time the value of devoting a regular period of time each week to "foot work" so that it became a pleasure. Some experienced their first contact with workers in their homes. To the branch as a whole it gave a new, needed feeling of ability to keep abreast of the party's national performance.

More concretely, the campaign has provided Philadelphia a base of some 400 Militant readers to revisit and produce candidates for eventual membership. Many of them are trade unionists. Two-thirds are Negroes. Nearly all are workers, many of them in heavy industry.

The workers are receptive to our paper once their attention is drawn to it. We also found that predistribution was helpful for later contact work.

An example of a successful approach started like this: "I represent The Militant, a weekly labor paper that's different from all others because it tells the truth about the workers' struggle for living standards, for expression of the rank and file in the unions and for the needs of the service men when they return." One or more of these three groupings was almost sure to include him, and he was

startled by the simple fact that his most basic needs are neglected. He sees that here is a refreshing type of leadership which may "have something" -- or at least stands alone in this field which is so close to his main aspirations.

Our plans for consolidating the gains of the campaign center around the building of Militant Readers' Discussion Groups in the immediate future. We have discovered a willingness of new readers to form such groups. A "Friends of the Militant Club" to assist financially has also been started.

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PORTLAND'S EXPERIENCES ON THE SUB DRIVE

Portland is having its own sub drive after the national sub drive is finished. We followed the policy of single-copy pre-distribution, accompanied by a leaflet which asked the reader to look the paper over carefully, with a view to subscribing. We found that this saved a lot of time on the canvass. This was tried on a 260 unit housing project, and we got 35 subscriptions. Those who did not like the paper took none of our time in sales talks. We obtained from them an immediate "no". From many of those who did subscribe, we received an immediate "yes", and a few cases required further selling.

We have not tried a test on another comparable area for comparison but will do so and inform you of the result.

The balance of our subscriptions have been obtained in a Negro neighborhood. We find that about 7 out of 10 Negroes can be sold subscriptions the first time they are contacted.

In all our subscription work we have always represented the paper as "a working class newspaper published by socialists". With those interested or politically developed, we did not hesitate to develop our full political line. I know that some branches have avoided the word socialist, and our experience should be valuable in this respect. We believe the superiority of this method will be shown in the renewal work.

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CLEVELAND'S REPORT ON THE MILITANT SUBSCRIPTION CAMPAIGN

The secret of Cleveland's success in the recent subscription campaign, if it can be called a secret, was the full participation of all comrades during weekly mobilizations. We feel that this accomplishment was far more important than exceeding the original quota of 200 by 711. Trotsky once said that a general strike allows the proletariat to test its enormous strength and gain courage thereby. The advance guard of the U.S. proletariat tested its strength during this general campaign and found its power beyond the highest expectations. This was especially true of the Cleveland Branch which doubted and under-estimated its ability. The fact that each comrade sold an average of 80 to 90 subs (we believe this to compare with any branch in the country) has given the branch increased confidence, and the call-back campaign is considered no longer a task, but a continuation and acceleration of an activity which becomes exhilarating.

Intensive preliminary thought was given to this campaign. All suggestions, if practically possible were tested.

Canvassing areas were mapped close to the branch headquarters and homes. The frugality of time we considered a vital factor, especially since all comrades work six and seven days of the week. Moreover, covering areas close by would facilitate call-back and contact work.

The branch was first divided into two teams of five, the winning team to be the recipient of a party given in its honor. This we thought would increase the spirit of competition. Inter-branch competition was almost forgotten, however, when we were confronted with Youngstown's challenge. In all honesty it must be stated that Cleveland never hoped to win, yet go over 150%.

The challenge came at a very opportune time. If any one factor contributed most to our final score it was this challenge. For this reason we returned the set of the Little Lenin Library to the real victor -- Youngstown.

To facilitate mobilizations every Sunday all other activities were cut to the bone; classes and lectures were completely stopped or postponed; business meetings were held bi-monthly rather than weekly.

Aside from mobilizations most comrades canvassed a minimum of twice and a maximum of four times weekly.

All our 1944 subscribers were contacted by mail to help in the campaign. This mailing is not to be confused with the National Office correspondence.

We even tried a hand at advertising the subscriptions through a local Slovenian paper. Though this attempt was unsuccessful we consider generalizing impossible before further experimentation.

The subscribers can be divided into the following categories:

White --	100	Negro --	790
Male --	90	Male --	316
Female --	10	Female --	474
Good contacts --	10	Good contacts --	35

Less than 5% were obtained by comrades in the shops, which accounts for the high percentage of Negro subs.

We found Negro or mixed areas far more fruitful for canvassing than white workingclass sections. Subscriptions an hour in a white area averaged 1 or 2, whereas 5 subs an hour was low scoring in the Negro district.

We consider the great number of Negro subscriptions in contrast to the white highly disproportionate. We are forced to realize by their receptivity to our paper that the Negroes today are in the vanguard of the workingclass. The value of the high number of Negro subs obtained throughout the country must not be underestimated.

A few words of praise and criticism: In the future it would be wise to print receipts on all subscription cards, especially during a campaign when the embarrassment at the absence of a receipt when demanded may well slow down individual comrades. This receipt should be for the F.I. as well as for Militant subs.

Many subscribers complained of the delay in receiving the first copy, sometimes as much as a month. Others didn't get the paper at all. We realize the strain and the limiting conditions under which the New York office is working. Nevertheless, this should be rectified.

However, we wish to commend the outstanding work (to say nothing of the patience) of Comrade Aubrey and the campaign staff. Their encouraging letters and the fine campaign page in the Militant did much to stimulate our drive.

For the sake of shortness we can say that there is at least one Militant subscriber in every important industry in the city.

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