

IN THE INTERNATIONAL

The First Communist Daily in the English Language.

By I. A m t e r.

An event of great significance has taken place in the Communist world. The Workers Party of America has launched an English daily, which is the First English Communist daily in the world.

By itself, it would not be of such importance, since the Workers Party has other dailies. But the very fact that at last the Party has succeeded in collecting a fund of \$ 100,000 with which to start the paper, indicates the growing strength of the Party and the sympathy and interest it has awakened among the American masses.

The Daily Worker will appear in Chicago. When it was announced that the Workers Party intended to establish a paper in that city, the bankers and manufacturers of the city

started a campaign of intimidation. For the Daily Workers is the official organ of the Party and will be the direct means whereby the Central Executive Committee will reach the American workers. The capitalists of Chicago recognized this fact, and did everything in their power to stop the appearance of the paper.

The Party has eleven other dailies, i. e., three Finnish and one each of the following: Jewish, German, Russian, Lithuanian, Hungarian, Polish, Ukrainian, and Czechoslovakian, besides a number of weeklies. These papers have a combined daily circulation of 155,000. This is a commendable achievement for a party of 22,000 members. As in all countries, each copy is read by a number of workers. Hence it may be assumed that the Communist daily press reaches 1,000,000 readers in the United States.

In view of the strength of the foreign-language press, the starting of an English daily was a serious undertaking. It became all the more serious in view of the fact that an English daily must be of a different nature from the foreign-language papers. Although a Communist daily must not attempt to compete with the capitalist press, nevertheless it will have to furnish some of the features of the capitalist press that have become indispensable to the American reader. It must have a first class news service, it must furnish first-hand write-ups of important events, such as strikes, labour troubles, labour conventions, as well as conferences of bankers, manufacturers etc. It must keep directly in touch with the activities of the United States Congress. In other words, the Daily Worker, without endeavouring to compete with the capitalist press, must to a great extent replace the capitalist daily in the minds of the workers — and farmers.

Comrade Zinoviev, in his article for the first edition of the Daily Worker, laid great stress on the farmer movement in the United States. A Revolution without the farmers is a total impossibility in the United States. The situation today is such that in many respects the farmers are more rebellious — even more class-conscious — than the majority of the workers. This may be attributed not merely to the relatively poorer economic state of the farmers, but to the absolute impossibility of the vast majority of the small working farmers continuing at work. In the past year more than 300,000 mortgages were foreclosed on the farmers. The farmers, who formerly represented 5 to 8 per cent of the bankrupts, formed 15 per cent of the failures in 1923.

Hence the Daily Worker must also reach the small farmer, in the common language of the country. This multiplies the duties and expenses of the paper.

What this means for a party of 22,000 members, of whom no more than 3,000 are English-speaking, and the majority of whom are supporting dailies and weeklies in other languages, is clear. It demonstrates that, despite the 19 languages comprised in the Workers Party of America, the comrades as a whole have not only recognized the necessity of an English daily, but have made the greatest sacrifices in order to attain their goal.

And the prospects of the new daily? On November 12, the New York Leader, formerly the New York Call, ceased circulation. The rechristening of the alleged socialist sheet did not save it from destruction. As a Socialist paper, the Call, in its early days during the war, served as the organ of all revolutionary and radical sentiment. The capitalist intimidation after the war — and particularly the disintegration of the Socialist Party after the secession of the Communists, which caused the political and organizational bankruptcy of the Socialist Party — forced the Party into more opportunistic channels, which gave the stamp to its paper. The New York Call got into financial difficulties. A reorganization took place: the New York Call became the New York Leader, a liberal bourgeois organ with no appeal to the workers. The workers refused to support the sheet. This is one of the favourable developments in the past two years as a result of the effective Communist propaganda. Half measures no longer satisfy the American workers. They are not yet ready for the Revolution: but they do not want any playing with it. This is what the Socialists cannot understand — and as a consequence, they are constantly losing ground in the United States.

The Daily Worker comes into the field with the greatest promises; it enters the arena with great responsibilities and duties. The activity of the Workers Party is a warrant that it will fulfil them.