

The Role of Language Fractions in Party Recruiting Drive

By MARIO ALPI.

The Party Recruiting Campaign now going on acquired great importance since it takes place in a period of radicalization of large masses of workers and of continued struggles against the bosses' offensive, (struggles which are assuming ever more a political character.) It is also important that the campaign comes at a time when the Party has expelled from its ranks the opportunists and renegades who cannot see the accentuation of the economic crisis and the consequent upward trend of the revolutionary movement in all the capitalist countries, not excluding the United States. The Party, following the line of the Comintern, is entering on the road of more decisive and aggressive struggle in the course of which the working masses of the United States are beginning to recognize it as their vanguard. The Party today is being looked upon as a leader not only by the native workers but also by other sections of the American proletariat composed of immigrant workers and especially by those which on account of their position in the basic industries are among the most exploited.

Following the world war, the masses of immigrated workers joined with the American workers in the great struggles inspired by the victorious October Revolution. Following that period, the Finnish, Hungarian, Italian workers, etc., received new vigor from the revolutionary movements which were taking place in the years 1919-1922 in their respective countries. It was in that period of acute crisis of the capitalist system that thousands upon thousands of immigrated workers rallied around the Communist Party which was then coming into being and the various language papers and organizations became widely spread and strengthened.

The crisis of the capitalist system, even during the second period, the period of relative stabilization, had its repercussions on the immigrant workers. With the restriction of immigration, the tendency of foreign masses in the country has been that of becoming more closely bound with the American workers. It is true that the immigrant workers still feel a somewhat narrow moral bond with their fellow workers in the country on the other side of the ocean. This leads in the best instances to an active internationalism, that follows with passion the struggles going on over there, but in most instances it keeps up a sort of narrow nationalism, hindering Americanization. Nevertheless, due mainly to the immigration restrictions as stated above, the immigrated masses are becoming stabilized and more firmly united with the native workers.

In the present period of the after-war crisis of the capitalist system, the third period which is characterized by a deepening of this crisis, on the basis of the rationalization process and unbelievable intensification of labor, the class struggle is again on the upward trend, and in this struggle the immigrated masses fight more and more closely bound up with the American proletariat. In the factories and mines, the workers of every nationality and language are consciously participating to an unprecedented extent in the fight against the common enemy, capitalism.

The most significant symbol of the unification of all sections of the American proletariat, has been the Cleveland Congress. Today we witness the motion not only of the native masses, but also of the immigrated masses, of the unorganized masses composed mainly of foreign-born workers; we witness ever more their shoulder to shoulder struggle not only against capitalism itself but also against the authority of the bourgeois state, against the yellow trade union fakers. This oncoming unity of the American proletariat, above the flimsy barriers of race and nationality, signifies that the immigrant groups are throwing overboard the mentality of considering themselves as inferior and divided from the native workers who were in a privileged position which is now disappearing, and begin to understand the trick played upon them by the capitalist class, which, by preaching about inferiority of nationalities and races, kept them divided from the rest of the American proletariat and to extract from them super-profits.

The masses of immigrant workers are mainly employed in the basic industries such as mines, steel works, textile centers of the North, automobile factories, shoe factories, needle industries, etc. The percentage of immigrated workers in heavy industry is still high.

Many of these immigrant workers, where they live more promiscuously with the old native population, Americanized themselves to a great extent while the young generations are completely Americanized. But there are, particularly within the mining industry, textile industry, etc., where for the conditions of work the workers are more compact, live united, many immigrant workers who are partly still separate from the American proletariat.

It is precisely among these masses of immigrant workers that we find a whole series of sick and death benefit organizations and cooperatives which bear the characteristics of their native countries and which are still further separated from each other according to the cities and regions from where they come.

With the liquidation of language federations, the Party has made a great step forward in the direction of unification of its forces, in the direction of Americanization. With the clear tasks set lately for all the language fractions, tasks which are auxiliary and coordinated to the Party tasks, more steps forward are being made in the direction of Americanization of the Party. The role of the language fractions, as it has been set at present, is of greatest importance not only for the unification of the Party forces, but also for the unification of its language press which is read by more than one hundred fifty thousands of workers of different languages, which is also an indication of the great influence of our Party on that part of the American proletariat and is an indication of the great role they will play in the unification of the working masses under the leadership of the Communist Party and the T. U. U. L. Through the language fractions a whole series of Finnish, Jewish, Hungarian, Italian, Yugoslav, Polish, etc., organizations to which belong hundreds of thousands of workers, are under the Party's influence. This means that through language organizations the Party influences also large sections of the native proletariat.

One of the main faults of the Party in regard to the immigrant workers, to the language organizations in sympathy with the Communist movement is that in the language organizations the percentage of Party members is very low, which is also one of the reasons for too many opportunist deviations, misunderstandings, etc.

In this recruiting campaign besides attracting to our ranks the greatest number of native workers it is extremely important that we bring also to our ranks a greater number of the most class-conscious, most militant members of the language organizations (sick and death benefit societies, cooperatives, educational clubs, etc.) which are under our influence, and recruit also as many militant language workers from within the new unions as possible.

This work the language fractions have to do. They form the links that keep the immigrant masses close to the Party. With the increasing of Party members of different languages the Party will not only increase its influence among these masses of the American proletariat, but the fractions will be in a position to accomplish their tasks more easily within various language organizations and guide them more effectively along the class line. With an increased number of language members the voice of the Communist Party, of the TUUL, of the ILD, etc., can be brought more effectively within the language organizations and this will help to destroy their race and national prejudices, their provincial mentality and will be of a great help in the further amalgamation of the immigrant workers with the proletariat of United States, will create the feeling among the language workers that they are an essential part of American proletariat and that a united, vigorous struggle of all workers against capitalism is necessary.

Through this work the language fractions will increase the number of their active members which will greatly help to further develop and support the language press of the Party and, besides, the Communist Party of the United States can better bring its relief work to the brother Parties, especially in those countries where fascism is in power, the Party here can effectively assist in mobilizing the proletariat of Italy, Yugoslavia, Hungary, Finland, etc., the public opinion of the American proletariat can more effectively be mobilized on the line of struggle against incipient fascism, against social fascism in the United States.

At work, therefore, according to the slogans and instructions of the membership drive, to prepare our Party for harder tasks, for more stubborn struggles now approaching in all capitalist countries, not excluding the United States, and especially in regard to the danger of new imperialist wars. Prepare for coming struggles that will bring the world proletariat towards new victories for the proletarian world revolution.