

The Problem of the Language Fractions

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DURING the last few months the organization department has concentrated on registering the party membership and reorganizing it on the basis of shop and street nuclei. In order to hasten the reorganization and in order to mobilize all our energies for this purpose we have deliberately laid less stress on the question of language fractions, workers' clubs and trade union fractions.

Our immediate organizational tasks are:

1. The organization of efficient language fractions of the workers of the various nationalities belonging to our party.

2. The organization of workers' clubs to draw closer to the party proletarians of various nationalities, workers who are not yet Communists.

3. The organization of a strong trade union fraction apparatus.

4. Putting the shop nuclei, the street nuclei, the language fractions and the trade union fractions to work; energizing or activating them, so to say. In short, we must now make every shop and street nucleus a functioning, a working, a living active unit of the party.

How Shall We Organize Language Fractions?

Every district organizer, in co-operation with the various language district organizers in his territory, should proceed immediately to begin or to complete the organization of language fractions in his district. The steps for the organization of these language fractions should be along the following lines:

1. General membership meetings of all party members of a particular nationality should be called in each city. For example, let us say that there are two Jewish branches in the city of Chicago. A meeting of all the Jewish party members found in these two branches should be called in the city of Chicago. In a city like New York, where there are many Jewish branches and where there are several sections and many sub-sections, it would perhaps be better to combine the Jewish membership of several sections and to have two membership meetings of the Jewish party members in different sections of the city. Each of these membership meetings would consist of the Jewish party members in several combined sections.

The same rule, of course applies to the party members of the other nationalities.

The strictest and completest possible co-operation between the district organizer of the party and the particular language district organizer in question is an absolute prerequisite for the success of these meetings.

2. If possible, every member of the former language branches of our party should be gotten to attend these language membership meetings. Those language party members who have not yet registered to date should then be registered at the language fraction meeting and thus be brot back into the party. At these meetings all the comrades of the particular nationality in question who are already party members thru being connected with a shop or street nucleus and those comrades formerly members of our language branches who register for reorganization at these meetings are to be constituted into the, let us say South Slavic, Finnish, or what not, language fraction of the party in the city.

3. At each of these language fraction meetings there should be elected in accordance with the provisions of the party constitution, an executive committee of the language fraction for the city to be working under the direction of the higher party committee in the city. In cases where two or more membership meetings of a particular nationality have to be held in one city, then a language fraction executive committee should be elected at each meeting. The personnel of the combined committees elected at each of these meetings is to be the city language fraction executive committee.

The party district committee in cities where this committee is located or the city executive committee in the other cities shall attach one of its members as a representative to each of these language fraction executive committees in the various cities. The party representative has a voice and vote.

Constituting the Language Fraction Executive Committee.

4. Our next problem is: what shall guide us in determining the composition of the language fraction executive committees? Who shall be members of these language fraction executive committees? There are two ways of approaching this question.

(a) First of all, our aim should be to have as members of these language fraction executive committees the leading, the most capable, the most active comrades of the nationality in question.

(b) In constituting the language fraction executive committee we may also take into consideration—but not necessarily—the practicability of having the committee composed of those party members who are representative of the various fractions functioning in certain fraternal organizations, national literary associations, national sick and death benefit societies, etc. That is, a language fraction executive committee may be composed of the comrades now functioning in and representative of fractions already working in four or five different fraternal organizations of the particular nationality; or a language fraction may be composed of the most able comrades, regardless of their being presently connected with fraternal organizations. Willingness and ability to work are the first tests in considering qualifications for membership in the language fraction executive committee. We must point out, however, that the representative basis may also be accepted as a method of constituting the language fraction executive committees. Of course a combination of the two methods is the ideal.

5. The fraction executive committees of the various languages in the different cities should meet at least once monthly and more often if necessary. These language fraction city executive committees must make an investigation of the fraternal and benevolent organizations to which their party members are affiliated. For example, the Jewish language fraction executive committee of New York City should find out how many of the New York City Jewish party members belong to the Workmen's Circle and to other Jewish fraternal and benevolent societies. The other language fraction city executive committees should do likewise. These committees should work in the closest touch and harmony with their national language fraction bureaus.

All findings as to membership in the various fraternal organizations must be turned over to the national language fraction bureau of the particular nationality. Thus, let us say that the South Slavic fraction executive committee of the city of Detroit finds that in its local membership there are 25 belonging to one sort of a South Slavic fraternal organization, 15 to a second kind of a benevolent society and three to a third kind of a South Slavic literary society, then it must turn over to the national South Slavic language fraction bureau in Chicago all of this information.

Organizing Fraternal and Benefit Society Fractions.

6. On the basis of these findings as to the fraternal organizations with which the language fraction membership is affiliated there should be organized fractions of party members in the fraternal and benevolent organizations of the language group in question. Thus, we may organize fractions in the Lithuanian literary society, in the South Slavic national benefit society, in various Finnish athletic clubs.

7. General membership meetings of the various language fractions should be held at certain intervals decided upon by the language fraction executive committees in the various cities. At these meetings there may be discussed only the problems of carrying on Communist propaganda among the workers of the national group under consideration and the questions of improving the activities of the Communists in the different fraternal and benevolent societies.

8. The tasks of the language fraction executive committees are as follows

(a) To guide the general Communist activities in the ranks of the non-Communist workers of the particular national group under the direction of the highest party committee in the city.

(b) To organize and guide the activities of the various fractions set up in different fraternal organizations of their nationality.

(c) To keep regularly and fully in touch with the national fraction bureau in question for guidance as to general policies for their special activities in the ranks of the non-Communist proletarians of their nationality and in the various benefit societies.

(d) To raise funds and secure subscriptions among the non-Communist workers of their nationality in order to help finance the national, district and city language fraction executive committees and to secure the maintenance of their various language organs.

(e) The language fraction city executive committees, under the direction of their language fraction, district executives and national bureaus and in the strictest co-operation with the district committees of the party, shall take steps to organize, wherever necessary, workers' clubs of a particular language group either in each city or in different sections of the city as the conditions dictate. The details of procedure in organizing the workers' clubs will be elaborated in the forthcoming article.