

# PARTY ORGANIZER

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## Opportunism Greatest Obstacle in Recruiting

**T**HE strike wave rapidly spreading throughout the country is now taking on added tempo as more and more workers are fighting against the effects of the National Recovery Act on their living conditions. The militant industrial unions are gaining numerical strength in the process of leading hundreds of strikes throughout the country.

In these recent strikes, we have even succeeded to some extent in overcoming many of the weaknesses of the past, chief of which was our sectarian approach towards the developing of broad cadres of new proletarian forces. In the present strikes with new locals being set up, we have brought forward many non-Party workers into the leadership of the unions and struggles.

In this very favorable situation for the building and strengthening of our Party into a real mass force, we find our Party is not making the necessary headway. In fact, recruiting of these excellent new forces into our Party is still proceeding at a snail's pace in relation to the rapidly developing movement. Why is it that our Party is not growing more rapidly?

The main reason, of course, for the lack of recruiting is the lack of systematic planned activity of the fractions and units; the failure to select the best fighters in the shops and winning them for our Party. But behind these weaknesses there was and is even today, in many places a dangerous opportunistic approach to our mass work, which is in the main responsible for the failure to build the Party. In many instances, we find that recruiting of these militant workers into our Party is consciously pushed to the background. In other places, some Party members have developed the theory that our work of building the union will be hindered if we ask the workers who are participating in the struggle to join the Party. We have even cases where the Party units are prohibited from distributing Party leaflets to striking workers.

The danger of pursuing such practices can readily be seen in some of our recent experiences. The bourgeoisie very skillfully maneuvers with the "red scare." The A. F. of L. bureaucrats and other agents of the bosses use this issue against the Party and the industrial unions. Our Party fractions in the unions and the Party organizations do not sufficiently meet this issue. In most cases we still capitulate before the reactionary forces, fearing that bringing forward the Party in these struggles would endanger the strike or the building of the union.

### Wrong Methods

In the practical application of this opportunist tendency we find the following experiences: the Party organizations (section committees, units, etc.) are working hard to make contacts and develop struggles in a given factory. After a strike breaks out, the Party organizations no longer act as a collective body, but our comrades as individuals actively participate in the strike and very often forget the Communist Party. The Party organizations stop functioning. The Party no longer speaks to the workers. No more Party shop papers, no more leaflets or meetings by the Party are arranged. Or else, the Party organizations are not disturbed by the strike. They continue their regular routine life, and do not realize that their revolutionary duty is to participate in every struggle of the workers. These comrades do not understand that there cannot be revolutionary life apart from the mass struggles. In both instances we have similar results. The Party's face is entirely hidden. The workers don't see the Communist Party.

We have in the struggles that have taken place, comrades who have been in the very forefront of the fight, who have gained prestige and the confidence of the workers. A Party comrade who militantly fights with the workers in their strike has in most cases no reason to hide or deny that he is a Communist. Who could better convince the workers about the Communist Party, than just this Communist, who fights together with them? And when is there a better time to build our Party, than during the struggle, when the Communist workers show the non-Party workers through their self-sacrificing, untiring activity that they are not a secret "red spectre" as the bosses and reformists want the workers to believe, but militant fighters in the defense of the workers' interests. This is the time when we can show the workers best, that we are part and parcel, flesh and blood of the working class. If we would consciously build around these comrades groups of non-Party actives, at the same time winning them for the Party, the tempo of recruitment would increase a hundredfold.

No one can deny that our Party comrades, our fractions in the industrial unions, in the A. F. of L. and independent unions are working hard during strikes. To recruit members from the factories or from the unions is not an easy task. The Party fractions and shop nuclei have to work systematically, selecting the best fighters, the most promising workers, and patiently, persistently develop them politically and win them for the Party. Sometimes we have to spend many days before we convince the worker that his place is in the Communist Party. We shall not have the illusion that radicalization

of the masses means that they are all ready at once to join the Communist Party, that only a general leaflet or a mass meeting is needed to bring them to our ranks. What is important above all, in addition to improving our political mass education of the workers, is this personal attention to individual workers, this planned recruiting of the new forces that are being brought forward as a result of the struggles. Unless this becomes an integral part of our work in the unions, we cannot conceive that our Party will march forward at a more rapid pace than heretofore.

### Recruit Into Our Ranks

Our systematic planned recruiting in the factories and unions will develop more rapidly if we simultaneously strengthen and improve our mass agitation and propaganda. The workers should see the Communist Party every day, everywhere. The Party must explain all political events in leaflets, shop papers, meetings, through the *Daily Worker*. And in all of the activities in the shops, in the unions, among the unemployed and other mass organizations, we should recruit for the Party. No district, section committee, unit or fraction meeting should conclude without taking up correctly the problem of recruiting. The Party must be there where the masses are working, living, suffering and fighting, if we want to win over the majority of the proletariat. And in these places we have to recruit the best, most class conscious, most active, most courageous workers into our ranks.

Never before was the connection of the government with the bosses of the factories so evident as now. There is no economic struggle or strike where the N.R.A. does not play a strike-breaking role; where the city, state and federal administration does not directly intervene against the workers, through arbitration and with the aid of the city and state police, or national guards. In such a situation the Party and every single member of the Party has the revolutionary duty to bring to the workers on the basis of their practical experiences the role of the capitalist state, the essence of bourgeois democracy, the betraying role of the social-fascists on the one hand and the revolutionary role of the Communist Party on the other.

The Open Letter has stated that "never before was the situation in the country so favorable for the development of the Communist Party into a real revolutionary mass Party." This must be understood by every Party member. This should permeate the ranks of every Party unit. And with confidence and boldness we should not hesitate to bring into our ranks thousands of new workers.

—J. P.