

Emphasis on Communist Education

By MARTIN ABERN

Comrade Rebecca Grecht writes interestingly in the DAILY WORKER on the subject, "Communist Education—A Pressing Need." Substantially, there can be little disagreement with her opinion that Communist education has not been sufficiently emphasized and that there is a need of co-ordinating the various phases of Party activity so that each balances the other in a beneficial way.

A big problem of the Party is to gather organizational strength. A strong organization campaign is essential. The Party has been carrying on political struggles beyond its organizational strength. It has gained much influence among sections of the workers and farmers thru its political activity, especially in the campaigns for a mass Farmer-Labor Party and for the protection of the foreign-born workers. Its political influence exceeds its organizational strength. It is necessary therefore that the Party gain more than it has organizationally from its political and industrial activities. Unless such an organizational strengthening is obtained, then the political value of the Party's work is somewhat diminished. In Germany, for instance, the Communist Party carried on immense campaigns among the workers; its ideas dominated the masses, but recruits to the German Party in a corresponding degree were not obtained. The masses did not fully recognize that it was the Communist Party of Germany which was instrumental in putting forward these ideas and slogans. Consequently, much of the work of the German Communist Party did not materialize in organizational gain. It did not receive the proper credit for its work. Much of the work must perforce, therefore, be done over again, in a measure, in order to turn the minds of the workers directly towards the German Communist Party as the genuine working class leader.

Workers Party Dynamo of F.-L. P.

The Workers Party has been, and is, the dynamic force behind the Farmer-Labor movement. This is recognized in a greater or lesser degree, but not sufficiently so. The emphasis of the Party has been on the campaign and propaganda by the Workers Party for the formation of a mass F.-L. P. and not enough on the need of organizing the influence thus gained into the ranks of the Workers Party itself. Propagandically, from the standpoint of gaining much influence for the Workers Party among the rank and file trades unionists and other workers, the July 3rd Conference in Chicago is an example. Leaving aside the question of the formation of the Federated Farmer-Labor Party, there can be no doubt that the Party enormously increased its prestige and influence.

But passing events, the swift development of the Farmer-Labor movement, sweeping into its ranks many who formerly opposed such a movement, or were lukewarm toward it, have resulted in the Party not holding entirely the influence obtained thru its farmer-labor party campaign. This is in part because the Party stressed the political necessity of a mass farmer-labor party, but not enough the role of the Workers Party and the need of organizing those workers close to it into the ranks of the Workers Party. Because the Party placed foremost, it seems, the necessity of the formation of a farmer-labor party and not enough of the W. P. itself, many now accept the F.-L. P. movement, but do not see the positive role the Workers Party played in it. Today there are more who will stress the need for a huge organizational campaign by the Workers Party.

Our Party played a tremendous role in the recent United Mine Workers Convention. It is necessary to organize this influence into membership into the Workers Party. Only the Communists, in the last analysis, can be depended upon. Many miners are very sympathetic to the efforts the Party comrades made at the U. M. W. A. convention. Strong attempts must be made to bring them into the Party and to acquaint them closely with the role and program

of the Workers Party in order that the future activities in the U. M. W. A. can be even more positive and steadily broadened, and the work of transforming the U. M. W. A. into a revolutionary organization hastened.

Party Education Is Imperative.

Political, organizational, industrial and Communist educational activity must go on simultaneously, in as close a degree and ratio to each other as is physically possible. Then our members will better understand and more surely carry out the Party's political directives and other work. Even as the political influence of the Party is greater than its organizational strength, so also is the political activity not sufficiently countered by a corresponding Communist understanding on the part of the members as a whole. In efforts to get out mass political propaganda, we have often run away from the members insofar as the mass of the members did not always comprehend clearly what the Party was trying to carry out. There was not sufficient clarity of the members on policy. The Labor Party policy, among others, is one. If there is to be a 100 per cent response from the mem-

we faced by this situation, but even in Russia the Party is confronted with the task of raising the cultural level of the nuclei (the Party political units) in order that they may distinctly remain far ahead of the non-partisan elements. Of course, purely pedagogical means are not enough; for the raising of the Party intellectual standard is a political problem, which means that besides the internal teaching mediums, the whole Party must carry out the Party tasks. Thus, thru schooling and struggle the level of Party understanding is raised. Every member, then, must be drawn into Party life and made to understand that he is a necessary part of the Party organism.

Bring Branch Discussions To Daily Questions.

There must be at the Party meetings, especially in the branches, more discussions on topics very close to the daily lives of the workers. The large political problems will interest the Party member, of course, but these must, further, be brought closer to his daily life and to the lives of other workers. The branches should have discussion by the members on life in the shop. Every member can and should speak five or ten minutes

greater degree, the Party will find itself greatly handicapped in its organizational, industrial and political activity.

Education Thru Class Struggle.

Organizers and speakers who have visited the membership from coast to coast are frank to declare that not only must there be a greater intensification of Communist educational activity, but that there must be carried on activity to make the members understand how to carry out even the elementary and routine work of the Party.

To build up the Party, to increase its political and other activities, we must have a trained officialdom. Functionary training must be made a vital part of our education. Organizational and functional strength, trained officials, will be obtained thru actual work in carrying out the Party program and thru functionary classes to hasten the development of trained officials. Functionary classes should be started wherever possible to teach the members how to handle meetings and other posts, large and small, in the Party. Each member should be assigned duties to perform with a view to building up the Party and learning thru work and experience the best methods of procedure. Communist education, whether in theory or in training of Party functionaries, cannot be gotten just from text books. A theoretical training is essential. At the same time, we must recognize that one of our slogans is: Education, not only thru books, but education thru active participation in the class struggle, in the daily lives and struggles of the workers. Education thru activity and activity thru education is our method.

Making the Work Cohesive.

Another need, in the writer's opinion, is to bring the members closer to the Central Executive Committee of the Party, and other official bodies, such as the District Executive Committees.

The Central Executive Committee must not be removed from the members, as if one were composed of the untouchable goods and the other of the lowly meek. Of course, this situation or impression by no means prevails.

There can be no doubt, however, that it would produce a healthy effect if comrades active in the various political, industrial, or other spheres, were brought more often before the Central Executive Committee to discuss and give their points of view.

Youth Is Keynote In Problem.

In carrying out its political and other policies, the Party must not forget the Young Workers League movement. In the Young Workers League, an English-speaking young Communist movement is being developed. The real basis for an American leadership of the Communist movement which can make itself felt in the American labor and political movement is here being laid. Every encouragement should be given to the young workers' movement. Those who are joining the Young Workers League are new to the radical and revolutionary, or Communist movement. Their brains are open to clean cut Communist education and activity. They have not most of the confusion which many comrades of the Workers Party brought with them from the Socialist Party. The latter is nothing to be scornful about; it is merely a condition of fact. The young workers have been born into a period of militarism and imperialism; there are no pacifist illusions about them. They can grasp Communist thought and action without difficulty, whereas many Party comrades who have lived in the period of social reform and pacifism find it difficult. These are but a few of the reasons why the Party must lend strong encouragement and aid to the Young Workers League and thus lay a real basis for a strongly-knit Workers Party.

Shop Units Organization of the Party.

A very essential matter which must claim the attention of the Party more than ever before is the shop nuclei, or shop unit form of organization. The shop nuclei form of organization has been proved the correct political (Continued on Page Seven.)



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bership, they must fully know and understand what is wanted. The need of more intense Communist education is hence, as Comrade Grecht says, obvious.

The Two Forms of Education.

Our educational work takes on, of course, the forms of internal education, or education within the Party, and external education, or education among the masses. With the latter we need not deal here, except to say that our propaganda among the masses must deal with the elementary principles of the class struggle and the A B C of Communism. We must not speak above the heads of the members of our class who have, on the whole, never been affected by radical or revolutionary doctrines, but, on the contrary, have been poisoned against them.

But the problem and need of the education of the membership has reached a point where every possible action to satisfy this need must be taken. The level of Communist understanding of the members must be raised; it must easily be above the understanding of those outside the Party, if the Party members are to make their influence felt among the sympathetic, neutral or non-partisan workers. Not only in America are

on conditions as he finds them in his shop and how it affects him and his fellow workers. These are matters which are close enough to him to understand thoroly. This is always interesting.

An effort should be made to develop more systematically the Communist education of the members. Theoretical training will be obtained, in a large measure, thru study classes, lectures, discussions on important current events, a study of the labor movement, its problems in this country, etc. All branches must institute study, lecture, or shop nuclei classes. Whether the lecture, text books, or other methods will have to be employed by a branch or shop nucleus will have to be determined by the local conditions and teaching facilities, but a strong effort must be made to increase the educational and teaching apparatus. It is to be hoped that the Party can institute soon District and National training schools where the selected comrades can go thru a course of Communist theory and practice. One thing is certain, that not as much has been done as is possible, even with the physical limitations prevailing in the Party. Still, unless the Communist understanding of the members is increased in a much

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form not only in Russia but also in Germany and is being proved so in other countries. The organizational and political roots of the Party must be in the shops, where the real life of the worker revolves. The shop unit lends itself splendidly to work among the masses of workers. The shop unit is the political pivot around which the Party work will turn. In this the life of the workers as it appears at first hand can be keenly and understandingly discussed and the lessons drawn therefrom. The members organized politically in the shops, factories, etc., can be mobilized immediately for any campaign of the Party. It is essential that the Party take up more avidly the matter of re-organizing and organizing the Party on the basis of shop units, since they will be the greatest stimulus to political and industrial activity.

The Party is in a very healthy condition. It has carried on a great political and industrial activity; it has grown and gained strength. Branches are being organized daily. The Party is virile and alive. That makes it all the more necessary for the Party to look itself over and see what are its most pressing needs at the moment.

The Party has great political influence and is growing, but it is necessary to start a huge organization campaign to develop its strength to meet its political influence. It is essential, therefore, also to raise the Communist understanding of the membership to meet its greater political, industrial and organizational work.

Intensify and organize Communist education in the Party; increase it manifold thru the starting of systematic education in the branches, cities and districts. The Party must make a great organization drive to draw in thousands more of the exploited wage earners and exploited farmers. The present Central Executive Committee of the Party is fully aware of these problems and is taking the steps to effect a more intense education of the membership, to organize more of the workers under the Communist influence into the Party. The Central Executive Committee is trying to lay the proper emphasis on each phase of Party activity: political, industrial, educational, organizational; and to co-ordinate these as one unit and thus carry out the Party policies with thoro understanding of its strength, influence and possibilities.