

14 Charles Lane
New York, N.Y. 10014
January 28, 1976

TO ALL ORGANIZERS AND EDUCATION DIRECTORS

Dear Comrades,

Following are some suggestions from the National Education Department on the organization of branch educational programs for the Spring.

Organizers should note that a second copy of this communication has been included in this mailing for the branch educational director.

1. Education for Provisional Members

In order to facilitate recruitment to the party, we have established the category of provisional members.

Thus, it is important, now, for branches to establish educational programs to introduce these comrades to the basic political ideas and history of our movement and help them make the final decision about membership.

Provisional members vary widely. Some will be workers, others students; some will have considerable knowledge of our ideas and activities, while others will know very little; some will have been active in struggles, while others may never have participated; they will be of different nationalities and may be comfortable in different languages. They will have many different questions and concerns -- some may have questions about religion, others about what socialism is, and still others may have questions about Maoism.

To be effective, our educational programs for provisional members must be tailor-made to the specific needs of each individual. In reality, there will need to be as many educational programs as there are provisional members.

A key role will be played in many cases by patient and extensive individual discussion. Branches may want to consider assigning comrades to work with provisional members -- answering their questions, helping them prepare reading programs in line with their particular needs and interests, and carrying on general political discussions. In some cases, it may be desirable to suggest that provisional members attend contact classes on socialism. In still other cases, provisional members may be ready to participate in the regular branch educational programs without special assistance.

Because of the wide differences among provisional members, it is impossible to develop one or two programs that will meet all their needs. Great flexibility and imagination will be needed.

All provisional members will benefit from a study of the party's political resolution, "Prospects for Socialism in America."

By now branches have received the five-class study guide on this topic that was prepared by the National Education Department.

2. Contact Classes

As our prospects for recruitment continue to grow, contact classes will play an important role. There are at least two basic types of contact classes.

One are classes aimed at drawing new people to our movement. They are basic, introductory classes on the ideas of socialism and are often held at the party headquarters. Branches should seek to establish such classes as a regular part of branch activity. Consideration should be given to publicizing the class schedules through leaflets, through advertisements in the Militant calendar, and by other means.

Branches should also be alert to possibilities to establish small contact classes around a workplace, a neighborhood, or among the activists in a particular struggle. Such classes may be more specialized than the advertised contact classes, depending on the interests of the specific group of contacts. They may center, for instance, around our strategy for the labor movement. Such classes can be particularly effective in drawing people closer to us because the participants already know each other and have areas of mutual interest.

3. Branch Internal Education

The aim of the Spring class series should be, to the greatest extent possible, to involve every member in a class, with each having the time to devote study to the subject. In many cases, this can best be accomplished through a concentrated class series, limiting class sessions to a realistic number (three to five) over a short period of time.

One method that has often proven effective is the holding of special branch educational weekends organized around a single topic. This allows the branch to organize its work to allow for a brief period of concentrated educational activity. Such classes are also usually very attractive to contacts, although their primary aim should be education of our members.

Some branches are experimenting with smaller class sizes in their internal educational programs. In some cases, this requires holding several classes concurrently. This may increase participation in discussion, and may also provide greater flexibility in the scheduling of classes.

The following are topics branches may want to consider for Spring internal education:

a. Teamster Politics

The third volume of Dobbs' series on the Teamsters is especially valuable as a handbook on the question of independent working class political action and for the lessons it contains on revolutionary work in a labor party. A series on this book can be

accompanied by the study of Teamster Rebellion and Teamster Power. A four-class study guide on Teamster Politics was sent to the branches in November 1975 and will be included in an upcoming Education for Socialists bulletin, Guide to Marxist Education - II. Study guides on Teamster Rebellion and Teamster Power are in Twelve Study Guides for Classes (SWP Party Builder Vol. 8, No. 3, \$.40).

b. A Socialist Strategy for the Labor Movement

A class series on this topic can focus on the party's call for a labor party and its use in our propaganda. A five-class series on socialist strategy in the labor movement is in Twelve Study Guides for Classes (Party Builder, Vol. 8, No. 3, \$.40).

c. Women's Liberation

The struggle for the adoption of the ERA, and the struggle to preserve legalized abortion, along with developments in the leading women's organizations, make it important for members to study the socialist analysis of the oppression of women. A four-class study guide on this topic was sent to the branches in November 1975 and will be included in the Education for Socialists bulletin, Guide to Marxist Education - II.

d. Stalinism

An introductory series on this topic may be useful, in view of the significant number of members who have not studied this before. A six-class study guide on Stalinism appears in Twelve Study Guides for Classes (Party Builder, Vol. 8, No. 3, \$.40). A four-class study guide on The Third International after Lenin was sent to branches in July 1975, and will appear in Guide to Marxist Education - II. A study guide on The Revolution Betrayed will be prepared soon.

3. Socialist Educational Weekends

Socialist Educational Weekends, when well-organized and publicized, can be useful recruiting tools. Such weekend activities, unlike the branch educational weekends described earlier, are not primarily internally oriented, but should be seen as propaganda activities for our movement.

The most successful Socialist Educational Weekends have concentrated on a single topic like African liberation, the women's movement, or the economy. Branches or locals that decide to hold such activities will want to link them closely to the Camejo-Reid campaign.

Party Publications

The following publications are available from the National Education Department:

a. Guide to Marxist Education (Education for Socialists, \$.90)

This publication contains eight study guides on basic topics, such as party organizational principles, the Chinese revolution and Maoism, united front vs. popular front, etc. In addition, it contains an article by Gus Horowitz on party education, a listing

of some of the tapes available from the National Office, and other items.

- b. Twelve Study Guides for Classes (Party Builder, Vol. 8, No. 3, 32 pp., \$.40)

This contains study guides on Chile, the history of the Fourth International, Dobbs' Teamsters series, Speeches to the Party, Black Liberation and Socialism, and other subjects.

Both Guide to Marxist Education and Twelve Study Guides for Classes are very useful for those who want to study topics individually, as well as for branch education.

- c. Structure and Organizational Principles of the Party, by Farrell Dobbs (available in Internal Information Bulletin No. 7 in 1974, 96 pp., \$1.20)

The Education for Socialists publication containing Dobbs' lecture series is out of print. However, it appears as an appendix to Internal Information Bulletin No. 7 in 1974. This very useful bulletin also contains the 1965 resolution on "The Organizational Principles of the Socialist Workers Party," Cannon's "Internationalism and the SWP," and Jack Barnes' August 1974 talk on "Secret Factionalism -- a Threat to the Unity of the International."

Copies of this bulletin are available to all party members, provisional members, and YSA members.

If branches wish to order any of these publications, they should fill out the form below and send it to the National Office.

Comradely,

Fred Feldman

Fred Feldman
SWP National Office

Return to: National Education Department, SWP, 14 Charles Lane,
New York, New York 10014

Please send _____ copies of Guide to Marxist Education (56 pp. \$.90)

Please send _____ copies of Twelve Study Guides for Classes (32 pp. \$.40)

Please send _____ copies of Internal Information Bulletin No. 7 in 1974 (96 pp. \$1.20)

Name _____

Address _____

City/State/Zip Code _____

Branch/local/at-large area: