

# Party Education

During this crucial war period, when every man and woman is needed for full participation in every aspect of the struggle against fascist destruction, the Workers' School of New York City faced the question of bringing Marxist-Leninist education to the workers of the city in such a way as to require from them a minimum of time and effort. Colleges in New York have extension courses. Why could not the Workers' School have the same? It could and did.

Just about one year ago, in the Spring of 1942, it organized its Extension Division for the express purpose of servicing trade unionists and community clubs, especially those community clubs located at a distance from the school. This made it possible for men and women to continue their activities in Civil Defense, in campaigns for rationing, price-fixing, legislative activities, in political organizations to which they were affiliated, etc., etc.

With the establishment of the Extension Division, came requests from the State Education Department of the Communist Party for aid in carrying out part of their educational program. For instance, the Division was asked to supply teachers who would conduct systematic education at branch meetings. At these meetings, arrangements were made for classes lasting for an hour, leaving the second hour for the transaction of the official business of the branch. These classes and meetings were usually arranged bi-weekly, though in some cases there were weekly sessions. It was possible to invite to these classes many workers from the communities and trade unions who were interested in the program and activities of these branches.

## KEY WAR QUESTIONS

At the clubs themselves classes were also arranged. Members of these clubs faced the problem of deepening their understanding and the understanding of their neighbors on such questions as, "Why must we support the policies of the President today?" "How do we strengthen the unity of our nation and of the United Nations so as to win the war quickly and to guarantee a livable post-war world?"

"What must be our attitude and that of our country to the Soviet Union?" "What changes have taken place in the economy of our country during this war period?" "What do these changes mean to us in terms of price-fixing, wages, rationing, buying bonds and stamps, etc.?"

"What must be our role in our trade unions and in our communities, if we are to strengthen the economic front of our country?" "Who are the appeasers and defeatists? How do they hinder the carrying out of the correct policies adopted by our country's administration in the winning of the war?"

Such questions and many others were asked at the classes. It was found that the best guide for the answering of these questions was Earl Browder's book, "Victory—and After," supplemented by his many speeches and writings since the publication of the book.

The fact that the need for education was widely felt is reflected in the hundreds who attended the classes organized by the Extension Division of the Workers' School. From September through half of February, over 1,500 students attended 112 classes. Of this number, 837 were men and 686 women. As will be seen from the following table, these students came from direct war production industries, from light industries, from among white-collar workers and professionals, and from the most active elements among the Negro people and national groups. Since February, at least 40 more classes have been organized, some composed of students not attending classes earlier in the year, and others of those who continued their studies in other subjects, as American History, the National Question, etc.

## CLASSES ORGANIZED BY THE EXTENSION DIVISION, WORKERS SCHOOL

September, 1942—February, 1943

COMPOSITION	No. of Classes	Total Attending	Men	Women
Community clubs .....	16	219	66	153
Waterfront .....	15	138	113	25
War industries .....	13	149	105	44
Needle trades .....	11	222	153	69
Building trades .....	3	50	48	2
Wholesale and retail workers	5	50	26	24
Food workers .....	7	82	66	16
Printers .....	1	15	15	—
Furniture workers .....	2	21	18	3
White collar workers .....	8	107	54	53
Professionals .....	4	57	22	35
Negro and National Groups	12	229	89	140
Classes upstate .....	2	15	7	8
Nassau .....	3	21	6	15
Women .....	2	27	—	27
AFL workers .....	1	11	7	4
Seminars .....	2	24	13	11
Teacher training .....	5	86	29	57
<b>TOTAL .....</b>	<b>112</b>	<b>1,523</b>	<b>837</b>	<b>686</b>

The fairly good results of the activities of the Workers' School Extension Division have laid the base for further work. It is possible to increase the number of courses to be given on various aspects of the war, and to reach much greater numbers of students. Through this medium a modest contribution to the war effort can be made on the ideological front so as to help to clarify many important questions on the war, to help raise morale on the home front, and to show the necessity for battling for correct policy in the life and death struggle for victory over fascist barbarism.

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