Clipping of Note NUMBER 57

Gaining Recruits for an Idea

As communism-socialism has gained acceptance over the years—usually under other names in the Western world—it is often asked: "Why don't the advocates of freedom use the same mass approach that has been used so effectively by the Communists?" The question implies that the way to win adherents to the cause of freedom is, in effect, to get up on a soapbox and beckon a crowd to gather 'round.

The following advice, extracted and condensed from a copy of *Recruit*—a handbook of advice on gaining recruits to the Communist party in the United States—shows how mistaken is this notion.

LIST PROSPECTIVE RECRUITS. Take a sheet of paper and write down the names of everyone you know. Start with the people you know best—your relatives, close friends, shopmates, fellow unionists, neighbors. Then search your mind for the names of other people you know and put them down—perhaps a member of an organization, or anyone whom you meet occasionally and can make it your business to meet more often.

LIST FACTS ABOUT EACH. Go over these names carefully. Jot down everything you remember about each one. What is his economic condition? What issues interest him? What does he read? To what organizations does he belong? Are you familiar with any personal or family problems he may have? Could you invite him to your home, to a party or to the movies?

FOCUS ON SPECIAL APPROACH. Every prospective recruit has certain special problems. He requires an *individual* campaign. Therefore, once your general survey has been made, plan a special approach for *each* person. Select those phases of the program which would most likely appeal to that particular individual. Convince him in terms of *his own experience, his* own special *interests.*

THEN GO TO WORK. Go to these people. Don't wait until you meet them accidentally. Organize your time so that you can spend several hours every week with each prospect. Make them your friends! Keep track of each one of them in an organized way and—keep following through!

Talk to them about anything that interests them. Listen more than you talk. Be patient and understanding. Explain and answer their questions calmly, slowly and simply. Talk their own language. Stick to one idea at a time—the one that's bothering them now. Don't try to explain everything in ten minutes. And, above all, *know what you are talking about.*

STRESS PATH TO SOCIALISM. Some prospects may already believe in Socialism. These should be easy. Show them that the Party is the only fighter for Socialism in America. Convince them that the most effective way they can fight for Socialism is within the ranks of the Party—not outside of it.

Sure, you'll get red-baiting arguments. Don't get angry or excited. Take it easy. In addition to lists of suggested general literature for prospective recruits, special literature is provided for recruiting needs. Use it! This is your final clincher. It will do most of your work for you. Use it discriminately. Select specific literature for specific people.

AND FINALLY. This advice won't recruit anybody. These are just the tools. Pick them up and go to work. *Remember – every recruit is an individual campaign! You must hand-tailor your approach to the particular person you are trying to recruit.* Keep after it. Don't get discouraged. Don't forget, it took you quite a long time, too.

Thus, in recruiting new members to the Communist party, they concentrate on the individual approach. The beliefs, prejudices, and individuality of each prospective recruit are carefully considered. The communist ideas and beliefs are then imparted on a person-to-person basis.

The individualistic approach, with its respect for individuals and their rights, seems educationally sound. But a recruit to communism, once he has been caught in the web, is forced to surrender these same personal rights. This is deception, of course, but it does not bother those who have embraced the code: "The end justifies the means."

The Libertarian, on the other hand, continues to respect the beliefs and rights of individuals, even after the educational courtship. For him, the end is consistent with the means.

F. A. Harper
of the Foundation staff

Additional copies: 5 free, then 1¢ each.