

# BOLSHEVISM AND BOLSHEVIK PARTY

## (Notes for Central Party School)

1) Democratic centralism is the organisational principle of the party which is based on the marxist-leninist global perspective. This principle of democratic centralism that was put forth by comrade Lenin and was adopted by the Comintern is the organizational principle of our party too.

2) Comrade Lenin had developed the theory of imperialism the highest stage of capitalism and defined the character of revolution in colonies and semi-colonies. As the role of working class advanced increasingly in the Global stream of revolution comrade Lenin put forth new organisational principles and new organisational forms.

3) All the old social democratic organisations were only having the goal to work within the capitalist system. It was not their aim to have revolutionary systemic change and hence don't need revolutionary organisation .

4) But, the organisation that has to destroy the bourgeois state and has to establish socialist state in the place of that will have to be qualitatively different. The communist Party has to be an organisation that is capable of waging ideological political cultural and organisational struggle against the strong state machinery and the strong ruling classes that run it. This is exactly what had been proven by Bolshevik Party by achieving the great October Revolution.

5) Nowadays, even in the countries where parliamentary democratic system prevails, if a party determines to remain as an organisation orientated for parliamentary election activities it can not fulfill the revolutionary goal of systemic change. The aim of the communist party is to organise the working class and revolutionary masses including the Peasantry. Only by doing so it could be made into a mass revolutionary party. It has to recruit the most progressive vanguard sections of the proletariat as its members on regular scale. Only thus it could be the vanguard of the proletariat. Simultaneously, it must be the inseparable part of the proletariat as a whole too.

6) The party should game the quality of working in any situation. It will be wrong to assume that all the open work including that for parliamentary activity will be sustaining in all countries without any hindrance forever. Communist Party must be capable to face and surpass various adversities such as quasi-fascist and fascist rule.

7) The Communist Party must acquire the quality to manoeuvre with flexibility according to concrete situations without compromising principles.

8) Unlike other political parties, the Communist party must uphold democratic centralism in order to achieve its goal.

9) It must be clarified what is meant by the term 'Democratic Centralism'. Democratic centralism is not simply to take decision always in accordance with majority opinion. That is, the substantial core of Democratic Centralism is that the minority must abide by majority and the individual must submit to the interest of the organisation. The theoretical and practical sides of Democratic Centralism got forged to shape from the ideological struggles between the Mensheviks and Bolsheviks led by comrade Lenin within the Russian Social Democratic Party. It was through the practical experiences of Russian revolution, through such a process, that the principles of Democratic Centralism evolved. After detailed discussions in the third Congress of the Communist International that Democratic Centralism was put forth as the Organisational principle for all the communist parties at international level.

10) Even though Mensheviks got extinct in the advancement of history Bolshevism and the organisational principles that it put forth were attacked top to bottom as a task by the heirs of Mensheviks such as social democrats anarchists and others like them. These forces still continue their criticism against the communist parties and against democratic centralism. Not only right wingers like Kautsky but people like Rosa Luxemburg also put forth criticism against Democratic Centralism. Even though people like Kautsky considered party to be precondition for revolutionary activity systemic change was not their goal. Rosa Luxemburg and others saw

that the party has to evolve naturally as the product of revolutionary mass movement. According to Lenin party is the result and product of mass movement and class struggle.

11) Those who oppose Democratic Centralism actually oppose systemic change itself. The difference among them are that some of them do it knowingly and the others do it unknowingly.

12) Generally the ruling classes won't allow the peaceful advancement of revolution. Only a party based on Democratic Centralism can meet the challenges put up by the class enemies and their state machinery. Democratic centralism is necessary to put up defence. That is not a question of principle alone. Instead, it is a vital question of precise practice. In a country like India from the day of inception itself Communist Party had advanced facing hard situations. In 1920s, in the days of its formation itself Peshawar Conspiracy case and many such false cases were framed against it and several communists were assassinated. Several times the communist party was banned. Thousands were slaughtered in Punnapra Vayalar, Telangana, Tebhaga and Naxalbari. During emergency lakhs were jailed by way of banning open and legal activities. Only by upholding Democratic Centralism the party can face such situations.

13) The ruling classes will shed their 'democratic mask' whenever they face challenge to their power. It is the Organisational principle that emboldens the Communist Party to face all these.

14) The principle of Democratic Centralism is being put to practice not by setting a ratio between democracy and centralisation.

15) All the fallacies and deviations will affect the very principle of Democratic Centralism itself. It is impossible to practice Democratic Centralism in a social democratic party or in a left sectarian party. Democratic Centralism is not a suitable form and organisational principle for such organisations. Democratic Centralism is impossible in the absence of correct ideological political line. Organisational centralisation is impossible in the absence of correct political centralisation.

16) As the former exemplifies the revisionist and social democratic parties the latter had occurred in the case of the ML movements that took form by the end of 60s.

17) It should be in the light of the above that we have to have perspective regarding our efforts to change ourselves into a mass revolutionary party half a century after the said period. From the beginning of the stage of Political Reorganization the goal of communist unity too has to be added on to it.

18) The Communist League of 1848 and the Communist International that were founded by Marx and Engels became the basis of the Leninist Organisational principles. What Lenin did was to develop the positions and assessments of Marx and Engels according to changed concrete situation. It was in his work 'One step forward One step back' that Lenin put forth his concept of party as the vanguard of the proletariat. Lenin told that it is not alone a class conscious military detachment of the proletariat but , an organised military detachment of the working class too. Lenin gave emphasis to the party discipline in this book. Lenin's perception regarding the party advanced further by the time of Russian Revolution. Even Trotsky, who had references with Lenin on many issues had agreed with Democratic Centralism put forth by Lenin and, himself gave demarcative contributions in forming and leading the Red Army.

19) In the 9th conference it was emphasized that the party organisation has to be expanded to North India. There is development in that direction. Party centre has to be viewed with this immediacy of a task.

20) Only by strengthening party centre the activities could be led in correct direction. Most dedicated Central leaders must work undertaking responsibilities at party centres. Political and Organisational decisions must be taken for this. All kinds of obstacles in the path to achieve the said must be fought and defeated.

## 21) PARTY FUND

The central leadership must take policy decisions to collect funds in the new situation. Accounts must be inspected steadily and errors and deviations must be corrected appropriately.

## 22) PARTY SCHOOLING

Party school system must be implemented from top down to district level.

23) In the present stage in which the party is facing attacks at ideological political and cultural levels, vigilance must be kept against identity politics and its various manifestations. The confusions that are created within the communist party by rightwing ideas including postmodernism are very serious issues.

## 24) CADRE POLICY

CADRE means the party's structure. Without this organic structure the party can not sustain. The party should find out various qualities of all the cadres and must develop them. The party must form a cadre policy.

## 25) INNER PARTY DEMOCRACY

The steady and continuous system of reporting from top to bottom and vice-versa shall strengthen the inner party democracy. There must be space for exchange of ideas within party committees. That should be promoted. Individuals have the right to keep their opinions that are not against Marxism Leninism and the party. Even though such opinions may cause differences of ideas among comrades such differences won't affect Democratic Centralism. That is, along with taking collective decisions there should be collective implementation too in order to make Democratic Centralism felt at the level of practical experience of it.

## 26) CLASS ORGANIZATIONS AND MASS ORGANIZATIONS

we had evaluated at the time of our party formation that the class and mass Organisations are highways to revisionism. As we began to rectify this and form class and mass organisations in the first stage the tendency was to make those organisations cover organisations. Even as TUCI was formed in 1989- 1990 the attempt was to make it the replica of the party. When the party called for boycotting elections the class and mass organisations including TUCI also followed it raising the same slogan. It was in the last conference of TUCI that this fallacy was changed. Now this is pointed out with the purpose to rectify other class and mass organisations in this way.

27) All the organisations, such as Student - Women - Youth organisations, which work in respective social sections should go ahead with respective character of freedom and specific qualities of democratic organisations of respective sections.

28) As people do exist as classes and social sections they have to be organised likewise. While organising classes and masses it must aim at the vast majority that exist as backward sections of those classes and masses; should not get satisfied by rallying a militant minority of those classes and masses around our party.

29) Class organisations and mass organisations are not subordinate organisational segments of our party. Their free and democratic working should be ensured and promoted. At the same time party members in those class and mass organisations must not go forth with their 'free-work' overriding the party. That will make the class and mass organisations to be pocket organisations of individuals.

30) In order to materialize the said changes in our party the central committee, state committees and district committees must be subject to reorganisation.

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**Third Congress of the Comintern 1921**  
**Guidelines**  
**on the Organizational Structure of Communist Parties,**  
**on the Methods and Content of their Work**

**Adopted at the 24th Session of the Third Congress of the Communist International, 12 July 1921**

**I. GENERAL**

1. The organization of the party must be adapted to the conditions and purpose of its activity. The Communist Party should be the vanguard, the front-line troops of the proletariat, leading in all phases of its revolutionary class struggle and the subsequent transitional period toward the realization of socialism, the first stage of communist society.

2. There can be no absolutely correct, immutable organizational form for communist parties. The conditions of the proletarian class struggle are subject to changes in an unceasing process of transformation; the organization of the vanguard of the proletariat must also constantly seek appropriate forms corresponding to these changes. Similarly, the historically determined characteristics of each individual country condition particular forms of adaptation in the organization of the individual parties.

But this differentiation has definite limits. Despite all peculiarities, the identity of the conditions of the proletarian class struggle in the various countries and in the different phases of the proletarian revolution is of fundamental importance to the international communist movement. This identity constitutes the common basis for the organization of the communist parties of all countries.

On this basis we must further develop the organization of the communist parties, not strive to found any new model parties in place of pre-existing ones or seek some absolutely correct organizational form or ideal statutes.

3. Common to the conditions of struggle of most communist parties and therefore to the Communist International as the overall party of the revolutionary world proletariat is that they must still struggle against the ruling bourgeoisie. For all the parties, victory over the bourgeoisie -wresting power from its hands-remains at present the key goal, giving direction to all their work.

Accordingly, it is absolutely crucial that all organizational work of communist parties in the capitalist countries be considered from the standpoint of constructing an organization which makes possible and ensures the victory of the proletarian revolution over the possessing classes.

4. Every collective action, in order to be effective, requires a leadership. This is necessary above all for the greatest struggle of world history. The organization of the communist party is the organization of the communist leadership in the proletarian revolution.

To lead well, the party itself must have good leadership. Our basic organizational task is accordingly the formation, organization and training of a communist party working under capable leading bodies to become the capable leader of the revolutionary working-class movement.

5. Leadership of the revolutionary class struggle presupposes, on the part of the communist party and its leading bodies, the organic tying together of the greatest possible striking power and the greatest ability to adapt to the changing conditions of struggle.

Moreover, successful leadership absolutely presupposes the closest ties with the proletarian masses. Without these ties the leadership will not lead the masses but will at best trail after them.

In its organization, the communist party seeks to achieve these organic ties through democratic centralism.

## **II. ON DEMOCRATIC CENTRALISM**

6. Democratic centralism in the communist party organization should be a real synthesis, a fusion of centralism and proletarian democracy. This fusion can be attained only on the basis of the constant common activity, the constant common struggle of the entire party organization.

Centralization in the communist party organization does not mean a formal and mechanical centralization but rather a centralization of communist activity, i.e., building a leadership which is strong, quick to react and at the same time flexible.

Formal or mechanical centralization would mean centralization of "power" in the hands of a party bureaucracy in order to dominate the rest of the membership or the masses of the revolutionary proletariat outside the party. But only enemies of communism can assert that the Communist Party wants to dominate the revolutionary proletariat through its leadership of proletarian class struggles and through the centralization of this communist leadership. This is a lie. Equally incompatible with the fundamental principles of democratic centralism adopted by the Communist International is a power struggle or a fight for domination within the party.

In the organizations of the old, nonrevolutionary workers movement a thoroughgoing dualism developed of the same kind as had arisen in the organization of the bourgeois state: the dualism between the bureaucracy and the "people." Under the ossifying influence of the bourgeois environment the functionaries of these parties became estranged: the vital working collective was replaced by mere formal democracy, and the organization was split into active functionaries and passive masses. Inevitably, even the revolutionary workers movement to a certain degree inherits this tendency toward formalism and dualism from the bourgeois environment.

The Communist Party must thoroughly overcome these divisions by systematic and persevering political and organizational work and by repeated improvement and review.

7. In the reshaping of a mass socialist party into a communist party, the party must not limit itself to concentrating authority in the hands of its central leadership, while otherwise leaving its old structure unchanged. If centralization is not to exist on paper alone but is to be carried out in fact, it must be introduced in such a way that the members perceive it as an objectively justified strengthening and development of their collective work and fighting power. Otherwise centralization will appear to the masses as bureaucratization of the party, conjuring up opposition to all centralization, to all leadership, to any strict discipline. Anarchism and bureaucratism are two sides of the same coin.

Mere formal democracy in the organization cannot eliminate tendencies toward either bureaucratism or anarchism, for both have found fertile soil in the workers movement on the basis of formal democracy. Therefore the centralization of the organization, that is, the effort to achieve a strong leadership, cannot be successful if we attempt to achieve it simply on the basis of formal democracy. Necessary above all is the development and maintenance of living ties and reciprocity—both within the party between the leading party bodies and the rest of the membership, and between the party and the working-class masses outside the party.

## **III. ON COMMUNISTS' OBLIGATION TO DO WORK**

8. The Communist Party should be a working school of revolutionary Marxism. Organic links are forged between the various parts of the organization and among individual members by day-to-day collective work in the party organizations.

In the legal communist parties most members still do not participate regularly in daily party work. This is the chief defect of these parties, which puts a question mark over their development.

9. When a workers party takes the first steps toward transformation into a communist party, there is always the danger that it will be content simply to adopt a communist program, substitute communist doctrine for the former doctrine in its propaganda, and merely replace the hostile functionaries with ones who have communist consciousness. But adopting a communist program is only a statement of the will to become communist. If communist activity

is not forthcoming, and if in organizing party work the passivity of the mass of the membership is perpetuated, the party is not fulfilling even the least of what it has promised to the proletariat by adopting the communist program. Because the first condition for seriously carrying out this program is the integration of all members into ongoing daily work.

The art of communist organization consists in making use of everything and everyone in the proletarian class struggle, distributing party work suitably among all party members and using the membership to continually draw ever wider masses of the proletariat into the revolutionary movement, while at the same time keeping the leadership of the entire movement firmly in hand, not by virtue of power but by virtue of authority, i.e., by virtue of energy, greater experience, greater versatility, greater ability.

10. Thus, in its effort to have only really active members, a communist party must demand of every member in its ranks that he devote his time and energy, insofar as they are at his own disposal under the given conditions, to his party and that he always give his best in its service.

Obviously, besides the requisite commitment to communism, membership in the Communist Party involves as a rule: formal admission, possibly first as a candidate, then as a member; regular payment of established dues; subscription to the party press, etc. Most important, however, is the participation of every member in daily party work.

11. In order to carry out daily party work, every party member should as a rule always be part of a smaller working group—a group, a committee, a commission, a board or a collegium, a fraction or cell. Only in this way can party work be properly allocated, directed and carried out.

Participation in the general membership meetings of the local organizations also goes without saying. Under conditions of legality it is not wise to choose to substitute meetings of local delegates for these periodic membership meetings; on the contrary, all members must be required to attend these meetings regularly. But that is by no means enough. Proper preparation of these meetings in itself presupposes work in smaller groups or work by designated comrades, just like preparations for effective interventions in general meetings of workers, demonstrations and mass working-class actions. The many and varied tasks involved in such work can be carefully examined and intensively executed only by smaller groups. Unless such constant detailed work is performed by the entire membership, divided into numerous small working groups, even the most energetic participation in the class struggles of the proletariat will lead us only to impotent, futile attempts to influence these struggles and not to the necessary concentration of all vital, revolutionary forces of the proletariat in a communist party which is unified and capable of action.

12. Communist nuclei are to be formed for day-to-day work in different areas of party activity: for door-to-door agitation, for party studies, for press work, for literature distribution, for intelligence-gathering, communications, etc.

Communist cells are nuclei for daily communist work in plants and workshops, in trade unions, in workers cooperatives, in military units, etc.—wherever there are at least a few members or candidate members of the Communist Party. If there are several party members in the same plant or trade union, etc., then the cell is expanded into a fraction whose work is directed by the nucleus.

Should it first be necessary to form a broader, general oppositional faction or to participate in a pre-existing one, the communists must seek to gain the leadership of it by means of their own separate cell.

Whether a communist cell should come out openly as communist in its milieu, let alone to the public at large, is determined by meticulous examination of the dangers and advantages in each particular situation.

13. Introducing the general obligation to do work in the party and organizing these small working groups is an especially difficult task for communist mass parties. It cannot be carried out overnight but demands unflagging perseverance, careful consideration and much energy.

It is particularly important that, from the outset, this reorganization be carried out with care and extensive deliberation. It would be easy to assign all members in each organization to small cells and groups according to some formal scheme and then without further ado call on them to do general day-to-day party work. But such a beginning would be worse than no beginning at all and would quickly provoke dissatisfaction and antipathy among the membership toward this important innovation.

It is recommended as a first step that the party leadership work out in detail preliminary guidelines for introducing this innovation through extensive consultation with several capable organizers who are both firmly convinced, dedicated communists and precisely informed as to the state of the movement in the various centers of struggle in the country. Then, on the local level, organizers or organizational committees which have been suitably instructed must prepare the work at hand, select the first group leaders and directly initiate the first steps. The organizations, working groups, cells and individual members must then be given very concrete, precisely defined tasks, and in such a way that they see the work as immediately useful, desirable and practicable. Where necessary one should demonstrate by example how to carry out the assignments, at the same time drawing attention to those errors which are to be particularly avoided.

14. This reorganization must be carried out practically, one step at a time. Accordingly, at the outset, there should not be too many new cells or working groups formed in the local organizations. It must first be established in practice that cells formed in important individual plants and trade unions have begun to function properly, and that in other main areas of party work the crucial working groups have been formed and have consolidated themselves to some extent (e.g., in the areas of intelligence-gathering, communications, door-to-door agitation, the women's movement, literature distribution, press work, in the unemployed movement, etc.). The old framework of the organization cannot be blindly smashed before the new organizational apparatus is functioning to some extent.

Nevertheless, this fundamental task of communist organizational work must be carried out everywhere with the greatest energy. This places great demands not only on a legal party but also on every illegal one. Until a widespread network of communist cells, fractions and working groups is functioning at all focal points of the proletarian class struggle, until every member of a strong, purposeful party is participating in daily revolutionary work and this participation has become second nature, the party must not rest in its efforts to carry out this task.

15. This fundamental organizational task obligates the leading party bodies to exercise continual, tireless and direct leadership of and systematic influence on the party's work. This demands the most varied efforts from those comrades who are part of the leadership of the party organizations. The leaders of communist work must not only see to it that the comrades in fact have party work to do; they must assist the comrades, directing their work systematically and expertly, with precise information as to the particular conditions they are working in. They must also try to uncover any mistakes made in their own work, attempt to constantly improve their methods of work on the basis of experience, and at the same time strive never to lose sight of the goal of the struggle.

16. All our party work is practical or theoretical struggle, or preparation for this struggle. Until now, specialization in this work has generally been very deficient. There are whole areas of important work where anything the party has done has been only by chance—for example, whatever has been done by the legal parties in the special struggle against the political police. The education of party comrades takes place as a rule only casually and incidentally, but also so superficially that large sections of the party membership remain ignorant of the majority of the most important basic documents of their own party—even the party program and the resolutions of the Communist International. Educational work must be systematically organized and constantly carried out by the entire system of party organizations, in all the party's working collectives; thereby an increasingly high degree of specialization can also be attained.

17. In a communist organization the obligation to do work necessarily includes the duty to report. This applies to all organizations and bodies of the party as well as to each individual member. General reports covering short periods of time must be made regularly. They must

cover the fulfillment of special party assignments in particular. It is important to enforce the duty to report so systematically that it takes root as one of the best traditions in the communist movement.

18. The party makes regular quarterly reports to the leadership of the Communist International. Each subordinate body of the party must report to its immediately superior committee (for example, monthly reports of the local organizations to the appropriate party committee).

Each cell, fraction and working group should report to the party body under whose actual leadership it works. Individual members must report (for example, weekly) to the cell or working group to which they belong (or to the cell or group head), and they must report the completion of special assignments to the party body from which the assignment came.

Reports must always be made at the first opportunity. They are to be made orally unless the party or the person who made the assignment requires a written report. Reports should be kept brief and factual. The recipient of a report is responsible for safeguarding information that would be damaging if made public, and for forwarding important reports to the appropriate leading party body without delay.

19. All these party reports should obviously not be limited simply to what the reporter himself did. They must also include information on those objective conditions observed during the work which have a bearing on our struggle, and especially considerations which can lead to a change or improvement in our future work. Suggestions for improvements found necessary in the course of the work must also be raised in the report.

All communist cells, fractions and working groups should regularly discuss reports, both those which they have received and those which they must present. Discussions must become an established habit.

Cells and working groups must also make sure that individual party members or groups of members are regularly put on special assignment to observe and report on opponent organizations, particularly petty-bourgeois workers organizations and above all on the organizations of the "socialist" parties.

#### **IV. ON PROPAGANDA AND AGITATION**

20. In the period prior to the open revolutionary uprising our most general task is revolutionary propaganda and agitation. This activity, and the organization of it, is often in large part still conducted in the old formal manner, through casual intervention from the outside at mass meetings, without particular concern for the concrete revolutionary content of our speeches and written material.

Communist propaganda and agitation must above all root itself deep in the midst of the proletariat. It must grow out of the concrete life of the workers, out of their common interests and aspirations and particularly out of their common struggles.

The most important aspect of communist propaganda is the revolutionizing effect of its content. Our slogans and positions on concrete questions in different situations must always be carefully weighed from this standpoint. Not only the professional propagandists and agitators, but all other party members as well, must receive ongoing and thorough instruction so they can arrive at correct positions.

21. The main forms of communist propaganda and agitation are: individual discussion; participation in the struggles of the trade-union and political workers movement; impact through the party's press and literature. Every member of a legal or illegal party should in some way participate regularly in all this work.

Propaganda through individual discussion must be systematically organized as door-to-door agitation and conducted by working groups established for this purpose. Not a single house within the local party organization's area of influence can be left out in this agitation. In larger cities, specially organized street agitation in conjunction with posters and leaflets can also yield



good results. Furthermore, at the workplace, the cells or fractions must conduct regular agitation on an individual level, combined with literature distribution.

In countries where national minorities form a part of the population, it is the party's duty to devote the necessary attention to propaganda and agitation among the proletarian layers of these minorities. This agitation and propaganda must obviously be conducted in the languages of the respective national minorities; appropriate party organs must be created for this purpose.

22. In conducting propaganda in those capitalist countries where the great majority of the proletariat does not yet possess conscious revolutionary inclinations, communists must constantly search for more effective methods of work in order to intersect the nonrevolutionary worker as he begins his revolutionary awakening, making the revolutionary movement comprehensible and accessible to him. Communist propaganda should use its slogans to reinforce the budding, unconscious, partial, wavering and semi-bourgeois tendencies toward revolutionary politics which in various situations are wrestling in his brain against bourgeois traditions and propaganda.

At the same time, communist propaganda must not be restricted to the present limited, vague demands or aspirations of the proletarian masses. The revolutionary kernel in these demands and aspirations is only the necessary point of departure for our intervention because only by making these links can the workers be brought closer to an understanding of communism.

23. Communist agitation among the proletarian masses must be conducted in such a way that workers engaged in struggle recognize our communist organization as the courageous, sensible, energetic and unswervingly devoted leader of their own common movement.

To achieve this the communists must take part in all the elementary struggles and movements of the working class and must fight for the workers' cause in every conflict with the capitalists over hours, wages, working conditions, etc. In doing this the communists must become intimately involved in the concrete questions of working-class life; they must help the workers untangle these questions, call their attention to the most important abuses and help them formulate the demands directed at the capitalists precisely and practically; attempt to develop among the workers the sense of solidarity, awaken their consciousness to the common interests and the common cause of all workers of the country as a united working class constituting a section of the world army of the proletariat.

Only through such absolutely necessary day-to-day work, through continual self-sacrificing participation in all struggles of the proletariat, can the "Communist Party" develop into a communist party. Only thus will it distinguish itself from the obsolete socialist parties, which are merely propaganda and recruiting parties, whose activity consists only of collecting members, speechifying about reforms and exploiting parliamentary impossibilities. The purposeful and self-sacrificing participation of the entire party membership in the school of the daily struggles and conflicts of the exploited with the exploiters is the indispensable precondition not only for the conquest of power, but, to an even greater extent, for exercising the dictatorship of the proletariat. Only the leadership of the working masses in constant small-scale battles against the encroachments of capital will enable the communist parties to become vanguards of the working class-vanguards which in fact systematically learn to lead the proletariat and acquire the capacity for the consciously prepared ouster of the bourgeoisie.

24. Particularly in strikes, lockouts and other mass dismissals of workers, the communists must be mobilized in force to take part in the movement of the workers.

It is the greatest error for communists to invoke the communist program and the final armed revolutionary struggle as an excuse to passively look down on or even to oppose the present struggles of the workers for small improvements in their working conditions. No matter how small and modest the demands for which the workers are ready to fight the capitalists today, this must never be a reason for communists to abstain from the struggle. To be sure, in our agitational work we communists should not show ourselves to be blind instigators of stupid strikes and other reckless actions; rather, the communists everywhere must earn the reputation among the struggling workers as their ablest comrades in struggle.

25. In the trade-union movement, communist cells and fractions are in practice often quite at a loss when confronted with the simplest questions of the day. It is easy but fruitless to preach just the general principles of communism, only to fall into the negative stance of vulgar syndicalism when faced with concrete questions. This merely plays into the hands of the yellow Amsterdam leadership.

Instead, communists should determine their revolutionary position in accordance with the objective content of each question that arises. For example, instead of being content to oppose every wage agreement in theory and in principle, communists should above all fight directly against the actual content of the wage agreements advocated by the Amsterdam leaders. Since every shackle on the militancy of the proletariat is to be condemned and vigorously combated, and it is well known that the aim of the capitalists and their Amsterdam accomplices is to use every wage agreement to tie the struggling workers' hands, it is therefore obviously the duty of communists to expose this aim before the workers. But as a rule communists can best achieve this by advancing wage proposals which do not constitute a shackle on the workers.

The same position applies, for example, to assistance funds and trade-union benefit societies. Collecting strike funds and granting strike benefits from a common pool is in itself a good thing. Opposition in principle to this activity is misplaced. It is only the way in which the Amsterdam leaders want to collect and use these funds that contradicts the revolutionary class interests of the workers. In the case of union health insurance and the like, communists should for example demand the abolition of compulsory special payments and of all binding conditions for voluntary funds. However, if part of the membership still wants to secure sick benefits by making payments, they will not understand if we simply wish to forbid it. It is first necessary to rid these members of their petty-bourgeois aspirations through intensive propaganda on an individual level.

26. In the struggle against the social-democratic and other petty-bourgeois leaders of the trade unions and various workers parties, there can be no hope of obtaining anything by persuading them. The struggle against them must be organized with the utmost energy. However, the only sure and successful way to combat them is to split away their supporters by convincing the workers that their social-traitor leaders are lackeys of capitalism. Therefore, where possible these leaders must first be put into situations in which they are forced to unmask themselves; after such preparation they can then be attacked in the sharpest way.

It is by no means enough to simply curse the Amsterdam leaders as "yellow." Rather, their "yellowness" must be proved continually by practical examples. Their activity in joint industrial councils, in the International Labor Office of the League of Nations, in bourgeois ministries and administrations; the treacherous words in their speeches at conferences and in parliamentary bodies; the key passages in their many conciliatory hack articles in hundreds of newspapers; and in particular their vacillating and hesitant behavior in preparing and conducting even the most minor wage struggles and strikes—all this provides daily opportunities to expose and brand the unreliable and treacherous doings of the Amsterdam leaders as "yellow" through simply formulated motions, resolutions and straightforward speeches.

The cells and fractions must conduct their practical offensives systematically. The excuses of lower-level union bureaucrats, who barricade themselves behind statutes, union conference decisions and instructions from the top leadership out of weakness (often even despite good will), must not hinder the communists from going ahead with tenacity and repeatedly demanding that the lower-level bureaucrats state clearly what they have done to remove these ostensible obstacles and whether they are ready to fight openly alongside the membership to surmount these obstacles.

27. Communists' participation in meetings and conferences of trade-union organizations must be carefully prepared in advance by the fractions and working groups, for example, drafting their own resolutions, choosing speakers to present and to support the motions, nominating capable, experienced and energetic comrades for election, etc.

Through their working groups, communist organizations must also prepare carefully for all general meetings of workers, election meetings, demonstrations, political working-class festivals and the like, held by opponent parties. When the communists call general workers'

meetings themselves, as many communist working groups as possible must coordinate their actions according to a unified plan, both beforehand and while the meetings are in progress, to ensure that full organizational use is made of such meetings.

28. Communists must learn how to be ever more effective in drawing unorganized, politically unconscious workers into the sphere of lasting party influence. Through our cells and fractions we should induce these workers to join trade unions and read our party press. Other workers associations (cooperatives, organizations of war victims, educational associations and study circles, sports clubs, theater groups, etc.) can also be used to transmit our influence. Where the communist party must work illegally such workers associations can be founded outside the party as well, on the initiative of party members with the consent and supervision of the leading party bodies (sympathizers' associations). For many proletarians who have remained politically indifferent, communist youth and women's organizations can first arouse interest in a common organizational life through courses, reading groups, excursions, festivals, Sunday outings, etc. Such workers can then be drawn permanently close to the organizations and in this way also induced to aid our party with useful work (distributing leaflets, circulating party newspapers, pamphlets, etc.). They will overcome their petty-bourgeois inclinations most easily through such active participation in the common movement.

29. In order to win the semi-proletarian layers of the working population as sympathizers of the revolutionary proletariat, communists must utilize these intermediate layers' particular conflicts of interest with the big landowners, the capitalists and the capitalist state, and overcome their mistrust of the proletarian revolution through continual persuasion. This may often require prolonged interaction with them. Their confidence in the communist movement can be promoted by sympathetic interest in their daily needs, free information and assistance in overcoming small difficulties which they are at a loss to solve, drawing them to special free public educational meetings, etc. Meanwhile, it is necessary for communists to cautiously and untiringly counteract opponent organizations and individuals who possess authority locally or have influence on laboring small peasants, cottage workers and other semi-proletarian elements. The most immediate enemies of the exploited, whom they know as oppressors from their own experience, must be exposed as the representatives and personification of the whole criminal capitalist system. Communist propaganda and agitation must intensively exploit in comprehensible terms all day-to-day events which bring the state bureaucracy into conflict with the ideals of petty-bourgeois democracy and the "rule of law."

Every local organization in the countryside must meticulously divide the task of door-to-door agitation among its members and extend this agitation to all the villages, farmsteads and individual houses in the area covered by its work.

30. For propaganda work in the army and navy of the capitalist state, a special study must be made of the most appropriate methods in each individual country. Anti-militarist agitation in the pacifist sense is extremely detrimental; it only furthers the efforts of the bourgeoisie to disarm the proletariat. The proletariat rejects in principle and combats with the utmost energy all military institutions of the bourgeois state and of the bourgeois class in general. On the other hand, it utilizes these institutions (army, rifle clubs, territorial militias, etc.) to give the workers military training for revolutionary battles. Therefore, it is not against the military training of youth and workers but against the militaristic order and the autocratic rule of the officers that intensive agitation should be directed. Every possibility for the proletariat to get weapons into its hands must be exploited to the fullest.

The rank-and-file soldiers must be made aware of the class division evident in the material privileges of the officers and the rough treatment of the ranks. Furthermore, this agitation must make clear to the ranks that their whole future is inextricably bound up with the fate of the exploited class. In the advanced period characterized by incipient revolutionary ferment, agitation for the democratic election of all officers by the soldiers and sailors and for the founding of soldiers councils can be very effective in undermining the pillars of capitalist class rule.

The greatest vigilance and incisiveness are always necessary in agitating against the bourgeoisie's special class-war troops, especially against their volunteer armed gangs. Where

their social composition and corruption make it possible, the social decomposition of their ranks must be systematically promoted at the right time. If they have a homogeneous bourgeois class character, for example in troops drawn purely from the officer corps, they must be exposed before the entire population, made so despicable and hated that the resulting isolation grinds them to pieces from within.

## V. ON THE ORGANIZATION OF POLITICAL STRUGGLES

31. For a communist party there is no time when the party organization cannot be politically active. The organizational exploitation of every political and economic situation, and of every change in these situations, must be developed into organizational strategy and tactics.

Even if the party is still weak, it can exploit politically stirring events or major strikes that convulse the whole economy by carrying out a well-planned and systematically organized radical propaganda campaign. Once a party has decided that such a campaign is appropriate, it must energetically concentrate all members and sections of the party on it.

First, the party must make use of all the ties it has forged through the work of its cells and working groups to organize meetings in the main centers of political organization or of the strike movement. In these meetings the party's speakers must make the communist slogans clear to the participants as the way out of their plight. Special working groups must prepare these meetings well, down to the last detail. If it is not possible to hold our own meetings, suitable comrades should intervene as major speakers during the discussion at general meetings of workers on strike or engaged in other struggles.

If there is a prospect of winning over the majority or a large part of the meeting to our slogans, an attempt must be made to express these slogans in well-formulated and skillfully motivated motions and resolutions. If such resolutions are adopted, then at all meetings in the same town or in other areas involved in this movement we must work toward getting an increasing number of the same or similar motions and resolutions adopted, or at least supported by strong minorities. We will thus consolidate the proletarian layers in motion, whom we had initially influenced only through our ideas, bringing them to recognize the new leadership.

After all such meetings, the working groups which took part in organizationally preparing and utilizing them must meet briefly, not only to prepare a report for the party committee in charge of the work, but also to immediately draw the lessons which are necessary for further work from the experience gained, or from any errors.

Depending on the situation, we must make our operational slogans accessible to interested layers of workers with posters and flyers, or else distribute detailed leaflets to those engaged in struggle, using the slogans of the day to make communism comprehensible in the context of the situation. Skillful posterage requires specially organized groups to find suitable locations and choose times for effective paste-up. Leafletting in and outside the plants and in restaurants and pubs used as centers of communication by the layers of workers involved in the movement, at major transit intersections, employment offices and train stations, should be combined wherever possible with the kind of discussion whose catchwords will be taken up by the aroused masses of workers. Detailed leaflets should if possible be distributed only in buildings, plants, halls, apartment buildings or wherever else we can expect they will be read attentively.

This intensified propaganda must be supported by parallel work at all trade-union and plant meetings caught up in the movement. When necessary, our comrades must raise the demand for such meetings or organize them themselves and must provide suitable speakers for main presentations or discussion. Most of the space in our party newspapers, and the papers' best arguments, must be placed at the disposal of such a particular movement, just as the entire organizational apparatus must be wholly and unflinchingly dedicated to the general aim of the movement for its duration.

32. Demonstration campaigns require a very flexible and dedicated leadership which must keep the aim of the campaign clearly in mind and be able to discern at any moment whether a demonstration has reached the upper limit of effectiveness, or whether, in the given situation, it is possible to further intensify the movement by expanding it into mass action in the form of

demonstrative strikes and finally mass strikes. The peace demonstrations during the war taught us that a real proletarian combat party, albeit small and illegal, cannot turn aside or halt even after such demonstrations have been suppressed when a major, immediately relevant goal is involved that is naturally bound to generate wider and wider interest among the masses.

It is best to base street demonstrations on the major factories. First our cells and fractions must have done systematic groundwork in a suitable situation to bring the mood to a certain uniformity through oral propaganda and leaflets. Then the committee in charge must bring together the party cadres with authority in the plants—the cell and fraction leaders—to discuss arrangements for the coming day so that our contingents march up in a disciplined fashion and converge punctually. They must also decide on the character of the slogans of the day, the prospects for broadening the demonstrations, and when to break off and disperse. A thoroughly briefed and organizationally experienced corps of energetic functionaries must form the backbone of the demonstration from the time it leaves the plants up to the time the mass action disperses. In order for these functionaries to remain in active contact with each other and be provided with the continuously necessary political directives, responsible party workers must be systematically distributed throughout the crowd of demonstrators. This kind of flexible, political-organizational leadership of the demonstration best lays the basis for renewed demonstrations and for possibly broadening them into larger mass actions.

33. Communist parties which have already achieved a certain amount of internal cohesion, a tested corps of functionaries and a considerable mass following must do their utmost through major campaigns to completely overcome the influence of the social-traitor leaders over the working class and to bring the majority of the working masses under communist leadership. The way the campaigns are organized will depend on the situation—on whether current struggles enable the party to move to the forefront as the proletarian leadership, or whether temporary stagnation prevails. The composition of the party will also be a decisive factor for the organizational methods of campaigns. For example, the so-called “Open Letter” was used by the VKPD in order to win over the crucial social layers of the proletariat more effectively than was otherwise then possible for a young mass party to do in the individual districts. To unmask the social-traitor leaders, the Communist Party approached the other mass organizations of the proletariat at a time of increasing impoverishment and sharpening class antagonisms, demanding openly before the proletariat an answer as to whether these leaders—with their supposedly powerful organizations—were prepared to take up the struggle together with the Communist Party against the obvious impoverishment of the proletariat, for the most minimal demands, for a measly crust of bread.

Wherever the Communist Party initiates a similar campaign, it must make all organizational preparations to ensure that its intervention wins a response among the broadest working masses. All the party’s industrial fractions and trade-union functionaries must, at their next plant and union meetings and in all public meetings (after thoroughly preparing for such meetings), effectively present the party’s demands as the totality of the life-and-death demands of the proletariat. Wherever our cells or fractions seek to take the offensive to advance mass agreement with our demands, leaflets, flyers and posters must be distributed in a skillful manner to use the mood of the masses advantageously. Our party press must daily feature the issues of the movement during the weeks of the campaign, alternating between shorter and more detailed articles, written from continually varied standpoints. The organizations must supply the press with a steady stream of material for this, and must energetically ensure that the editors do not flag in promoting the party campaign in the press. The party fractions in parliamentary and municipal bodies must also be systematically put to work in such struggles. Following the directives of the party leadership, they must speak for the movement in the parliamentary bodies by introducing appropriate motions. These parliamentary representatives must regard themselves as conscious members of the struggling masses, as their spokesmen in the camp of the class enemy, as responsible functionaries and party workers.

If the united, organizationally concentrated work of all the party’s forces leads in a few weeks to the adoption of a large and steadily increasing number of resolutions in agreement with our demands, the party will be faced with the serious organizational question of providing an organizational framework for the masses who are in agreement with our slogans. If the movement has assumed a predominantly trade-union character, steps must be taken above all

to increase our organizational influence in the unions: our fractions must proceed with well-prepared, direct offensives against the local trade-union leadership, either to defeat them or else to force them to wage an organized struggle on the basis of our party's demands. Where plant councils, factory committees or similar bodies exist, our fraction should intervene to induce plenary meetings of these plant councils or factory committees to decide in favor of this struggle. If several local organizations have been won over to such a movement fighting under communist leadership for the bare life-and-death interests of the proletariat, they must be convened in conferences; plant meetings which have come out in support should also send their special delegates. The new leadership thus consolidating itself under communist influence will gain new impetus by this concentration of the active groups of the organized working class; this impetus must in turn be used to drive the leadership of the socialist parties and trade unions forward-or to expose them, including with respect to their organizational affiliation.

In the economic sectors where our party possesses its best organizations and where it has encountered the most widespread agreement with its demands, the organized pressure which has been brought to bear on the local trade unions and plant councils must be used to consolidate all the isolated economic struggles being waged in this sector, as well as the developing movements of other groups, into a unified, militant movement. This movement must transcend the framework of the particular interests of individual trades and raise several elementary demands in their common interest which can then be won through the joint forces of all organizations in the district. It is in such a movement that the Communist Party will prove itself to be the real leader of that section of the proletariat which wants to fight, while the trade-union bureaucracy and the socialist parties, who would oppose such a jointly organized, militant movement, would be finished-not only politically as regards their ideas, but also in practical organizational terms.

34. If the Communist Party attempts to take the leadership of the masses into its hands at a time of acute political and economic tensions leading to the outbreak of new movements and struggles, it can dispense with raising special demands and appeal in simple and popular language directly to the members of the socialist parties and trade unions not to abstain from the struggles necessitated by their misery and increasing oppression at the hands of the employers. Even if their bureaucratic leaders are opposed, the ranks must fight if they are to avoid being driven to complete ruin. The party's press organs, especially its daily newspapers, must emphatically prove day after day during such a party campaign that the communists are ready to intervene as leaders in the current and impending struggles of the pauperized proletariat, and that in the immediate acute situation their combativeness will, wherever possible, come to the aid of all the oppressed. It must be proved day in and day out that without these struggles the working class will no longer have any possibilities for existence and that, despite this fact, the old organizations are trying to avoid and obstruct these struggles.

The plant and trade-union fractions, continually pointing to the communists' combativeness and willingness to sacrifice, must make it clear to their fellow workers in meetings that abstention from the struggle is no longer possible. The main task in such a campaign, however, is to organizationally consolidate and unify all struggles and movements born of the situation. Not only must the cells and fractions in the trades and plants involved in the struggles continually maintain close organic contact among themselves, but the leading bodies must also (both through the district committees and through the central leadership) immediately place functionaries and responsible party workers at the disposal of all movements which break out. Working directly with those in struggle, they must lead, broaden, intensify, generalize and link up the movements. The organization's primary job is to place what is common to these various struggles in sharp relief and bring it into the foreground, in order to urge a general solution to the struggle, by political means if necessary.

As the struggles become more intense and generalized, it will be necessary to create unified bodies to lead them. If the bureaucratic strike leaderships of some unions cave in prematurely, we must be quick to push for their replacement by communists, who must assure a firm, resolute leadership of the struggle. In cases where we have succeeded in combining several struggles, we must push for setting up a joint leadership for the campaign, in which the communists should obtain the leading positions to the extent possible. With proper organizational preparation, a joint leadership for the campaign can often easily be set up

through the trade-union fractions as well as through plant fractions, plant councils, plant council plenary meetings and especially through general meetings of strikers.

If the movement assumes a political character as a result of becoming generalized and as a result of the intervention of employers' organizations and government authorities, then the election of workers councils may become possible and necessary, and propaganda and organizational preparation must be initiated for this. All party publications must then intensively put forward the idea that only through such organs of its own, arising directly from the workers' struggles, can the working class achieve its real liberation with the necessary ruthlessness, even without the trade-union bureaucracy and its socialist party satellites.

35. Communist parties which have already grown strong, particularly the large mass parties, should also take organizational measures to be continually armed for political mass actions. In demonstration campaigns and economic mass movements, in all partial actions, one must constantly bear in mind the need to energetically and tenaciously consolidate the organizational experience of these movements in order to achieve ever more solid ties with the broader masses. The experience of all new major movements must repeatedly be discussed and reviewed at broad conferences which bring the leading functionaries and responsible party workers together with the shop stewards from the large and medium-sized plants, so that the network of ties through the shop stewards can be made ever more solid and organized ever more securely. Close bonds of mutual trust between the leading functionaries and responsible party workers on the one hand, and the shop stewards on the other, are organizationally the best guarantee that political mass actions will not be initiated prematurely and that their scope will correspond to the circumstances and the current level of party influence.

Unless the party organization maintains the closest ties with the proletarian masses employed in the large and medium-sized factories, the Communist Party will not be able to achieve major mass actions and genuinely revolutionary movements. If the uprising in Italy last year-which was unquestionably revolutionary in character and found its strongest expression in the factory occupations-collapsed prematurely, then this was no doubt in part due to the betrayal of the trade-union bureaucracy and the inadequacy of the party's political leaders, but also partly because no intimate, organized ties existed at all between the party and the plants through factory shop stewards who were politically informed and interested in party life. It is also beyond doubt that the attempt to aggressively utilize the political potential of the great English miners movement this year suffered extraordinarily from this same failing.

## **VI. ON THE PARTY PRESS**

36. The communist press must be developed and improved by the party with tireless energy.

No newspaper may be recognized as a communist organ if it does not submit to the directives of the party. Analogously, this principle is to be applied to all literary products such as periodicals, books, pamphlets, etc., with due regard for their theoretical, propagandistic or other character.

The party must be more concerned with having good papers than with having many of them. Above all, every communist party must have a good, if possible daily, central organ.

37. A communist newspaper must never become a capitalist enterprise like the bourgeois press and often even the so-called "socialist" papers. Our paper must keep itself independent from the capitalist credit institutions. Skillful solicitation of advertising-which in the case of legal mass parties can greatly help in keeping our press afloat-must never lead, for example, to our becoming dependent in any way on the major advertisers. Rather, the press of our mass parties will most quickly win unconditional respect through its intransigent attitude on all proletarian social questions. Our paper should not pander to an appetite for sensationalism or serve as entertainment for the public at large. It cannot yield to the criticism of petty-bourgeois literati or journalistic virtuosi in order to make itself "respectable."

38. The communist newspaper must above all look after the interests of the oppressed struggling workers. It should be our best propagandist and agitator, the leading propagandist of the proletarian revolution.

Our paper has the task of collecting valuable experiences from the entirety of the work of party members and then of presenting these to party comrades as a guide for the continued review and improvement of communist methods of work. These experiences should be exchanged at joint meetings of editors from the entire country; mutual discussion there will also yield the greatest possible uniformity of tone and thrust throughout the entire party press. In this way the party press, including every individual newspaper, will be the best organizer of our revolutionary work.

Without this unifying, purposive organizational work of the communist press, particularly the main newspaper, it will hardly be possible to achieve democratic centralism, to implement an effective division of labor in the Communist Party or, consequently, to fulfill the party's historic mission.

39. The communist newspaper must strive to become a communist enterprise, i.e., a proletarian combat organization, a working collective of revolutionary workers, of all those who regularly write for the paper, typeset and print it, manage, circulate and sell it, those who collect local material for articles, discuss this material in the cells and write it up, those who are active daily in the paper's distribution, etc.

A number of practical measures are required to turn the paper into this kind of genuine combat organization and into a strong, vital working collective of communists.

A communist develops the closest ties with his paper if he must work and make sacrifices for it. It is his daily weapon which must constantly be tempered and sharpened anew in order to be usable. The communist newspaper can be maintained only by heavy, ongoing material and financial sacrifices. The means for its expansion and for internal improvements will constantly have to be supplied from the ranks of party members until, in legal mass parties, it ultimately attains such wide circulation and organizational solidity that it itself begins to serve as a material support for the communist movement.

In the meantime it is not enough for a communist to be an active salesman and agitator for the paper; he must be an equally useful contributor to it. Every socially or economically noteworthy incident from the plant fraction or cell—from a shopfloor accident to a plant meeting, from the mistreatment of apprentices to the company financial report—is to be reported at once to the newspaper by the quickest route. The trade-union fractions must communicate all important resolutions and measures from the membership meetings and executive bodies of their unions, and they must report on any characteristic activity of our opponents succinctly and accurately. What one sees of life in public—at meetings and in the streets—often provides an alert party worker the opportunity to observe details with a sense of social criticism which can be used in the paper to make clear even to the indifferent our intimate knowledge of the problems of everyday life.

The editorial staff must treat this information, coming as it does from the life of the working class and workers organizations, with great warmth and affection. The editors should either use such material as short news items to give our paper the character of a vital working collective acquainted with real life; or they should use this material to make the teachings of communism comprehensible by means of these practical examples from the workers' daily existence, which is the quickest way to make the great ideas of communism immediate and vivid to the broad working masses. If at all possible, the editorial staff should hold office hours at a convenient time of day for any worker who visits our newspaper, to listen to his requests and his complaints about life's troubles, diligently note them down and use them to enliven the paper.

Obviously, under capitalist conditions, none of our newspapers can become a perfect communist working collective. However, even under very difficult conditions it is possible to successfully organize a revolutionary workers newspaper along these lines. That is proved by the example of our Russian comrades' Pravda in 1912-13. It did in fact constitute an ongoing and active organization of conscious, revolutionary workers in the most important centers of the Russian empire. These comrades collectively edited, published and distributed the newspaper—most of them, of course, doing this in addition to working for a living—and they scrimped to pay for its expenses from their wages. The newspaper in turn was able to give them the best of what they wanted, what they needed at the time in the movement, and what is still



of use today in their work and struggle. For the party ranks as well as many other revolutionary workers, such a newspaper was really able to become "our newspaper."

40. The militant communist press is in its true element when it directly participates in campaigns led by the party. If the party's work during a period of time is concentrated on a particular campaign, the party paper must place all of its space, not just the political lead articles, at the service of this campaign. The editorial department must draw on material from all areas to nourish this campaign and must saturate the whole paper with it in a suitable form and style.

41. Sales of subscriptions to our newspaper must be systematized on a formal basis. First, use must be made of every situation in which there is increased motion among the workers and where political or social life is further inflamed by any sort of political and economic events. Thus, immediately after every major strike or lockout where the paper has openly and energetically represented the interests of the struggling workers, a subscription drive should be organized to approach each individual who had been out on strike. The communist plant and trade-union fractions within the trades involved in the strike movement must not only propagandize for the newspaper with lists and subscription blanks in their own arenas but, if they possibly can, they must also obtain lists of addresses of the workers who took part in the struggle, so that special working groups for the press can conduct energetic door-to-door agitation.

Likewise, after every political electoral campaign which arouses the workers' interest, systematic door-to-door canvassing must be carried out in the proletarian districts by the designated working groups.

At times of latent political or economic crises whose effects are felt by the broader working masses as inflation, unemployment and other hardships, after making skillful propagandistic use of these developments every effort should be made to obtain (as much as possible through the trade-union fractions) extensive lists of the unionized workers in the various trades, so that the working group for the press can productively follow up with sustained, systematic door-to-door agitation. Experience has shown that the last week of each month is best suited for this regular canvassing. Any local organization that allows the last week of even one month to pass without using it for agitation for the press is guilty of a serious omission in extending the communist movement. The working group for the press must also not let any public meeting of workers or any major demonstration go by without being there pushing our paper with subscription blanks at the beginning, during the breaks and at the end. The same duties are incumbent both on the trade-union fractions at every single meeting of their union, and on the cells and plant fractions at plant meetings.

42. Our newspaper must be continually defended by party members against all enemies.

All party members must lead a fierce struggle against the capitalist press; its venality, its lies, its wretched silence and all its intrigues must be clearly exposed and unmistakably branded.

The social-democratic and independent-socialist press must be defeated through a continuous offensive: without getting lost in petty factional polemics, we must expose, through numerous examples from daily life, their treacherous attitude of concealing class antagonisms. The trade-union and other fractions must strive through organizational measures to free the members of trade unions and other workers organizations from the confusion and paralyzing influence of these social-democratic papers. Both in door-to-door agitation and particularly in the plants, subscription work for our paper must be skillfully and deliberately aimed directly against the press of the social-traitors.

## VII. ON THE GENERAL STRUCTURE OF THE PARTY ORGANISM

43. The extension and consolidation of the party must not proceed according to a formal scheme of geographic divisions but according to the real economic, political and transport/communications structure of the given areas of the country. Stress is to be placed primarily on the main cities and on the major centers of the industrial proletariat.

In beginning to build a new party there is often a tendency to immediately extend the network of party organizations over the entire country. Limited as the available forces are, they are thereby scattered to the four winds. This weakens the ability of the party to recruit and grow. After a few years the party may often in fact have built up an extensive system of offices, but it may not have succeeded in gaining a firm foothold in even the most important industrial cities of the country.

44. To attain the greatest possible centralization of party work it makes no sense to chop up the party leadership into a schematic hierarchy with many levels, each completely subordinate to the next. Optimally, from every major city which constitutes an economic, political or transport/communications center, a network of organizational threads should extend throughout the greater metropolitan area and the economic or political district belonging to it. The party committee which directs the entire organizational work of the district from the major city (the city being the head, as it were, of this party organism), and which constitutes the political leadership of the district, must establish the closest ties with the masses of party members working in the main urban area.

The full-time organizers of such a district, who are to be elected by the district conference or the district party congress and approved by the party central committee, must be required to participate regularly in the party life of the district's main city. The district party committee should always be reinforced by party workers drawn from the members in the main urban area, so that close and vital contact really exists between the party committee which runs the district politically, and the large membership of the district's urban center. As organizational forms develop further, the district's leading party committee should optimally also constitute the political leadership of the main urban center in the district. In this way, the leading party committees of the district organizations, together with the central committee, will serve as the bodies which actually lead in the overall party organization.

The area of a party district is of course not limited only by the geographical extent of the area. The key point is that the party district committee must be able to lead all local organizations in the district as a unit. When this is no longer possible, the district must be divided and a new district party committee founded.

In larger countries, of course, the party needs certain intermediate bodies to serve as connecting links between the central leadership and the various district leaderships (provincial leaderships, regions and the like) as well as between a given district leadership and the various local bodies (subdistrict or county leaderships). Under certain circumstances it may become useful for one or another of these intermediate bodies, for example that of a major city with a strong membership, to be given a leadership role. However, as a general rule this should be avoided as decentralization.

45. The large units of the party organizations (districts) are composed of local party entities: of rural and small-town "locals," and of "wards" or "rayons" of the various sections of the major cities.

A local party entity which has grown so large that under conditions of legality it can no longer effectively hold general membership meetings must be divided.

In the local party organization the members are to be assigned to the various working groups for the purpose of doing daily party work. In larger organizations it may be useful to combine the working groups into various collective groups. As a rule those members who come into contact with one another at their workplaces or otherwise on a daily basis should be assigned to the same collective group. The collective group has the task of dividing the overall party work

among the various working groups, obtaining reports from the heads of the working groups, training candidate members within their ranks, etc.

46. The party as a whole is under the leadership of the Communist International. The directives and resolutions of the international leadership in matters affecting a member party shall be addressed either (1) to the general central leadership of the party, or (2) through it to the central leadership in charge of a special area of work, or (3) to all party organizations.

Directives and decisions of the International are binding on the party and, as a matter of course, on every party member.

47. The central leadership of the party (central committee and Beirat or Ausschuß) is responsible to the party congress and to the leadership of the Communist International. The narrower leading body as well as the broad committee, Beirat or Ausschuß are as a rule elected by the party congress. The congress may, if it deems appropriate, charge the central leadership with electing from its own ranks the narrower leading body, consisting of the political and the organizational bureau. The narrower leading body, through its two bureaus, directs the policies and ongoing work of the party and is accountable for this. The narrower leading body regularly convenes plenary meetings of the party central leadership to make decisions of greater importance and scope. In order to be able to fully grasp the entire political situation and to maintain a living picture of the party, its clarity and its capacity to perform, it is necessary in electing the central party leadership to give consideration to candidates from the different regions of the country, if any suitable ones are available. For the same reason, serious differences of opinion on tactical questions should not be suppressed in the election of the central leadership. On the contrary, representation of these views in the overall leadership by their best spokesmen should be facilitated. The narrower leading body, however, should be homogeneous in its views if at all feasible and must-if it is to be able to lead firmly and with certainty-be able to rely not only on its authority but on a clear and even numerically fixed majority in the central leadership as a whole.

By thus constituting the central party leadership more broadly, the legal mass parties in particular will most quickly create for their central committee the best foundation of firm discipline: the unqualified confidence of the membership masses. Moreover, it will lead to more quickly recognizing, curing and overcoming vacillations and disorders which may show up in the party's layers of functionaries. In this way, the accumulation of such disorders in the party and the need to surgically remove them at subsequent party congresses-with possibly catastrophic results-can be kept to a bearable level.

48. To be able to lead party work effectively in the different areas each of the leading party committees must implement a practical division of labor among its members. Here special leading bodies may prove necessary for a number of areas of work (e.g., for propaganda, for press work, for the trade-union struggle, for agitation in the countryside, agitation among women, for communication, Red Aid, etc.). Every special leading body is subordinate either to the central party leadership or to a district party committee.

It is the job of the leading party district committee, and ultimately the central party leadership, to monitor the practical work as well as the correct composition of all committees subordinate to it. All members engaged in full-time party work, just like the members of the parliamentary fraction, are directly subordinate to the leading party committee. It may prove useful now and then to change the duties and work locations of the full-time comrades (e.g., editors, propagandists, organizers, etc.) insofar as this does not overly disrupt party work. Editors and propagandists must participate on an ongoing basis in regular party work in one of the working groups.

49. The central leadership of the party, like that of the Communist International, is entitled at all times to demand exhaustive information from all communist organizations, from their component bodies and from individual members. The representatives and plenipotentiaries of the central leadership are to be admitted to all assemblies and meetings with consultative vote and the right of veto. The central party leadership must always have such plenipotentiaries (commissars) available so that it can responsibly provide these district and county leaderships with instruction and information not only through its political and organizational circulars or

correspondence, but also by direct verbal communication. In the central leadership as well as in every district committee, there must be an audit commission composed of tested and knowledgeable party comrades to inspect the treasury and books. It should report regularly to the expanded committee (Beirat or Ausschuß).

All organizations and party bodies, as well as all individual members, are entitled at all times to communicate their desires and initiatives, observations or complaints directly to the central leadership of the party or the International.

50. The directives and decisions of the leading party bodies are binding on subordinate organizations and on individual members.

The accountability of the leading bodies, and their obligation to guard against negligence and against misuse of their leading position, can be fixed on a formal basis only in part. The less formal accountability they have, for example in illegal parties, the more they are obligated to seek the opinion of other party members, to obtain reliable information regularly and to make their own decisions only after careful, comprehensive deliberation.

51. Party members are to conduct themselves in their public activity at all times as disciplined members of a combat organization. When differences of opinion arise as to the correct course of action, these should as far as possible be decided beforehand within the party organization and then action must be in accordance with this decision. In order, however, that every party decision be carried out with the greatest energy by all party organizations and members, the broadest mass of the party must whenever possible be involved in examining and deciding every question. Party organizations and party authorities also have the duty of deciding whether questions should be discussed publicly (press, lectures, pamphlets) by individual comrades, and if so, in what form and scope. But even if the decisions of the organization or of the party leadership are regarded as wrong by other members, these comrades must in their public activity never forget that it is the worst breach of discipline and the worst error in combat to disrupt or, worse, to break the unity of the common front.

It is the supreme duty of every party member to defend the Communist Party and above all the Communist International against all enemies of communism. Anyone who forgets this and instead publicly attacks the party or the Communist International is to be treated as an opponent of the party.

52. The statutes of the party are to be formulated so that they are an aid, not an obstacle, to the leading party bodies in the continual development of the overall party organization and in the incessant improvement of the organization's work.

The decisions of the Communist International are to be implemented without delay by member parties, even in those cases where, according to the statutes, the corresponding changes in the existing statutes and party resolutions can be made only at a later date.

### **VIII. ON THE COMBINATION OF LEGAL AND ILLEGAL WORK**

53. Corresponding to the different phases in the process of the revolution, changes in function can occur in the daily life of every communist party. Basically, however, there is no essential difference in the party structure which a legal party on the one hand, and an illegal party on the other, must strive for.

The party must be organized so that it can at all times adapt itself quickly to changes in the conditions of struggle.

The Communist Party must develop itself into a combat organization capable on the one hand of avoiding open encounters with an enemy possessing overwhelmingly superior forces who has amassed all of his strength at one point; but on the other hand also capable of exploiting this enemy's unwieldiness, striking him when and where he least expects the attack. It would be the gravest error for the party organization to prepare for and expect only insurrections and street fighting or only conditions of the most severe repression. Communists must carry out their preparatory revolutionary work in every situation and always be on combat footing, because it is often almost impossible to predict the alternation between a period of upheaval

and a period of quiescence; and even in cases where such foresight is possible it cannot generally be used to reorganize the party, because the change usually occurs in a very short time, indeed often quite suddenly.

54. The legal communist parties in the capitalist countries generally have not yet sufficiently grasped that it is their task to understand how the party should properly arm itself for revolutionary uprisings, for armed struggle or for illegal struggle in general. The entire party organization is built much too one-sidedly on an enduring legality and is organized according to the requirements of legal day-to-day tasks.

In the illegal parties, in contrast, there is often insufficient understanding of the possibilities for exploiting legal activity and for building a party organization in living contact with the revolutionary masses. In this case, party work shows a tendency to remain a fruitless Sisyphean labor or impotent conspiracy.

Both are wrong. Every legal Communist Party must know how to ensure maximal combat readiness if it should have to go underground, and it must be armed particularly for the outbreak of revolutionary uprisings. In turn, every illegal Communist Party must energetically exploit the opportunities provided by the legal workers movement in order to develop through intensive party work into the organizer and actual leader of the great revolutionary masses.

The leadership of legal and of illegal work must always be in the hands of the same unitary central party leadership.

55. Within both the legal and the illegal parties, illegal communist organizational work is often conceived of as the creation and maintenance of a closed, exclusively military organization isolated from the rest of the party work and party organization. That is completely wrong. On the contrary, in the prerevolutionary period our combat organization must be built primarily through general communist party work. The entire party should be trained as a combat organization for the revolution.

Isolated revolutionary-military organizations established too soon before the revolution are very apt to show tendencies toward dissolution and demoralization because there is a lack of directly useful party work for them to do.

56. For an illegal party, it is obviously of critical importance in all of its work to protect its members and bodies from discovery and not to expose them by, for example, membership registration, careless dues collection or literature distribution. Therefore, it cannot use open forms of organization for conspiratorial purposes to the same degree as a legal party. But it can learn to do so to an increasing extent.

All precautionary measures must be taken to prevent the penetration of dubious or unreliable elements into the party. The methods to be used will depend very largely on whether the party is legal or illegal, persecuted or tolerated, growing rapidly or stagnating. One method which has proved successful here and there under certain circumstances is the system of candidacy. Under this system, an applicant for membership in the party is admitted first as a candidate on the recommendation of one or two party comrades, and whether he can be admitted as a member is dependent upon his proving himself in the party work assigned to him.

Inevitably, the bourgeoisie will try to send spies and provocateurs into illegal organizations. This must be fought with the utmost care and persistence. One method in this fight is the skillful combination of legal and illegal work. Prolonged legal revolutionary work is absolutely the best way to test who is reliable, courageous, conscientious, energetic, adroit and punctual enough to be entrusted with important assignments, suited to his abilities, in illegal work.

A legal party should constantly improve its defensive measures to avoid being taken by surprise (for example, by keeping cover addresses in a safe place, as a rule destroying letters, putting necessary documents in safekeeping, giving its couriers conspiratorial training, etc.).

57. It follows that our overall party work must be distributed in such a way that even before the open revolutionary uprising the roots of a combat organization corresponding to the requirements of this stage develop and take hold. It is especially important that the communist

party leadership constantly keep these requirements in mind, and that it try to the extent possible to form a clear conception of them in advance. Naturally, this conception can never be exact or clear enough a priori. But that is no reason to disregard this most important aspect of communist organizational leadership.

For when, in the open revolutionary uprising, the Communist Party is faced with the greatest change in function of its life, this change can pose very difficult and complicated tasks for even the best-organized party. It may be a matter of mobilizing our political party for military combat within a few days. And not only the party, but also its reserves-the organizations of sympathizers-indeed, even the entire home guard, i.e., the unorganized revolutionary masses. At this point the formation of a regular Red Army is still out of the question. We must be victorious-without an army built in advance-by means of the masses, under the leadership of the party. For this reason, even the most heroic struggle may avail us naught if our party has not been prepared organizationally in advance for this situation.

58. In revolutionary situations it has often been observed that the revolutionary central leadership proved incapable of performing its tasks. The proletariat can achieve splendid things in the revolution as regards lesser organizational tasks. In its headquarters, however, for the most part disorder, bewilderment and chaos reign. Even the most elementary division of labor can be lacking. The intelligence department in particular is often so bad that it does more harm than good. There is no depending on communications. When clandestine mailing and transport, safe houses and clandestine printing presses are needed, these are usually totally at the mercy of fortunate or unfortunate coincidence. The organized enemy's every provocation has the best prospects for success.

Nor can it be otherwise, unless the leading revolutionary party has organized special work for these purposes in advance. For example, observing and exposing the political police requires special practice; an apparatus for clandestine communications can function swiftly and reliably only through extended, regular operation, etc. Every legal Communist Party needs some kind of secret preparations, no matter how minimal, in all these areas of specialized revolutionary work.

For the most part, we can develop the necessary apparatus even in these areas through completely legal work, provided that in the organization of this work attention is paid to the kind of apparatus that should arise from it. For example, the bulk of an apparatus for clandestine communications (for a courier system, clandestine mailing, safe houses, conspiratorial transport, etc.) can be worked out in advance through a precisely systematized distribution of legal leaflets and other publications and letters.

59. The communist organizer regards every single party member and every revolutionary worker from the outset as he will be in his future historic role as soldier in our combat organization at the time of the revolution. Accordingly, he guides him in advance into that nucleus and that work which best corresponds to his future position and type of weapon. His work today must also be useful in itself, necessary for today's struggle, not merely a drill which the practical worker today does not understand. This same work, however, is also in part training for the important demands of tomorrow's final struggle.