

# Guidelines on the Organizational Structure of Communist Parties, on the Methods and Content of Their Work

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## 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 tail 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 *unflinching 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 non-revolutionary 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 combatted, 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 meet-

ings 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 posterizing 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 reso-

lutions 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

(Continued)