

DISCUSSION DOCUMENT

THE CENTRAL COMMITTEE

The Central Committee must be the policy-making body of the Party and the highest political organ of the Party between two Congresses.

Composition of the C.C.

The membership of the C.C. should be drawn from the most advanced section of the Party members. By "advanced section" is not meant the "so-called theoretically advanced members" but the comrades who have worked to build the Party, the most active and resourceful in the various spheres of work and those who are able to take the initiative in the highly complex world of changing British imperialism.

The size should not be less than 30, who will regularly meet every three months (3 months) or more frequently in case of emergency. Therefore C.C. members, if elected, must be prepared to come to London 4 times a year. Branches must provide fares as the centre does not have the financial resources. It is suggested that each meeting last a weekend and from each should be prepared a policy which will be sent to branches and may be published. There can be no transferring of responsibility to another branch member as C.C. members are elected as individuals, not as representatives of branches.

The greatest effort must be made to ensure the maximum representation of workers in key industries. At the same time, to maintain closer relations between centre and branches, to develop new cadres from members and to ensure that the Party benefits from all the experience and political understanding of members. While electing the C.C. we must bear in mind all kinds of factors, regional, occupational, age, experience and personal factors. It is important that we examine very closely the question of women workers and their representation because this is one of our weakest sections of work.

SECRETARIAT

The C.C. should nominate from its members a secretariat of not more than 15 members to execute the Party policy determined at Congress and by the C.C. between Congresses. The Secretariat will also be responsible for the organisation of the day to day activities of the Party. Each member of the Secretariat should have a specific Party responsibility. The Secretariat is subordinate to the Central Committee.

TREASURY

The present Constitution provides for the election of a Treasurer at Congress. This provision should be reviewed in order to be deleted by Congress. The Secretariat should nominate three (3) of their number to constitute a "Treasury". These three members would be responsible for the entire party finance including "Worker" and Bookshop.

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FUNCTIONS OF C.C. AND SECRETARIAT

There must be constant communication by the Secretariat to the C.C. on everyday work and from the C.C. to the secretariat on policy, through written documents. One of the main roles of the C.C. through its vital links with all aspects of struggle, is to produce policy documents as guide lines for action. It is the Secretariat's role to ensure that these policies are carried out by communicating them to all branches and members and to assist in all ways possible, their implementation. To assist, one member of the Secretariat should have as a main task, the informing of the C.C. of all work done by the Secretariat through regular reports to all members of the C.C. In turn the C.C. should appoint one person who will inform the Secretariat regularly of all C.C. decisions.

C.C. members must play an active part in the regular work of the Party. There is no room on the C.C. for a "thinking", "Talking", non-active member. A collective leadership is developed only when every member of the C.C. plays a full part, at the C.C. in forming policy and at branch and work level.

ELECTION OF THE C.C.

At this Congress names may be suggested by the existing Secretariat for consideration of Congress, for membership of Central Committee.

DISCUSSION DOCUMENT

BRANCH FUNCTIONING

FIELD OF WORK

The Party work that each branch undertakes must be based on a firm knowledge of the area and locality where the branch is situated. Each branch must have a clear understanding of the type of work it is capable of doing. First we must learn that we can only work with the material at hand. For instance a branch composed mainly of students must direct their activities primarily towards students. Experience shows that efforts by student branches to work among industrial workers can lead to failure, and result in demoralisation, which then leads to inactivity and political "theorising".

THE WORKER

All branches whatever their field of activity must recognise the Worker as the prime weapon in their political work. Branches whatever their size can and must organise activity around the sale of our paper. All meetings called by any section of the labour movement can and should be covered by the branch in that locality. Each branch must take responsibility for the sale of our paper by individuals at their place of work. Nothing must be left to chance, the sale and use of our paper must be done in an organised way. All branches should frequently discuss the content of the paper, in fact it should be on the agenda every branch meeting. Every effort should be made by branches to submit articles.

EDUCATION

Education should occupy a major part of branch meetings, this should not be confined to reading the Marxist classics, important as this is. Party education must be linked at all times with the study of conditions in our own country, and the problems of our own class. It is only in this way that we shall raise our own political and theoretical level. The discussions should be conducted in such a manner as to invite the fullest possible participation. All branches should give consideration to organising weekend schools or study groups.

MEETINGS AND ATTENDANCE

All branches should meet regularly; although the frequency of meetings will vary from branch to branch, the aim of all branches should be to meet once per week. Every effort should be made to start branch meetings at the time stated, so that full use can be made of the meeting. A careful check should be made of attendance, experience shows that members who do not attend the branch usually have special problems, arrangements can then be made for these members to be visited, and their problems discussed. Attendance at the Party branch should and must be a priority. The branch is the basic unit of our Party, maximum attendance and the fullest participation of all members must be the aim of all branches.

FINANCE

The question of finance is of prime importance to our Party and the Party branch. This again must not be left to chance, but done in an organised way. Time should be set aside at each branch meeting for a full discussion of branch finance. Any problems of finance should not be left to the branch Treasurer, but should be discussed by all members, financial problems of individual members must not be left to the Treasurer alone to solve. Ways and means of raising money apart from dues and guarantees should be looked at. The fullest possible use of our Party rooms, where available, should be looked into. Film shows, public meetings, social evenings, should be organised by the Party branch, events where non party people can be invited.

MORE ON BRANCH FUNCTIONING

When considering the functioning of branches, their make-up and the growth of new branches out of the old, we must keep in mind the ever-present danger to our Party, the danger of factionalism. Each of these embryonic cliques has its own axe to grind, whether it be that the Party should be composed solely of industrial workers, or that "broad fronts" are no good at home or overseas, or even that not enough of Mao's Thought is considered.

This tendency to fragment, this centrifugal force, must be counteracted by the unbreakable relationship of branch to centre. It is absolutely taboo for branches to develop lines of communication between each other, unless it is essential on the grounds of practicability (e.g. between Liverpool and Manchester at present). All communications must be from branch to centre and from centre to branch. Only in this way will the Party remain a tightly-knit body with each branch receiving the concentrated expression of the Party's experience and not the particular (possibly unpleasant) flavour that one branch may be able to offer. For the surest way to undermine a Party is to take advantage of contact established earlier for on the surface, a better-intentioned motive.

Further more, this relationship between branch and centre is not a stop-go one. It is a continuous process which is not to vary according to the branch's whim. The communication from centre to branch comes in the form of the "Worker" and other Party publications. It comes in the form of letters and documents, business and educational, and also in the form of "Workflo". The branch must issue and implement this material to the best of its ability. Finally, the branches must do all they can to enable members of the C.C. and Secretariat to visit the branch, this being especially important for those branches without Party leaders amongst their number.

In order that there should be a Party policy for the branch to implement, the branch must contribute to the formulation of this policy. This is done by regular reports of Party activity, criticisms of Party propaganda or any aspect of Party thinking (done in a constructive way), reports of ideas generated in the branch. It is the branch which is immersed in the masses, into the branch diffuses the blood of class struggle, It is the branch which must initiate the life of the Party.

The branch once formed is indivisible from the centre. A question related to this is "under what conditions is a new branch established"? The answer is "when individuals of the branch have the firmest roots in the working class of that area". The crucial branches will be organised at the point of production. But of course this will not always be possible especially at this stage of the Party's development. So a branch may be based on a town or a community. And here the question must be looked at from two sides - the strength of the link with the centre and the strength of the link (and future strength) with the community. Care must be taken that the branch does not become a talking shop; or that they don't frantically look for some activity "appropriate to their own locality" but in fact superficial and phoney. Above all that they are not given a licence to become a self-governing enclave, a sanctuary for their own particular "line", destined to split completely from the Party.

All these points towards the correct functioning of the branch are of course, inter-related. Provided political conviction reigns in the branch, that the Worker occupies an integral place in the branch's activity, that it directs its efforts tirelessly towards its own arena, that it pays dues and guarantees regularly, that education is honestly engaged in, that the closest contact is maintained with the centre, then the branch can only thrive and ensure that the Party thrives.