

# Party's Basic Organization

## Rooted in Making Revolution

The *Constitution* of the Revolutionary Communist Party states that, "Party branches shall be set up as the basic units of the Party, along the lines of the organization of production and society, in order to be most rooted in the actual struggles of the working class and the masses." Why is it that the basic organization of the Party is structured in this way and how does this relate to the overall role of the Party—to lead the working class and masses of people in overthrowing capitalism, establishing socialism and advancing to communism?

First of all, as Mao Tsetung has summarized it, "Marxists regard man's activity in production as the most fundamental practical activity," through which man not only comes to better understand the relations between himself and nature, but "also gradually comes to understand, in varying degrees, certain relations that exist between man and man." ("On Practice," *Select- ed Works*, Vol. 1, p. 295) It is in their role in production, the way they are organized in carrying out production and their relationship to the system of production, that workers have their fundamental character as a class. It is in production that the fundamental contradiction of capitalist society—between socialized production, represented by the working class and private ownership, represented by the capitalists—takes direct, concrete form. And it is the socialization of workers in production that provides the *basis* for them to develop the outlook and the organization necessary to overthrow capitalism, eliminate the contradictions characterizing the capitalist epoch and move mankind forward to a whole new stage, communism.

As the *Programme* of the RCP points out, "In their everyday life workers pour their sweat into production and, in capitalist society, experience the life-killing exploitation on which the system is built. They take part in struggles, together with fellow workers and others, against the abuses and outrages of the capitalist system." And as stated in a number of places by the Party (including the report from the Central Committee, excerpted in the June and July 1977 issues of *Revolution*) today it is in the economic struggles of the workers, the struggle against their employers around wages, working conditions, etc., that the "center of gravity" of the Party's work must now be concentrated. This is because, to quote that CC Report, "the economic struggle is now... where in fact the workers, as workers, are waging their battles and in the embryonic way they are beginning to develop a sense of themselves as workers by fighting against an opposing group of employers."

### Every Factory a Fortress

But in the fundamental and strategic sense the Party is not rooted in the plants and other work places mainly in order to lead the workers in waging the economic struggles, though today that is the "center of gravity" of the Party's work and at all times under capitalism this is a very important part of the class struggle. Beyond this, however, the Party must be organized along these lines in order to be able to turn every "factory into a fortress," not just, or mainly, of economic struggle but a political stronghold of the working class in waging the fight against the capitalist class on all fronts, around every major social question—whether it is war, the oppression of minority nationalities, a major strike, etc.

In order to build every "factory into a fortress" of this kind in the broadest way the working class needs not only its vanguard Party but also mass organization, uniting Party members and many other workers who are not communists, to wage struggle in the plants and industries and overall to mobilize the working class in the fight against all oppression, of the working class and other sections of the people as well. This is the great significance of the formation in the very near future of a national workers organization.

Still, without the leadership of its Party the working class cannot be mobilized to fight for its interests in the fullest and most fundamental sense. This is true in the short run, in particular battles the workers wage, but more than that it is the case that the abuses and outrages that spur the workers to battle cannot be ended, and the plunging of society into crisis, war and massive suffering and destruction cannot be eliminated without the working class rising up and leading the masses in revolution to sweep away the cause of it all—capitalism. And as the Party's *Programme* emphasizes, "In order to become conscious of itself as a class, and to know and change the world in accordance with its revolutionary interests, the working class must have

the leadership of its own political Party, a Party that takes part in and leads the battles of the working class and its allies against the capitalist rulers and consistently points the way forward toward the goal of overthrowing the rule of capital, building socialism and advancing to communism. In every country where the working class has seized and held power and continued on the socialist road, it has had the leadership of such a Party." Without such a Party it is impossible for the working class to emancipate itself from the chains of capitalist wage-slavery, and only when the working class, in every country, is led by such a Party can it move forward to finally emancipate mankind as a whole from the shackles of class society altogether.

### Political Line and Organization

It is on the basis of this understanding, on the basis of recognizing not only what the fundamental contradiction of capitalism is but that it can only be resolved through socialist revolution, that the Revolutionary Communist Party builds its basic organization where the workers are concentrated in production. And it is this understanding that must guide the work of all the Party units in all work they carry out, both in building the economic struggle and in the broader sense working to turn every "factory into a fortress" in the way summarized before.

This understanding and the organizational principles that flow from it are directly and completely opposed to the reformist and revisionist organizations that claim to represent the working class, or "the people." For example, the Communist Party, USA (CP) is organized not on the lines of production, with its basic concentration in accordance with the concentration of workers in production, but along the lines of bourgeois electoral districts.

Organization flows from political line, and the reason the CP is organized in this way is that it holds and promotes the line that "socialism" can and will be achieved peacefully, through the process of elections. This, of course, is a perversion of Marxism-Leninism and of the scientific truth that it reveals: that all social revolutions, all transformations of society in which one system replaces another, are and must be achieved through the forcible overthrow and then the forcible suppression of one class by another, and that the state—the government apparatus, especially the armed forces and bureaucracies—is the instrument of one class for the suppression of another. All of history bears out this truth. This has been proven to be true even in the case of revolutions in previous eras where one exploiting class overthrew and took control of society from another—for example in the bourgeois revolutions of the past few centuries where the capitalist class captured power and replaced the feudal system with the capitalist system. Still more is this the case with socialist revolution, where the working class has the task not of overthrowing one system of exploitation for another, but of abolishing exploitation and class divisions altogether.

Clearly, then, whether to be organized on the basis of being rooted where the workers have their character as a class and their concentrated strength or on the basis of electoral districts that blur class distinctions and cover up the nature of the system and the state is a fundamental question of ideological and political line, of basic class outlook, aims and program of struggle. And it is one of the hallmarks of the CP in this country and revisionist parties in other countries that with their ideological and political degeneration came the transformation of their organization from one based in industrial concentration to one based on electoral districts or other similar forms.

This question is also a crucial one in terms of victory or defeat in the class war against the bourgeoisie. One example is the history of the Communist Party in Germany, during the late 1920s and early 1930s, a period marked by deepening crisis and mass discontent, a period characterized by great turmoil and punctuated by periodic uprisings of the masses. One of the serious weaknesses of the Communist Party of Germany during that time—though not the only one—was the fact that it lacked strong organization among the workers in basic industry and so was weakened in its ability to mobilize them as the backbone of the struggle against the ruling class and the fascist forces it increasingly promoted. And this organizational weakness, along with others, contributed to the fact that, despite the militant and massive battles it waged, the German working class was dealt a serious defeat

with the German bourgeoisie's institution of the fascist form of its dictatorship under Hitler.

### Preparing for Revolution

This emphasizes once again the basic principle that all of the Party's work, and the very way it is organized to carry out that work, is and must be consciously aimed at preparing its own ranks and the masses of workers (and others oppressed by the capitalist rulers) for the eventual armed onslaught to overthrow the capitalists. If the Party is not organized and does not carry out its work toward that aim, then what is the purpose of the Party itself, what is the reason for its very existence?

But what does it mean to prepare its ranks and the masses for revolution? Fundamentally it is a question of political and ideological line, of raising the class consciousness of the masses, of training them—especially the advanced—in the science of revolution so they can learn to see through the various tricks and maneuvers of the ruling class and the charlatans they use to mislead people. It is not essentially a question of putting guns in the masses' hands; in fact the bourgeoisie will do a lot of that. It is line that will determine which way people use those arms.

The recent Report from the Central Committee of the RCP drives home this point and points to the fact that unless the Party carries out its work in this way then, when the conditions for revolution do ripen the Party will be in no position to seize the opportunity and will simply throw it away, condemning the masses to prolonged suffering under capitalism. And, as stressed in that Report, in order to prepare its own ranks and the masses for revolution, the Party must wage big battles together with the masses and join with others to build mass organization. But at the same time, it must pay serious and systematic attention to building the Party itself, "both quantitatively (more members) and qualitatively (deepen its grasp of the correct line and its links with the masses)," as the Central Committee Report says.

These two aspects (quantitative and qualitative) are dialectically related. The deepening grasp of the correct line and the Party's links with the masses enable the Party to recruit more fighters into its ranks, and as the *Programme* states: "As broader and broader sections of the working class become class conscious and join the ranks of the Party, it is more and more able to fulfill its role as the vanguard of the proletariat and to apply the mass line more thoroughly."

As the CC Report also notes, Lenin characterized three conditions that mark a revolutionary situation: (1) the ruling class is unable to rule in the old way; (2) the masses are unable to live in the old way; and (3) there is a Party with the line, program and organization to lead the masses in making revolution. With the development of such a situation, and in particular

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### Programme and Constitution of the RCP, USA

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The *Programme* of the RCP summarizes the present situation facing the working class in its struggle and points the road forward. It is a concentration of the Party's basic aims, strategy and tasks as the Party of the working class. It sets forth to the working class the goal of its struggle—revolution, socialism and ultimately communism—and the means to achieve this historic goal. It is a guide to action.

The *Constitution* of the RCP summarizes the basic *Programme* of the Party and sets down its basic organizational principles which enable it to carry out its tasks and responsibilities as the Party of the working class.

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# Party...

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as the first two conditions come into being—which, of course, is related to the Party's work among the masses in the non-revolutionary situation, in building mass struggle and raising the consciousness of the struggling masses—then the question of the Party's ability to lead the masses in seizing the opportunity becomes decisive.

If the Party has not built a strong base, ideologically, politically and organizationally among the workers, especially but not exclusively the most active and class conscious, in the basic industries where the workers are concentrated and have their character as a class, then it will be seriously crippled in its ability to lead the masses in making revolution even with the development of an objectively revolutionary situation.

This emphasizes the fact that party building has to be conducted in close connection with what today is the Party's central task, "to build the struggle, class consciousness and revolutionary unity of the working class and develop its leadership of a broad united front against the U.S. imperialists, in the context of the worldwide united front against imperialism aimed at the rulers of the two superpowers. As this is developed, together with the development of a revolutionary situation, the question of mobilizing the masses for the armed insurrection will then come to the fore as the immediate question." (*Programme*, p. 102)

At this point the Party's role in leading the masses in this task will come down over line, formulating policies to win over the broadest masses to revolutionary struggle, and over concrete questions such as how, on the basis of that line, to organize the armed power of the working class, based on and backed by the organized strength of the workers, especially where they are most concentrated, in basic industry.

The Party's *Programme* clearly sets forth its role and responsibility in this light: "When the conditions are ripe, the Party organizes and directs the armed forces of the working class, in smashing the bourgeois state and suppressing the bourgeoisie." In this situation, with the insurrection and in the conditions of civil war, the Party must not only lead the armed struggle, but must lead the masses in carrying out other urgent tasks, such as defending the factories from capitalist attempts to destroy them once an area has been seized by the working class, finding the ways to continue or restore production and meet the needs of the people, including the supplying of the workers armed forces, and concretely exercising political power in the areas they capture.

In this situation, while mass organization will play a crucial role, success or failure will ultimately depend on the line and the organized strength of the Party. The deeper its roots among the workers, the more it is concentrated in basic, strategic industries, and most fundamentally, the more it has built the foundation for developing factories into actual fortresses of revolutionary struggle, the greater will be its ability to lead the masses in the armed conflict with the capitalists. At that time such questions will, literally, be a matter of life or death.

## Transforming All Society

Looking beyond the first great step of the working class in carrying out its historical mission—the seizure of power through the armed overthrow of the capitalist class—and considering the question of transforming all of society to achieve communism, it is still more decisive that the Party be based where the workers are organized in production. For how can the differences between industry and agriculture, between workers in different industries and other contradictions be handled in accordance with the interests of the working class as a whole in advancing society, without a Party that, exactly because it is rooted in all different sectors, is able not only to forge but to carry out lines and policies representing the interests of the working class, greater than any of its particular parts and greater than any particular sector of society?

Without a Party with a correct line to synthesize, through the application of Marxism-Leninism, Mao Tsetung Thought, the overall interests of the working class and society and concretize these into policies, the working class and masses will be split into conflicting and competing fragments and will be incapable of maintaining its rule and continuing on the socialist road. Only based on this higher synthesis can the working class develop economic plans and other ways of running and transforming society that actually correspond to the needs of the people. Without this, different sections of the working class and society would be blind to each other's needs and abilities—separated, for example, by the walls of the objective divisions of industry and agriculture into different sections of production. And without that Party being organized among the different sectors of society, and most especially its basic productive units, it will be unable to achieve that correct synthesis, to arm the broad masses with correct lines and policies and actually lead the masses in carrying them out.

In the U.S. today such questions may seem remote and abstract, since it is not only the case that the working class does not yet hold state power but the immediate prospect of the working class seizing power does not exist—in short this is a non-revolutionary situation, in which the capitalist class, though in deepening crisis and being weakened, still has reserves and is able to maintain its rule with *relative* stability. But the point is, as stressed throughout the Report from the RCP Central Committee and in this article, that all the work of the Party now plays a decisive part in preparing the working class and its Party for the development of a revolutionary situation in the future. And it is exactly for this reason that the Party must concentrate its forces in the working class, especially in basic industry where workers are most concentrated and socialized, and must build mass struggle, mass organization and the Party itself mainly in these areas, "along the lines of the organization of production and society," as the *Constitution* of the RCP sets down.

## Work Among All Oppressed

At the same time, however, in order to carry out its role as the vanguard of the working class, the Party must not only build basic units in industry or carry out work only in the working class, but must work among all strata and groups oppressed by the capitalists. Just as Mao Tsetung says that man's most fundamental practical activity is in production, he also emphasizes that "Man's social practice is not confined to activity in production, but takes many other forms—class struggle, political life, scientific and artistic pursuits; in short, as a social being, man participates in all spheres of the practical life of society. Thus man, in varying degrees, comes to know the different relations between man and man, not only through his material life but also through his political and cultural life (both of which are intimately bound up with material life)." ("On Practice," *Selected Works*, Vol. 1, p. 296)

As it says in the RCP *Programme*: "The basic conflict in capitalist society is between the proletariat and the bourgeoisie, representing socialized production on the one hand and private ownership of the means of production on the other. But this basic contradiction gives rise to other contradictions, which are mainly influenced by, but also have a significant influence on, the basic contradiction between the proletariat and the bourgeoisie." (p. 97)

Workers are concerned about and wage struggle around not only conditions where they work, but also about many other questions that affect them in every sphere of society. This does not change the fact that it is in production that workers have their basic character as a class, nor does it deny the fact that the organization of the working class and its Party must be rooted where workers are organized in production. But it does point to the need to develop the movement of the working class, as a class for itself, fighting around all the major social questions, regardless of what strata or group is most directly affected—students, oppressed minorities, etc. The point is, the working class and its Party must be organized and mobilized to take up and "infuse its strength, discipline and revolutionary outlook into every major social movement," and that in order to do this it is crucial to root organization where the workers are concentrated as a class, turning every "factory into a fortress" of all-around struggle against the ruling class.

Along with this, the Party of the working class must build units among and lead the struggle of other sections of the people. The strategy of the working class for making revolution is the united front against the imperialist ruling class under the leadership of the working class. This can only be built if the Party of the working class, while mainly rooted in the struggles of the workers themselves, also joins with and gives leadership to the struggles of all those strata and groups that are oppressed by and fight back against the imperialist rulers. But, in addition, as V.I. Lenin wrote in *What Is To Be Done?*, "Working-class consciousness cannot be genuine political consciousness unless the workers are trained to respond to *all* cases of tyranny, oppression, violence and, no matter *what class* is affected—unless they are trained, moreover, to respond from a . . . [communist] point of view and no other. The consciousness of the working masses cannot be genuine class-consciousness, unless the workers learn, from concrete, and above all from topical, political facts and events to observe *every* other social class in *all* the manifestations of its intellectual, ethical, and political life; unless they learn to apply in practice the materialist analysis and the materialist estimate of *all* classes, strata, and groups of the population." (*Collected Works*, Vol. 5, p. 412)

Recent experience in the U.S. has shown how the struggle of Black people and other oppressed nationalities, students and youth and other sections of the people fighting against U.S. aggression in Indochina and more recently against U.S. backing for the racist regimes in southern Africa, the fight of women for equality and other struggles have raised questions, created controversy and generated discussion and struggle among broad numbers of workers, inspiring the most advanced in particular with the desire to build struggle against the same capitalist enemy. All this has, overall,

had a very positive effect on the working class.

At the same time there is confusion and backward reactions among workers in response to these struggles and there are, of course, shortcomings and limitations to these various social movements, despite their positive character overall. But this stresses all the more the need for the Party of the working class to both work among these other strata to give leadership to them, to bring forward the outlook and interests of the working class, and even more importantly to bring to the workers an understanding of both the overall positive role and also the shortcomings of these struggles and the *class basis* of this. As the *Programme* of the RCP states, "Only by uniting with all social forces fighting imperialism can the working class develop consciousness of its own historical role as capitalism's gravedigger. The proletariat will learn more sharply the nature of society and the monopoly capitalists who rule it, as it sees also the vacillation of the other strata toward the bourgeoisie, their narrowness and self-interest. With the aid of the Party, it sums up that none of these other class forces can represent its interests, and that this stems from the fact that they have a different position in society—they own some means of production or stand above the proletariat in society's 'division of labor.' Thus the working class not only wins allies in the course of building the united front, but learns why it alone can lead them to overthrow the monopoly capitalists." (p. 103)

Once again, this emphasizes the fact that, while working among all strata oppressed by the capitalists, in all social movements, and recruiting into the Party advanced, revolutionary-minded fighters in these movements who are won to the stand of the working class, the Party must concentrate its organization and build the Party mainly among the workers, especially where their strength and character as a class is most concentrated. And, again, while building mass struggle and mass organization, the Party units must also devote systematic efforts to finding and training revolutionaries and recruiting them into the Party, to building the Party as the vanguard of the working class firmly based in the backbone of the working class along the lines that the workers are organized in production, and to strengthening its ability not only to lead the immediate battles but to prepare its own ranks and the masses to carry revolutionary struggle through to victory when the conditions for revolution ripen. ■

# Youth...

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lems youth face and winning many new youth to the need for proletarian revolution. And it will help consolidate youth already in the groups—showing how small forces can start to build the struggle against the bourgeoisie and bring other people into the revolutionary movement.

Throughout the next month propaganda, posters and T-shirts will be coming out—to start making the formation of a young communist organization in October a question among youth and those taking up this campaign and broader. And on Saturday, August 20, there will be a mass meeting in New York City to put out and discuss this young communist organization, unite youth around the Wall Street actions and make plans for the last two months of building for it.

The campaign towards Wall St. is swinging into full gear—a poster is going up in neighborhoods and communities with the headline "5 MILLION YOUTH NEED JOBS!" "MARCH ON THE WALL ST. BANKERS AND BOSSES!" T-shirts are coming out advertising the demonstration, a short slide show on unemployment is to be shown in community centers, parks and neighborhoods—and a pamphlet by the *Young Red* explaining how the rich rulers of Wall Street cause unemployment. These tools will help the organizing that has already started.

Youth groups in different cities have gone out to unite with and build local struggles around Jobs for Youth and point towards the Wall St. actions as an important time to take on the whole fight, and unite these struggles against the enemy. In New York, Youth in Action linked up with a community organization in Bedford-Stuyvesant and led a demonstration of 150 youth blocking traffic for an hour. The result was 1600 government jobs came through to the community. Youth in Action in Philly has taken up the fight for a higher minimum wage as part of the overall Jobs for Youth campaign and March on Wall Street. One target of this has been McDonalds and other youth employers who pay youth below the minimum wage. The campaign is just getting rolling in other cities with groups taking up other local battles around jobs programs, minimum wage, fighting against rotting conditions in the neighborhoods and linking this to the fight for jobs. All of this is being put in the context of going to Wall Street to confront the rich blood-suckers who stand behind every abuse. ■