

COMMUNIST LEADERSHIP

**A
3-LESSON
SYLLABUS**

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COMMUNIST LEADERSHIP

A 3-LESSON SYLLABUS

This course is for those who are doing, or are being trained to do, active responsible work in the branches of the Communist Party. It is intended as a guide to the role of the Party and its organisation.

LESSON ONE

THE COMMUNIST PARTY

What are the fundamental aims of the Communist Party?

build a Socialist Britain in which the means of production and distribution will be in the hands of the working class.

Secondly, at each stage, to combine the struggle on immediate issues with the fight for our ultimate aim—Socialism.

First, to lead the working class to power in order to

Thirdly, to build the unity of the Labour movement for united action to achieve those aims.

Fourthly, to strengthen the solidarity of the international working class.

What is the place of the Communist Party in the British Labour movement?

The Communist Party,

formed in 1920, "sought to give the broad Labour Party an effective Socialist Marxist core, to unify, consolidate and guide the wide movement in a Socialist direction." (Pollitt, *Looking Ahead*, p. 115.)

In its formation it already brought about the unity of a number of left-wing groupings within the Labour movement. Today it constitutes the revolutionary Marxist Party of the Labour movement seeking to work with and unite the left-wing forces in the Labour movement.

The indispensable role of the Communist Party is especially clear today when, as in 1931, the reformist right-wing leaders of the Labour Party are leading the movement into full-scale collaboration with British and American big business against the democratic and anti-imperialist forces.

What are the main tasks of the Party today?

The main task of the Party is to rally the Labour movement and the people

against the alliance of the British capitalists and the right-wing Labour leaders. This alliance means for Britain the worsening of the economic crisis, growing hardships for the people, encouragement of reaction at

home and abroad, the sacrifice of our national independence, the road to war. In this situation the tasks of the Communist Party are:

1. To develop on the widest scale (a) the mass movement for peace and against the warmongers (b) the united struggle of the working class in fighting defence of its standards of living.

2. To win the Labour movement for a mass movement against the alliance of capitalists and right-wing Labour leaders which will result in "the dismissal of its right-wing leaders and the formation of a Labour Government of the Left." (*For Britain Free and Independent*, p. 40.)

3. To conduct widespread propaganda for Socialism, to show what it would mean for Britain and to popularise its magnificent achievements in the Soviet Union. To show what the advance to Socialism means for the people in the new democracies.

4. To help strengthen and unite the organisations of the working class and especially the trade unions, building 100 per cent trade unionism, developing and maintaining the maximum activity in every working class organisation.

5. To explain on the widest possible scale, to all sections of the people (students and the youth in general, professional workers, women, small business men, as well as the workers at the bench) our alternative policy which alone can save Britain, and win them for action for it.

What kind of Party do we need to fulfil these tasks?

First, a Party *based on Marxism*. Marxists see capitalism as a stage in

human society; the very nature of capitalism gives rise to the working class, which must ultimately end capitalism and build Socialism. The class struggle is a product of the capitalist system; it is based on the exploitation of the working class by the capitalists. The capitalists maintain their ability to exploit by means of the State and the armed power at their command. In order to build Socialism, the working class must, therefore, obtain political power and have the necessary force at their disposal. The reformists fundamentally base themselves on capitalist ideas. They deny the true nature of exploitation and, therefore, that there is real basis for the class struggle. They practise class collaboration. Above all, they deny that the State is the instrument of the ruling class but see it as an impartial body which can be controlled by a majority in Parliament. In practice they use the State in the traditional way, against the working class.

Based in this way on capitalist ideas, we can understand why the reformist leadership of the Labour Party is acting against the interests of the people and makes no change in the State apparatus. That is why, to mobilise the people against capitalist policies requires the widespread exposure of social-democratic ideas.

Secondly, a *mass Party*, i.e., a Party strong in numbers and with roots in every factory, depot, street, block of flats, and in every section of the people; leading them in mass action against the capitalists. It must be a Party closely linked with the people; that is why we must recruit boldly. "More new people from the

masses into the Party for independent participation in the creation of a new life—such is our motto in the struggle against all difficulties, such is our road to victory” (Lenin, *Collected Works*, Vol. XX, “Workers’ State and Party Work”). We need several thousand more residential and factory branches and factory committees, since these are main organs by which Party policy is made the property of the people.

Thirdly, we need a Party able to give *constant and many-sided leadership; to wage many-sided, militant, mass activity*. A Communist (and thus the Party) must, in Lenin’s words, be a “tribune of the people, able to react to every manifestation of tyranny and oppression, no matter where it takes place, no matter what stratum or class of the people it affects . . .” (*L.S.W.* Vol. II, p. 99). The Party must also advance and win action for policies which carry forward the struggle of the people. Through the leadership of the Party, these struggles must be linked into a common struggle against capitalism. Now above all we must develop the mass action of the people since this alone can bring about the changes that are needed. The Party must constantly explain the class significance of these struggles. This many-sided leadership is the task of the Executive, District, Area, Branch, Factory Committees and Women’s Sections. To do this the Party establishes links with its members in the professions, in the particular industries, in the Co-operative movement, and in all kinds of working class organisations in order to help them. All this assists the Party to see the interests of the people as a whole and to overcome sectional and secretarian outlooks (See Party Rules, 3d.).

With such a conception of political work, the Communist Party cannot be merely a Parliamentary one. Our conception of political action is, as Lenin indicates above, necessarily varied. It means reacting quickly to all attacks on our living standards and on our political rights. It means presenting our policy inside Parliament and Councils, but also campaigning for it outside of them. The kind of political action is determined by our aims and by the stage reached by the movement of the people.

Fourthly, our Party must be *able to act with unity and speed*. To make this possible our organisation is based on democratic centralism. The essence of Party democracy is the fullest participation of our members in the day-to-day life of the Party, continuously helping to shape policy. This is specially important in the discussions which precede the Party Congress, the supreme authority of the Party, where the main lines of policy are democratically discussed and decided. At District Congresses there is the local application of national policy. The main committees at all levels are elected, i.e., the Branch, Borough or Area, and District Committees, and the National Executive at the National Congress. But these committees, once elected, have the responsibility of day-to-day leadership. Their decisions, therefore, are binding on the committees below them. In this way the Party can move quickly and dispose its forces where most required. Fundamentally, of course, the discipline of the Communist Party depends on the conviction of its members; hence the Marxist training and education of our membership is of such vital importance.

QUESTIONS ON LESSON 1

1. *What are the principal differences between Marxism and Reformism?*
2. *Do these differences find reflection in the struggle around immediate issues?*
3. *Explain the relation between the struggle on immediate issues and our ultimate aim.*
4. *What is the attitude of the Communist Party to Parliamentary and Local Government Elections and activity?*
5. *What do we mean by a Mass Party?*

LESSON TWO

HOW THE PARTY BRANCH LEADS THE PEOPLE

Introduction. In this syllabus we are concerned primarily with the branch (on a territorial and factory basis) as the basic unit of the Party. The branches are the main organs by which Party policy is made the property of the people. The success of their work determines the success of the whole Party in winning the people for the struggle and for the advance to Socialism. In considering how best the branches can do their work, attention is focused on the Branch Committee, the elected leadership of the Branch which is responsible for exercising that leadership.

Much of what is said below applies also to Borough Committees in London and a number of City and Area Committees, but it is not practicable to include them all together in a single syllabus.

WHAT IS THE ROLE OF THE BRANCH COMMITTEE?

1. The Branch Committee as the local instrument for national campaign The aim of its work is to act as the local political leadership of the workers, to win them for Party policy (as laid down by Congress—see above), and for the struggle on issues under the guidance and leadership of the Party Centre.

Its first task is therefore to make sure that this policy is known and understood by the members. Hence the

need for (i) statements and discussion on current policy at Branch Committees and at Branch meetings; (ii) classes or lectures making a more fundamental examination, to get full understanding and help the members to explain and fight for the policy; (iii) participation by the Branch Committee in District discussions and schools; (iv) ensuring the distribution of pamphlets and other material—especially the *Daily Worker*—to Party members.

Its second task is to organise the activity of the Party members to make the policy known as a means to mobilise the people in the Branch area. This includes (i) the distribution of material issued from Party Centre on the subject—leaflets, pamphlets, posters, etc.; (ii) public statements of policy—at meetings of all kinds, and in the Press; (iii) Branch leaflets, etc., where some special local situation can be linked up with the general policy.

While such activities are directed to winning support from the widest possible number of people, we must see the working class as the central inspiring force. Our central aim is to build up mass action by the Labour movement against the drive to war and the attacks on the standard of living. Therefore the first priority for all propaganda is the working class in the factories and in organisations, and in working class areas.

In order to move those forces into action it is necessary for the Branch Committee to know and build up close contact with (i) the factories in the area, with details of numbers of workers, what they are turning out, times of starting and finishing (for *Daily Worker* sales, distribution of literature, etc.), in what trade unions they are organised, etc; (ii) working class

organisations in the Branch area— trade unions, Co-operatives, clubs, etc; (iii) working class streets, with concentration on *the same streets* to get the best results.

Naturally, on special issues there will be particular approaches requiring knowledge of and contact with women's organisations, youth clubs, educational organisations, religious bodies, etc.

2. The Branch Committee as the local instrument for District campaigns

The same considerations apply as for national campaigns, except that in some cases the District

organises demonstrations or other events, and the Branch Committee has to consider not only propaganda, but the drawing in of the Party members and local organisations, etc., for these events.

3. The Branch Committee as the initiators of local campaigns

In considering National and District policy and campaigns, the Branch Committee should

always try to see the special local application of the policy, or the special local conditions that make an issue specially important in its area.

There are, moreover, many issues which arise locally and are of class significance, though not directly concerned with the current National or District campaigns.

Therefore, the Branch Committee should always show initiative (a) in applying National and District policy in appropriate local forms; (b) in reacting quickly to local issues affecting the people.

(In London, *Borough* Committees have the chief responsibility in this field; but Branch Committees

should suggest to the Borough Committees what issues are important in their area.)

For example: *HOUSING*. National policy will state the problem for the country as a whole, and indicate what needs to be done on a national scale to solve it. The Branch Committee will make full use of the broad general guiding lines of this policy and draw up a policy which will (a) estimate the local housing needs; (b) indicate the local sites where houses and/or flats could be erected (c) show how labour and materials could be made available; (d) how the scheme could be financed in such a way that homes would be built at rents which wage-earners could afford to pay, at the same time rejecting all efforts to increase the rents on existing houses.

Issues that arise locally may include housing repairs, rents, evictions, water supply, playing-fields for young people, etc. As a rule, only issues on which there is wide public feeling should be taken up, and on which public pressure can produce results.

In all this, it is vital that the Branch Committee shall lead *by example* in a public way, as the way to rally both the people and the membership.

What should be the main features of organising the mass activity by the Branch?

Having formulated policy, consideration must next be given to the methods by which

the Committee can make it known, win support for it, and move people into action for its realisation. Best results will only come through working out a plan of campaign. This is of value because it (a) sets definite political objectives; (b) helps, therefore, to rouse the

members for action, (c) enables the branch more effectively to marshal its forces, and (d) is the only basis upon which a real check-up can be made.

It is important to note that the scale and scope of such plans will of necessity vary with each branch, according to forces available, local circumstances, etc.; but the need to lead mass action holds good for every branch, no matter what its size.

The essential features of organising mass activity are (a) a clear statement of political demands and proposals; (b) the campaigning measures by which the objectives are to be achieved; (c) the forces through which the movement is to be developed, and (d) strengthening of the Party and the working class as a result of the campaign—new members, *Daily Worker* and literature sales, finances, etc.

Small branches, or where there may be only one or two members in a town, village, or place of work will need just a simple form of activity to start with: e.g., to sell so many copies of the *Daily Worker*, to win so many readers, to organise an invitation meeting, to sell so many copies of a *Special*, etc.; in other words, to win in this way closer links with the workers. But whatever it is, it should be done in an organised way, with specific targets set, and a regular check-up on progress.

The real test of all our work is the extent to which the workers and the people around us are themselves drawn into action fighting for our policy as a whole or any aspect of it which affects them most: and through activity, fighting for their demands, workers gain experience, learn by their experience, win confidence in their own strength and power, and recognise the need to join the Party in order to strengthen the working class.

How can we go about making and retaining members?

Building the Party.

The campaign to recruit to the Party

must be planned and must be continuous. The test of effective leadership on political, social and economic issues is how it strengthens the working class for further struggle, and in particular the new recruits it brings to the Party. We must recognise that tens of thousands of militant workers can be won now to the Party, especially those drawn into our campaigns. In the area covered by a branch, in how many of the streets have we members? In how many of the factories and depots employing, say, more than twenty workers, have we members? The most effective method of recruitment is by individual contact. This, too, can be planned by discussing lists of sympathisers, regular *Daily Worker* readers, etc., and deciding who can best approach them. The most common mistake is to neglect to ask people to join the Party. Selective meetings are also valuable, while at *all* public events a well-prepared appeal should be made for recruits. Similarly, we must recruit to the Young Communist League.

Retaining members. Among the most important factors in retaining members are the following:

(a) *The character of activity.* It will certainly be easier to hold members where the Party locally shows itself publicly as actively campaigning on the problems most affecting the people, locally and nationally, and whether economic or political.

(b) *The effectiveness of the Communist Party Branch.* Branches should be alive politically and socially. It is especially important to improve the character of the regular branch meetings. The main questions discussed

should deal with current problems and issues. Every effort should be made to draw all present into the discussion, where necessary posing specific questions for this purpose. At such meetings definite conclusions should be reached and decisions made for appropriate action in which all members can take part. More social activity, in big and small ways, will help to draw comrades closer together.

At the same time, the new members we make will have very varied interests and be at many different levels of development. The leadership must therefore show its ability in organising such varied activity as to draw each member into the struggle.

(c) *The need for education and training.* Without strengthening their grasp of scientific Socialism, members will not develop their convictions and loyalty to the Party. Classes and training courses are fundamental in any plan for retaining and equipping our members.

(d) *The need for personal attention.* New members do not need less personal attention when they join, but more. More experienced members should help them by explaining the role and organisation of the Party, advising on reading, assistance in branch activity, etc. Dues collectors can help a great deal.

Who are our cadres? And how can we develop them?

Our existing Party cadres are all those members who accept some responsibility, however small, for the carrying out of Party policy and leadership. But the extent and quality of Party leadership depends on the extent to which we develop and train thousands of new cadres. The acute developing political situation which is arousing political

interest among vast numbers of workers, makes this both possible and essential. The qualities we seek to develop are loyalty and devotion to the Party, contact with the people, the ability to work with the people and win support for our policy as well as recruit to the Party, and self-reliance and initiative.

In planning the development of cadres, the branch committee must (a) know its members. There is a far greater amount of ability and experience in the ranks of the Party than is ever used. A close knowledge of the members gained by personal discussion and in varied campaigning as well as through the registration forms is an indispensable step. Through considering the forms of activity most suitable to them, a great many of them will develop as leading people. This leads to (b) giving members responsibility. Cadres, of course, are not tested in words but in deeds. Therefore they must be given a certain measure of responsibility. Without being given the job to do, they cannot show their abilities. (c) It is not enough simply to hand over a job. Cadres must be trained. A number of recommendations are made in the special statement of Cadres (Report of the E.C., pp. 66-69), including classes and personal attention.

The Branch Secretary and all members of the Branch Committee must be continuously looking for new people and helping to develop them to do responsible work.

What is the job of the Branch Secretary?

expanded.)

(In a school for Branch Secretaries, this section should be considerably

The Secretary is the key cadre in the Branch Com-

mittee. He (or she) should as far as possible be known (or aim to become known) locally as the leading Communist spokesman and as the main representative of the Party in the locality, and recognised by all as a political force.

He needs to maintain close contact with the District Committee, know its main campaigns, and work out how best to interpret and apply them locally. It is the Branch Secretary's responsibility to prepare Branch Committee agendas so that the Committee keeps abreast of national and local developments, is clear as to policy, and each member has a clearly-defined responsibility for helping to carry it out in practice. He must see that the members of the Committee are fighting hard to carry out the decisions of the Committee.

The Branch Secretary should also keep in touch with the Branch Officers, receive their reports, help them with particular problems, and arrange for periodical discussions on their work in the Branch Committee.

What is the importance of checking up on decisions and how should it be done?

Note the twofold character of the check-up: (1) the political check-up. What has

happened to the political line and the decisions taken? To what extent are the people moving into action—how many factories, organisations, etc.? What have been the workers' reactions and response? This should be the primary concern of the check-up: to know what has been done, to examine the methods and the political results achieved, to get to know the difficulties and

experiences, etc., so as to be able to determine the next steps. (2) To measure the growth and influence of the Party in terms of members, money raised, *Daily Worker* and literature sold, etc.

There cannot possibly be any guarantee that a Branch Committee will never make mistakes. Through proper check-up, however, by noting the causes of its failures, it will be able to learn from its experiences, avoid similar errors in future and so improve its work and strengthen its political authority in the locality and among the members.

There is no one method by which a satisfactory check-up can be made. It is not just a matter of compiling statistics, although on questions of membership, dues, etc., these will be absolutely essential and should be compiled *regularly* each month. The check-up in the wider and more political sense as outlined above may sometimes be possible at Branch Committee meetings, but in a number of instances will also require less formal and often individual personal discussions with a number of comrades who in some way or other have played a part in the particular campaign.

Branch Committees should also remember how necessary it is to report to the Borough Committee or the District regularly each month (a) on the activity which has been undertaken and (b) on the membership and dues position. Just as a check-up is important for the Branch Committee, so it is for the higher organisations in the Party, who can on many questions only know what is taking place on the basis of reports received from the branches.

Lastly, it is important that the check-up should con-

cern itself, not only with *what* has been done and *how*, but also *by whom*, as this will help in the constant selection and promotion of cadres previously dealt with.

QUESTIONS ON LESSON 2

1. *What contact does your Branch Committee have with the members, and how does it make its policy known to the members?*
2. *What methods does your Branch adopt to carry the Party's policy to the people?*
3. *Upon what sections of the people in your area must we concentrate in order to develop the mass movement?*
4. *How has your Branch applied National policy?*
5. *On what local issues is it campaigning?*
6. *What are the principal methods it is adopting to win new recruits?*
7. *How does your Branch deal with new members?*

LESSON THREE

COMMUNIST LEADERSHIP IN THE FACTORIES

Introduction The twelve million workers who are employed in Britain's key industries and services are the main base of Britain's economy. The factories, depots and pits in which they work are the very heart of the economic power of the capitalist class. At the point of production, the class struggle is sharpest. This is more so than ever when the Government, together with the employers, is carrying out an offensive against the conditions of the working class, and we enter a period of mass struggle. Among these workers are the bulk of the experienced, class-conscious trade unionists. There can be no more important task of the Communist Party than to win these workers into action for its policy, the defence of their standards and the real advance to Socialism.

The programme on which we fight is outlined in Harry Pollitt's Report to the 20th Congress of the Party (*For Britain—Free and Independent*, 9d.). The Communist Party must make a big and consistent effort to build up factory groups and branches. This effort, of course, should be made, not only in key industries and services, but wherever there is an opportunity. The aim of this session is to discuss how to build up a factory group or branch and suggest guiding principles for its work.

What is the central aim of Party organisation inside a factory ?

the working class in the struggle.

The central aim of a factory group or branch is similar to that of any other branch —to win the leadership of

This is not to be achieved at one blow. It requires that Communists in the factory should be able to give day-to-day leadership to the workers and act in their interests, building the trade union and shop steward organisations of the workers. It means winning the workers for different kinds of *action* which sharpen their class consciousness and political understanding. It requires the constant presentation of our programme and Communist ideas in discussion, sale of literature; and the drive to win new members for the Party. These things are impossible without organisation.

How are Party members organised in factories ?

formed which meets regularly. In these cases, where Party organisation and work has been carried on for some considerable time, where there is capable and experienced leadership and where the Party group is strong in numbers there a Factory Branch may be formed, in consultation with the District Committee.

Where there are three or more Communists, a factory group should be

Conditions in factories, depots, shipyards, etc., are so different that it is impossible to lay down a blue-print for Party organisation which will suit all circumstances. The following general principles must be adapted.

First, no matter what the individual circumstances, there must be regular and well-prepared meetings of the Party members in the factory. The principal aim of

each meeting is to consider the position in the factory and decide what steps must be taken to carry forward our activity. By this we do not mean only discussing those issues of an economic character which are confined to that factory, but to discuss the wider political situation as it relates to and affects that factory. Therefore, the first item on the agenda of each meeting should be a political discussion which will have the effect of clearing up questions and indicating on what questions we should be striving to bring the workers into action. Then, secondly, there should be a report and discussion on the shop issues which are coming up and how the Party can help solve them in the interests of the workers. At each meeting there should be a brief time devoted to *Daily Worker* sales, with a check on what is being done to win new readers; dues and finance; literature, and, of course, recruiting. These need not be taken as separate items but can be incorporated as part of the discussion on the political situation and the steps which need to be taken.

The meetings should not be too long. Some groups have found that to have their meetings immediately after work (with tea provided if possible) gets the best results, especially if the members live widely apart. There is no easy solution to the problem of shifts. But shifts should not be an excuse for not holding regular meetings for all those who can come; for those who cannot, personal contact is of the utmost importance. In one big Coventry factory, a comrade who has been either on permanent night shift or alternate night and day shifts has been a first-rate literature seller, and for some time literature secretary of the group, although he could only attend some of the meetings.

Secondly, the number of jobs the group or branch will do depends on the forces available. In the smaller groups there should be a secretary, treasurer and literature secretary. Where the group or branch is of some size, then it is useful to have comrades responsible for *Daily Worker* sales and education. Of course, both *Daily Worker* sales and Marxist education are essential, whether there are comrades responsible for them or not.

Thirdly, the leadership of the group or branch must include those comrades who hold positions of responsibility in the most important workers' organisations associated with the factory. It must itself be in close touch with the moods and the needs of the workers. The leadership or committee should be elected at a meeting of all members in the factory.

Who is responsible for guidance of factory groups or branches?

For the main enterprises the District Committee decides which shall come directly under its own control or that

of a particular Area, City, Borough or Branch Committee. The chief factors are the importance of the enterprise; the level of Party leadership inside it; the ability of the lower committees to give guidance; and, finally, the accessibility of the enterprise to the District or any other Committee.

What should be the relationship between Party organisation on a factory and territorial basis?

The building up of Party organisation in the factories and in the Wards should

not be seen as conflicting, but as being two aspects of building the mass Party and winning leadership in

action. But it may involve very definite decisions by the local Branch and the factory group on the work of particular comrades. In this present situation it would obviously be incorrect to decide to build factory organisation unless the appropriate committee is prepared to allocate cadres (and take measures to train cadres) for this work.

The activities of the Party Branch and Party factory groups or branches are complementary. Local Party work influences workers not touched yet by factory organisation; while factory organisation influences members not touched by branches in the areas where they live. It is better if members can be drawn into both local and factory activity, since this helps them to have a balanced outlook and gain rich experience. Moreover, there are many issues which require the joint action of Communists inside the factories and on the streets, as for example, the campaign for peace and the general campaigns against the building cuts, for the defence of the workers' conditions, etc. The building up both of local and factory organisation is the only way to a mass Party with roots wherever the people live and work.

How does the factory branch or group set about winning the leadership of the workers?

In the first session we have stated the main tasks of the Communist Party

at this stage of the struggle. These tasks are common to all units of the Party. But the emphasis and the means to achieve these tasks naturally depend on the circumstances.

First in importance is to bring the workers into action so that *through their experience* they learn the necessity of securing a Labour Government of the Left. Agitation and propaganda are essential to bring about such action, but they are not substitutes for it. In fact, the usefulness of our propaganda must be measured by the amount of support and action which they command. This action by all the workers in an enterprise will not be won for our entire policy, but on particular issues which arise, economic and political. Given an active Party, such action, whatever its form, will assist in the political education of the workers.

Secondly, the factory branch or group must not separate economic from political issues. This is especially important when the Government, by its line-up with British and American big business, is taking and preparing measures which are arousing great resentment and anger among the workers. The Party in the factories must make clear its support for union wage claims and its opposition to wage freezing. It must support the developing mass movement against the cuts in shipbuilding and building, for reductions in prices, etc. The workers see more and more clearly that increased production within the framework of a reactionary policy will in no way solve the crisis. "It is in the factories and branch rooms," stated the 20th Party Congress, "that the workers can best be mobilised and their mass pressure exerted upon the Government."

While assisting in this movement, the Communist factory organisation must be ready at all times in the name of the Party to call for action on direct political issues. At the same time, therefore, as leading the

struggle on the political economic issues, it must win support from the workers for the conception that it is the people themselves who can save the peace, despite the war-mongering issues. All such actions sharpen the political consciousness of the workers.

Thirdly, the Communist factory group or branch must conduct ceaseless explanation of the general policy and aims of the Communist Party. The main weapon will be the *Daily Worker* and the regular sales of our Party literature. But there are many opportunities to hold dinner-hour discussions (e.g., on the Party's economic plan, on the Marshall Plan, etc., and on theoretical questions); the sale of tickets for public meetings organised by the local Branch or District, or by the factory group itself. The task of explaining Communist policy means that our own members must be well-equipped with our policy, constantly explaining the meaning of Socialism, constantly developing their Marxist understanding. For this reason, not only must we get the members to study Party literature and the classics, but also arrange for Marxist education and training. Without such training we shall not develop leading forces and the work of explanation will be badly done.

Finally, and by no means least, winning the workers for action on Party policy means a mass Communist Party. If the group or Branch is doing its job, the result of all its varied activities should be a steady stream of recruits. In a large factory this is an essential *if the Party is to have its roots among the workers in all shifts and all aspects of factory life*. No other committee or activity is a substitute for building the Party.

Recruitment is mainly the result of patient, personal contact and discussion, but there is an important place for the selective meeting held immediately after work and addressed by a well-respected and competent spokesman for the Party. These selective meetings need careful preparation, so that the non-Party people who come already have a strong interest. The meeting place itself should be as congenial as possible. From time to time the group should discuss those who are sympathetic and consider ways and means of bringing them in to the Party.

What should be the relation between the Communist factory group or branch and other factory organisations?

The Communists must carry forward their proud tradition of being the foremost fighters for 100

per cent trade unionism and powerful shop stewards' organisation. Communists who have the privilege of being elected to trade union or shop steward positions must be efficient in carrying out their responsibilities, continuously bringing the greatest number of workers into shaping trade union and shop steward policy, and at all times acting as Communists. Moreover, Communists will serve the workers in every field of factory life; on canteen committees, sports clubs, dramatic societies, etc., the organisation of which varies from factory to factory. The central task is to assist in uniting the workers for active struggle in defence of wages and conditions. But Communist factory organisation is in no way a substitute for shop steward and trade union organisation. It is the shop stewards who will take the initiative in pressing a union wage

claim, but the factory Party group or branch can explain the importance of the claim, dispel the counter arguments of the Government and the capitalists. Similarly, the shop stewards will support the action of local people in demanding more housing, campaigning against the closure of a British Restaurant, etc.

It is an even worse error to imagine that organisations built primarily to defend the conditions of the workers are in any way substitutes for Communist organisation. The role of the Party as the unifying, Marxist core is as important within the factories as in the Labour movement as a whole.

How can we build factory groups where these are very weak or non-existent?

In a great many factories there are one or two Party members, but no organised group; and in very many more key enterprises there are no Communists at all. A priority task for District, Borough and Branch committees is to plan a big development of this work.

Even in those factories where we have only one or two members, Party activity must be carried out by the comrades we have. In such cases it is clear there can be little hope of developing consistent activity which will influence daily the thoughts and actions of a large body of the workers until we have more members. This is not to say that until we have a fair-sized group there can be no mass activity on various issues or recruitment to the trades union and building workshop organisation, but the obvious fact that in a factory of five or six

hundred workers one or two Communist can affect only a minority of the workers on the wider political questions.

In those cases our comrades should establish contact with the workers who are most sympathetic to the Party and systematically approach them to join, and at the earliest opportunity organise a meeting where they can be invited to become members of the organisation we will commence there.

We should try to give a conception of the changes a Communist branch or committee can make in that factory: how it can strengthen the workers' organisation, develop the fight for improvements in conditions and, by changing the workers' outlook on general political issues, heighten their political understanding and class consciousness, and thus contribute towards the national fight for changes.

Where the comrades are inexperienced, the appropriate committee should (a) allocate a more experienced comrade to meet with them and advise them; (b) assist them by special training classes, etc.

In such cases, as also where we have no members at all, the District, Borough or Branch must plan activities outside the factory. Factory-gate sales of the *Daily Worker*, dinner-hour meetings, leaflet distribution, canvassing of flats where the workers live, contact at trade union branch meetings—these are some of the measures which can be taken. Full use should also be made of the registration forms, which give valuable information.

QUESTIONS ON LESSON 3

1. *Have the factory workers an important role to play in the fight for peace?*
2. *How do you link the struggle to defend the workers' living standards with the fight for peace?*
3. *What do you know about the factories in your area and the state of the workers' organisations in them?*
4. *In what ways does an established Factory Branch lead the workers?*
5. *What steps should be taken to establish organisation in factories where (a) we have one or two members; (b) no members at all?*

FOR FURTHER STUDY

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