
Tentative Program for the Organization of Communist Party Shop Committees.

[A Document of the unified CPA, Circa 1922]

Typeset leaflet, copy in the Comintern Archive, f. 515, op. 1, d. 96, l. 1.

The following program is a tentative outline for the immediate organization of Communist Party Shop Committees. Your Central Executive Committee, in grappling with this problem, has been guided throughout by the necessity of creating a subsidiary organization which must be rigidly, and at all times, subordinate to the organization, principles, and policy of the Communist Party itself. Moreover, it was faced with the task of creating something which is an entirely new departure for Communist organizations in this country.

The plan of organization — its structure — is therefore to be considered as purely temporary and broadly elastic, so as to permit of change and revision as time and experience will dictate.

Its function, as outlined below, must also be considered from the point of view of immediate practicality rather than as ultimate in scope. A more comprehensive program at present before the plan itself has been tested by experience, might lead to stultification and confusion. The present basis has this distinct advantage: correct in theory and principle, new activities will develop out of practice and the experience of the membership, minimizing as far as possible any tendency of friction between the shop committees and the Communist Party, and the possibility of readjustment before those tendencies have crystallized.

Finally, in order for any plan to succeed — no matter how good — the heartiest cooperation of the rank and file is absolutely essential. A fair period trial alone will determine its soundness or unsoundness. During this trial period, however, the Central Executive Committee will carefully study the results from reports submitted — and with the help of suggestions from the membership, which are cordially invited —

will attempt to shape and mould the CPSC into an effective adjunct of Communist organization and propaganda among the broad masses of the working class in America.

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Form of Organization.

1). All party units shall immediately distribute and collect all data relative to the OCCUPATION, UNION AFFILIATION, AND NAME AND ADDRESS OF EMPLOYER — as stated on form blanks sent out for this purpose.

2). All party members shall be classified under the following three categories (in code): (a) Occupation; (b) Union affiliation; (c) Name and address of employer.

Note: Names and addresses of party members must not be given — but only such designations as each local may decide upon to insure the rank and file from possible spies within the organization.

3). Such files shall be kept solely in the custody of the Central Executive Committee.

4). Not more than FIVE members in a particular shop or factory shall constitute a CPSC.

5). All CPSC within a given local shall be appointed by the LOCAL EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE.

6). Each CPSC shall elect its own chairman.

7). The CPSC shall work under the direction of the LOCAL EXECUTIVE COMMITTEES, subject to the supervision and control of the higher party bodies — SUB-DISTRICT COMMITTEES and the CEC.

8). The chairman of the CPSC shall meet regularly with the Local Organizers to make reports and receive instructions.

9). Members of CPSC shall have no party rights other than as regular party members.

Note: All party work must be conducted through the regular party units. Under no circumstances shall CPSC take the place of the party group or branch.

Function.

1). The CPSC shall distribute leaflets, pamphlets, and literature to the workers in the shops.

Note: Plans for the issuance of a legal paper suitable for propaganda in the shops are under consideration.

2). The CPSC shall build up groups of sympathizers within the shop or factory, whose sole function shall be to help them in spreading Communist propaganda.

Note: These groups of sympathizers will be the raw material for future membership in the Communist Party, and should be selected with this end in view. Furthermore, these sympathizers will in many cases do the actual distribution of literature, as any members may be known or suspected of affiliation with the party.

3). The CPSC shall organize educational meetings of shop workers.

Note: Only such workers as are known to be sympathizers, or show signs of becoming sympathiz-

ers, should be included in these plans. These shop educational meetings should prove to be of great value if properly and carefully carried out. Later on, small mass meetings of workers (not mass meetings of party members) — combining two or more shops for this purpose — may be organized in order to get more direct contact with the workers. Would recommend that no steps be taken in this direction for the immediate present.

4). The CPSC shall take steps to organize study classes of the most advanced workers (sympathizers, etc.).

Note: Elementary courses will be submitted for this purpose. Workers who take these courses can be admitted to membership after the usual preliminary conditions are fulfilled.

5). The CPSC shall act as a medium for collecting funds for the party in the shops and factories.

Note: It is absolutely imperative that the workers be called upon to contribute to the Communist Party. The regular income from the dues, etc. is insufficient even for the upkeep of the organization. As the Communist Party grows in influence and scope, new fields of activity are developed requiring more and more funds. The ways and means for collecting funds in an underground organization are necessarily limited. The CPSC can supplement the regular party organization for raising funds directly from the workers in the industries.

Issued by the CEC of the CP of America.

Edited with a footnote by Tim Davenport.

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