

2007 Party and Press Building Plan

Developed by the National Organization Department CPUSA

Adopted by the National Committee, March 24-25, 2007

(This outline of our national plans for Party- and press-building is intentionally brief, given that specific, concrete plans will be developed by clubs and districts.)

Almost two years ago, following our 28th National Convention, the National Committee began a conversation about the urgent necessity to build a bigger and stronger Communist Party. A bigger Party is needed for us to have more influence in the mass movements, to assist the working-class and people's struggles, to ensure the movement's future, and to help the working class recognize its historic role.

Clearly, the Party can only grow in the course of political struggle. Only an approach that balances mass political work with dedicated organizational work at the club level can succeed. This plan does not address the political side of the work, which are elaborated in national and district political reports as well as commission plans of work.

This year we are planning a number of initiatives to rededicate ourselves to building the Communist Party and our press in this manner. This plan is not an intensive "recruitment campaign" followed by a return to "normal activity." *It is aimed at changing the way we do our work for the long-run at all levels in order to make Party- and press-building an integral part of our work and part of the consciousness of every member.*

Discussion on the Party's role

The lack of deep understanding among many of our members of the Marxist theory of the Communist Party is one of the key barriers to building the Party. It goes without saying that success in bringing in new members depends on our conviction of the importance and necessity of the Party and its role. To lay that groundwork will be a Party-wide discussion of Sam Webb's article "The Role, Nature and Work of the Communist Party."

- Every club and district hold well-prepared discussions on "The Role, Nature and Work of the Communist Party" before the July National Committee meeting.
- Carry this discussion into the pages of the *People's Weekly World* and *Political Affairs* as well as on our web pages.
- Put Party- and press-building in some way onto every agenda of clubs, districts and the National Board.

Putting Clubs at the Center of Our Work

Local Party-building initiatives

Party-building is not simply a matter of recruitment, but encompasses a many-sided approach to strengthening our work at all levels. Key to this are well-functioning clubs – often easier said than done. Solutions to club problems won't be one-size-fits-all; rather, each will need its own solutions based on its concrete situation. We are not projecting one kind of Party-building initiative for everyone, but are encouraging each district to develop innovative approaches rooted in its assessment of real conditions and local issues. Three concrete proposals for the Organization Department are:

- Consult with each district to develop local plans for Party-building initiatives in 2007.
- Identify four or five clubs with which to work to help make some recruitment breakthroughs. In keeping with – and developing in the new conditions – our industrial concentration policy, at least one or two of these should be shop/industry clubs.
- Develop a monthly newsletter addressing Party-building and organizational matters.

District assignments for national Party leaders

For some time now we have discussed and to a small extent implemented a system of district assignments for national Party leaders. The idea is to have for every district a member of the national staff who stays in regular contact with the district leadership, visits at least twice a year and helps conduct a review of the district's work. Our goal is to establish these district assignments for national Party leaders by June 1, 2007.

Racially and nationally oppressed communities

A decisive part of the core forces for social change in this country are the communities of the racially and nationally oppressed people. They also represent a key part of the multiracial, multinational and multi-lingual U.S. working class. African Americans, Mexican Americans, Puerto Rican Americans and other Latinos, Asian Americans, Native Americans, Arab Americans and others face particular oppression under U.S. capitalism and they also bring their own particular experiences, needs and issues to the struggle for equality and democracy. In this connection we plan to.

- Hold discussions in key districts about developments in the communities of the racially oppressed, the struggle for equality, and approaches to building the Party in those communities, starting with a meeting of the club (where one exists) to discuss its status and potential for growth.
- Hold public meetings in six or more such communities with the goal of increasing PWW subscriptions, developing new contacts and recruitment.
- Increase bilingual English/Spanish materials as well as look at other ways to make the Party fully bilingual and recruit Spanish-speakers.

Building the Communist Press

People's Weekly World subscriptions & subscribers

The *People's Weekly World* is the newspaper of the Communist Party and is essential to all its work. The PWW is our as well as the voice of the labor-led people's movement, and one of our links to that developing movement. The *PWW* is also the best tool for organizing and building the Party, given its broad appeal. Increased subscriptions are a key part of expanding the Party, particularly Party clubs' connections with people.

- Aim for 1000 new *PWW* subscribers; 500 through clubs with goals set in each district and club; 500 through direct mail campaign and internet subs.
- Aim for meeting with 100 non-member subscribers across the country with the aim of deepening ties, raising funds and potential recruitment.

People's Weekly World bundles and routes

The main way the *PWW* reaches masses of working people is not through subscriptions, but through mass distributions by clubs. Distribution via neighborhood routes, at local union halls and

meetings and community organizations, on campuses, etc. is key to getting out the Party's message and establishing contacts. Very important is the person-to-person distribution of the paper by members and supporters to people with whom they work, friends, coalition partners, etc. Our goal is to increase the systematic use of the paper by the clubs.

- Establish 20 new club PWW routes; prioritize labor council and other regular union meetings, working-class neighborhoods and shop gates.
- Encourage the ordering of PWW bundles, of whatever size, by a maximum number of clubs and individual members.

Political Affairs

Each district and club should develop an approach to building Political Affairs (PA) and increasing its circulation. We have to do even more to integrate PA into the work of the Party at all levels and to use its content to engage in educational discussions and political development. Currently, very few clubs or districts take bundles for local distribution and sales.

- Encourage new PA bundles for clubs and individual members
- Encourage Party members to take out PA subscriptions

Other aspects of Party-building

Fundraising & finances

At this time, a critical aspect of Party building and ensuring the Party's future is developing our capacity to raise more money. We have had numerous discussions about the need to improve our fundraising work and financial planning. This year we want to make even greater headway towards this being seen as the collective responsibility of every member, every leader, every club.

- Initiate campaign for full membership participation in the week's income sustainer program.
- Expand participation in the wills and advanced gifts program.
- Complete this year's Party Fund Drive (May 1 to July 4); and the Press Fund Drive (for the PWW and PA, to run from Labor Day to Thanksgiving).

Marxist education

An essential aspect of retaining new members, developing Communist leaders and improving our political work is regular educational work, on everything from the Marxist basics to study of current events. New member and club chair classes are particularly important.

- Conduct new members classes in six districts this fall.
- Hold a national school for local Party leaders in the fall emphasizing club chairs' participation.

Young Communist League

The Young Communist League and the Communist Party share a unique friendship. We each promote the growth and development of the other and of course many YCLers are members of the Party. We have often said that the YCL is the future of the Party and that is a key reason why we support and help build the YCL.

This year, the YCL has its own club-building and recruitment plans. The Party should strive to aid and assist the YCL's efforts at all levels, including in carrying out its Action Plan. Additionally, we are proposing a national initiative to collaborate with the YCL on college campuses.

- Identify two or three campuses where we will work with the YCL to build clubs.
- Begin trial run of a campus speakers' tour in the fall semester.

Increased use of the internet and mass media

Visibility is key to attracting recruits and supporters to the Party. Of course the People's Weekly World newspaper and Political Affairs magazine are essential aspects of our public presence, as are mass demonstrations, conferences, etc. But we must do much more to expand the Party's presence on the Internet and in the mass media.

- Develop internet visibility and promotion campaign as well as maximize online donations and subscription options.
- Develop media packet for Districts and national leaders to increase our media presence.

Regional conferences

The Party-wide discussion on the role and necessity of the Communist party will culminate in three regional two-day conferences in September of this year. Each host District will schedule the conference as they see fit and will work with the Org Dept to plan participation, travel, housing, etc. These conferences should in no way be a signal to end our Party-building work, but a key step in the process to take our work to a higher level. The conferences will collectivize the experience with local Party-building initiatives, successes and failures. They will emphasize discussion of concrete and practical issues of Party-building and the clubs.

- Hold regional conferences in New York City, Chicago and Oakland in the fall.
- Strive for every club chair and NC member to attend these meetings