

17.0: Central Task 2022

1. The goal of building a new, multinational communist party in the United States is our central task. Until we have a party, party building will remain the central task for FRSO. This strategy document is centered on how we will build and develop the organization and further advance party building. It is based on our analysis of objective conditions and the development of our forces. It is intentionally internally focused with a timescale of about 3 years.
2. Currently there is no communist party in the US. There has not been one for a long time. It is fair to ask, "How can we say this when there are at least three groups that have 'Communist Party' in their names?" The main answer is because none of them lead any significant section of the working class. The whole point of being a communist party is to lead the struggles of the working class toward revolution, to be the vanguard of the united front against US Imperialism. FRSO believes that an alliance must be forged between the movement of the multinational working class and the movements of the Oppressed Nationalities in the US under the leadership of a communist party. This alliance is at the core of the united front against imperialism, which is our basic strategy for revolution.
3. Given the sharpening of contradictions in the U.S. and the growing polarization, it is likely that we will see major waves of struggle in the period ahead. This will provide a favorable context for party building. To the degree possible we want to learn from struggles and provide leadership to them. We are working to build a united front against monopoly capitalism – with our organization playing a leading role. We are about building fights. When we see a fire, we add gasoline.
4. There have been great gains over the past several years. This has been the kind of period that Lenin meant when he said "There are decades where nothing happens; and there are weeks where decades happen." We can also continue developing our organization. We can recruit more cadre, build units, districts, commissions, and work teams. We can look at next steps for the Joint Nationalities Commission, and possibly elevate work teams to commission levels of functioning. First we will need to reinforce the existing leadership and make our work life more collective.
5. We are not building a party that prioritizes electing Democratic Party politicians or independents to office. In the course of building a united front against imperialism, it would be wrong for us to ignore elections or oppose elections on principle. However, FRSO is not a group that thinks we can win socialism through elections. We need a revolution to win socialism, and we need a Marxist-Leninist party for that to happen. Building a new communist party is not about proclaiming ourselves to be the vanguard. We must be recognized as such by a significant section of the advanced (the active) among the masses of people.
6. There are two basic point here. One *point* is that mass struggle is the crucible in which we will forge a new communist party – and we want *to be at the* front of the struggle, effectively engaging the enemy. Secondly, the possibly exists that we can lead large numbers of people into conflict with the enemy over the next few years. We intend to do that.
7. A key link in party building for FRSO in the coming period will be the consolidation of our forces, both to our line and to our method of organizing. This means we will have to focus on studying the theory of revolution, how we lead struggle in the streets, and how we practice

democratic centralism. We will revamp and improve our study materials and begin using the completed sections of the program when recruiting. Studying *Fight Back!* Articles is always a good idea, and the series of articles on Marxist theory can be especially useful. Reading *Fight Back!* is essential to understanding what to do, what to say, and what's going on in the rest of the organization.

8. Units and districts must follow democratic centralism and carry out decisions made by higher bodies. Comrades in established districts have rich experience in this regard. We need to help new districts to develop this capacity. This can take the form of trainings for local leadership and dispatching leading comrades to provide assistance. Failure to do this will result in lapses of revolutionary discipline and the breakdown of organization.

9. The good news is our organization is now too big to continue functioning the way it has. Coming out of the 9th Congress period of consolidation, the office will help us grow quickly, and we will need more people in the office headquarters. We will see an increase in our capacity and an increased use for funds. Conditions for communists in the US. are very good, and the masses are in motion. Staff can help us take advantage of these conditions more thoroughly than ever before.

10. As we expand our national infrastructure, we need to expand our fundraising capacity in a big way. We need to build a machine that is consistently bringing in money. This includes yearly fund drives like the 100,000-dollar fund drive of 2021. We also need to have an all-around approach – that entails everything from wills where comrades and supporters leave resources to the organization to businesses – such as selling swag.

11. We will look at setting up a mechanism for online petitions where we capture the data for mass organizations and charge accordingly. This will help expand the reach of mass organizations (such as unions and others) and could net a far amount of income. We also need to evolve budgeting and accounting mechanisms that do not undermine security concerns.

12. Staff can help us provide a fuller political life for general members. We must identify members with the drive to become full cadre. These are general members who display an interest in studying Marxism-Leninism, organizing in the streets and following democratic centralism to carry out plans. Across the U.S. there are thousands of people who are procommunist, interested in Marxist theory, or are looking for something to the left of DSA. Our leadership will investigate hosting a national meeting for general members. We need to strengthen our propaganda work, which includes *Fight Back!*, our social media work, and podcast.

13. Mao said, "The fundamental cause of the development of a thing is not external but internal; it lies in the contradictions within the thing." If FRSO stays united, makes thoughtful decisions, and carries forward practical plans, incorporating more leaders into our higher bodies, we can become the main revolutionary group in this country. Our motion will pull some towards us, while compelling others to move out of our way.

14. We need to continue building new districts like the ones now established in New Orleans, Seattle, and the others we are developing in Portland, Hartford, and Philadelphia. You could add San Diego, Memphis, Nashville, and other cities to this list to be ambitious. The center makes decisions when it comes to expanding into new territory.

15. In the consolidation period following the 9th Congress, we can focus on sending FRSO leaders to the previously mentioned cities and states like Ohio where we know people in multiple cities. We will continue studying the science of revolution and incorporating new geographic areas into the life of our organization. We will continue to host cadre schools. Over the next period, we need to promote ML study in our units, and undertake national efforts such as the national cadre school. We can do this in a step-by-step way. These measures will help ensure ideological cohesion and uniform organizational practices throughout our group. The center will also investigate additional methods for training our leadership, possibly including a school for district leaders. Over the long run we need to establish an infrastructure for Marxist-Leninist education that extends from the center into every district and unit.

16. We should also develop an organization wide study to promote a communist world look. We need to fight the middle-class, non profit view that we need to be paid money to participate in the struggle to liberate ourselves from capitalism. It is like Mao said, "fear neither hardship, nor death."

17. As we grow, we must resist the tendency to think of ourselves as a federation of different cities with different areas of work. We must stay united as a national organization and practice democratic centralism. In part this means that lower bodies follow decisions made by higher bodies of the organization. It also means that city and district leaders form plans with guidance from our national leadership. With an expanded center, we can provide more leadership and guidance to cities. This will help ensure that our organization is united as we move forward.

18. The Standing Committee understands that in the immediate past period the needs of the organization has out stripped our capacity to provide consistent summation and leadership at the same level across all cities. We feel that the expansion of the Standing Committee and the addition of staff will go a long way toward correcting this.

19. Leaders on all levels need to promote the line, projects, and priorities that the organization as a whole has arrived at. One of our greatest challenges is strengthening the system of democratic centralism. This includes adhering to the principal of collective leadership and individual responsibility. We need to check up on if and how collective decisions are carried out. If we say a document is to be discussed by every district, the results of those discussions must be collected and discussed by the relevant leadership bodies. We must reinforce our organization's channels for communication, including those for summation and the implementation of decisions. Otherwise, we will be relying on an "old boys" network and ties of friendship, or comrades who know each other, etc. Doing things this way makes it very difficult to bring forward new leaders.

20. We must continue to evaluate and correct mistakes, and be willing to part ways with those who devolve into Right Opportunist thinking, into reformism and social democracy. A bad trend we see again and again among some radicals is ultra-left idealism. Sometimes we refer to this thinking as "petite bourgeois radicalism." This is often expressed openly and honestly, and we can take an educational approach of unity, struggle, unity to defeat it. Still, we will part ways with those who stubbornly resist the revolutionary ideology of the working class. Our desire for unity must always be based on principle. We have largely abandoned the weapon

of criticism/self-criticism. The national leadership needs to take the lead and provide guidance in bringing it back.

21. Security remains an important part of our daily life that cannot be overlooked. District and city leaders are responsible for ensuring that the proper procedures are followed in their areas. When in doubt or when something important happens, comrades must report to the center. Organizational matters should be discussed in an organized way, via channels. Comrades should not use social media to reach out to other members who are not part of their units to talk about organizational matters. If something is wrong, contact your local leadership. If need be, you can contact the center.

22. Security is important. The FBI waged an 8-year campaign to destroy our organization and those we work with. We must maintain and improve our defense machinery, such as the Committee to Stop FBI Repression. We also need to adhere to the security guidelines. Given that our organization and many of our leaders are a focus of the far right, and the sharpening contradictions in society, we urge comrades to utilize all legal means of self – defense.

23. Different Contributions, Unified Approach

24. Our organization contains several levels of leadership and distinct areas of work. The different sections of our organization must use Marxist-Leninist theory to navigate different paths towards our goal of party building.

25. The basic units of our organization are districts and units. These are the units that can carry out our red work, expand the organization, and lead mass struggles. This is where the "rubber hits the road" in terms of applying our line and to sum up our work to deepen our line and leadership. In the upcoming period as contradictions deepen, many struggles, like the uprising after the murder of George Floyd, will be centered around local areas. At the same time, districts and units are key to uniting all comrades around nation-wide calls to action, whether they be around the proletarian holidays (International Women's Day and May Day) or mass organizing such as police crimes or anti-war work.

26. The organization can't grow without calling upon additional comrades to lead districts and units, even if the comrades are sometimes inexperienced. In cities where we are large, district organizers and unit leaders form district committees to help carry out practical plans and promote good ideological development. Leaders in these cities should make plans with the center to take their work to the next level. Newer cities or places with a single area of work should develop our ties with the masses by focusing on a single sector of struggle. This doesn't mean our vision is narrow, it means our planning is focused. Our expanded leadership can help these cities develop into districts, but only if collective plans are carried out and comrades win the advanced to our line. Concretely this means waging campaigns of struggle and asking dedicated fighters to study with us and eventually join our group.

27. The role of our commissions is to develop a leading line for areas of work on a national level. Commissions have developed the immediate demands for oppressed nationalities and the working class, and also pamphlets on immigrant rights and trade union organizing. This commission work under the leadership of the Standing Committee, and along with work teams, help lead our work in nation-wide formations like SDS or the National Alliance.

28. More comrades are involved in trade union work than ever before in the history of our group. They have different levels of experience – some are new to the work, some have been

part of labor work for 5 or 10 years, and some are veterans of the workers struggle. We practice fusion – combining the workers' movement with Marxism-Leninism. There has been a large uptick of struggle, including strikes, these past few years.

29. Our labor work needs comrades to continue reinforcing our national concentration in the Teamsters (IBT) union. Some cities have experience in public sector or teachers unions, and other cities are building local concentrations. Those who are new to labor work can "skill up" and learn methods of fighting on the shop floor. Those who have more experience or who have concentrations in local unions can run for shop steward or even local office. Most of our growth in labor work comes from existing comrades, often students, intentionally joining or forming labor concentrations. We should examine our ability to recruit workers directly from the workplace. We must also pay attention to gender composition and nationality composition.

30. Our work in the national movements has seen a qualitative change over the past few years. We expect national oppression to continue to intensify. Our view of the national question is rooted in the material analysis of historic conditions, and we must continue to win advanced organizers to our line. This means taking part in and leading struggles, then studying with the most advanced fighters.

31. Many of our comrades in both the Chicano and African American national movements lead important fights against police crimes. In the African American national movement, we must continue to rally forces to fight for community control of the police. Comrades should continue to help grow and expand the National Alliance Against Racist and Political Repression, raising the national profile of NAARPR even higher.

32. We need to expand our immigrant rights work, which is mainly done among Chicanos, Mexicanos, and Latinos. While immigrant rights work is relatively small at present, more cities are beginning immigrant rights work. It is our duty to help lead struggle against National Oppression and win the best fighters to Marxism-Leninism.

33. As communists, we must not forget to fight for working class leadership within the national movements. Our strategy for revolution is to build an alliance between the multinational working class and the movements of oppressed nationalities under the leadership of a Marxist-Leninist party. As our experience deepens and our ranks grow, we hope to develop the structure of our joint nationalities commission and see our work teams evolve to match our ability to lead.

34. Our organization has continued to see great success in the student movement, particularly within Students for a Democratic Society (SDS). Our student commission did a good job navigating tough conditions during the pandemic when campuses were closed, and with students back on campus our work among students continues to deepen. We must attract students who want to fight into our campaigns and win the advanced over to revolutionary theory.

35. Students and youth with an interest in socialist theory but who lack organizing experience must be challenged to become active fighters on campus. When student comrades lead campaigns on campus, we can teach others our methods of organizing. After working on campaigns and struggling on campus, we can sum up lessons and study theory. This builds valuable experience and can inspire students to continue organizing after college. Student

comrades should continue to carry out transformation, stepping into lives as working class revolutionaries and avoiding petty-bourgeois paths.

36. There are other important areas of work which comrades are active in. For comrades doing climate justice organizing or anti-war organizing, it is important to develop plans in conjunction with commission or work team leadership. We will possibly see more wars. We must fight to project our line and win the advanced over to it. Other areas of work are newer and should develop plans with higher bodies. One of the most important tasks for these areas of work is to practice summation and write about their experiences, which can be shared through the internal bulletins. Summing up our victories and learning from our mistakes will allow our organization to grow and offer more leadership to comrades who are engaged in the work.

37. Conclusion

38. At no point should our level of red organization lag behind the state of our mass organizations. It is an error to put 95% of our efforts into organizing the masses and leave little thought to internal questions. Being a comrade means more than being a good activist or fighter – it means never forgetting the bigger picture and actively participating in the development of communist organization. After all, it is the communist party which will decide the outcome of the struggle against monopoly capitalism – not a loose federation of cities or mass groups.

39. In *The Communist Manifesto*, Marx wrote that: “The Communists are distinguished from the other working-class parties by this only: 1) In the national struggles of the workers of the different countries, they point out and bring to the front the common interests of the entire class, independent of all nationality. 2) In the various stages of development which the struggle of the working class against the ruling class has to pass through, they always and everywhere represent the interests of the movement as a whole.” We are a pre-party organization, but with the potential to earn our place as the party of the U.S. working class. We must be bold in our approach and hold steadfast to our principles. History teaches us that by applying Marxism-Leninism to our conditions, we can build solid organization, wage fierce struggles, and triumph over the enemy.