

RULES

I. Membership

1. Anyone who accepts the aims, methods and program of the organization, who is willing to join and be active in a committee of the organization, carry out the organization's decisions, and observe its discipline, and who gives regular financial support to the organization can become a member.

2. Members of the organization must:

a. Grasp and uphold the interests of the people, strengthen our ties with them, help build the struggles of the people, and explain the policies and programs of the organization.

b. Study Marxism propagate it among the people, and struggle against attitudes and actions which hurt the socialist cause.

c. Help to develop and defend the organization's line, carry out its policy and decisions, fulfill tasks assigned to them, and strengthen the organization's unity. Read, study, promote, support and distribute the literature of the organization in appropriate ways.

d. Be forthright in criticism and self-criticism and fight liberalism in themselves and others. Members should adhere to principle and have a spirit of speaking out against bad policies.

e. Safeguard the security of the organization, refrain from idle curiosity, and report security mistakes to local leadership as soon as possible. Protect the organization from opportunists or police agents in or out of the organization.

f. Work for unity, do not cause splits, and be able to unite with the vast majority, both inside the organization and among the people, including those who differ with them. Subordinate personal interests to those of socialism.

g. Struggle against white chauvinism and male chauvinism.

3. Persons who wish to join the organization must meet the criteria laid down in the security guidelines. We recognize that at times people join the organization as a collective. That, said applicants for membership must go through the admission procedure individually. Admission must be approved by the section or district committee and, where appropriate, higher committees.

4. The admission procedure shall include:

a. A recruitment study series on fundamental concepts of Marxism-Leninism

b. Admission will begin with a probation period, which will end after 6 months unless upon review, an extended time is needed. During this probation, the recruiting body of the organization will carry out a plan to consolidate and develop new cadre; also, during this time, new members will not attend meetings outside their local area and will not speak publicly as a representative of the organization, unless a higher body of the organization approves this in individual cases.

5. A member has the right and duty to participate as fully as possible in discussion at organizational meetings or in the internal organizational press on all theoretical and practical questions relating to organizational policy.

A member has the full right to express their opinions in their units, on all committees in which they participate, and in the internal bulletin. The internal bulletin is a major forum for discussion and exchange of views among members between Congresses. All contributions to the bulletin will be published, with the exception of those which in the opinion of the Central Committee compromise the organization's security.

A member has the right to have any statement made by them transmitted to higher committees, including the Central Committee or Congress of the organization. The organization extends this right to any person having contact with it.

A member has the right to meet in person with representatives of a committee taking disciplinary action against them. In cases of emergency, the Central Committee or its standing body may take disciplinary action not subject to this appeal, but in such cases the committee must inform the members and explain why these emergency powers have been invoked.

A member has the right to withdraw from the organization, upon the return of all internal papers. Membership is a voluntary proposition. People who no longer wish to be members should withdraw. Leaving the organization should not imply hostility on either side. Sometimes people just don't want to do the work or have the responsibility anymore. If we gear our organization towards them, and not towards the activists, we will never accomplish our goals. Of course, the organization retains the right to struggle with individuals to maintain their revolutionary commitment.

6. A member of the organization who violates organizational discipline must participate in criticism/ self-criticism in their basic unit or other committee and may be subject to censure (formal criticism of a member's action); removal from a committee assignment or other responsibility with censure; probation; or expulsion. An act of expulsion does not become effective until it has been endorsed by the member's basic unit. Disciplinary action is taken by vote at a meeting of a committee on which the member serves, or by a leadership committee directly, but in either case, is subject to the approval of higher committees. Expelled members may reapply for membership after one year following the expulsion. The Central Committee must approve all decisions to readmit expelled members.

A member may be disciplined for the following reasons:

- a) Violation of the policy of the organization, as set by the Congress or the Central Committee. Policy includes rules.
- b) Violations of decisions made by other higher committees or by majority vote of a basic organizational unit, when such decisions have been made known to the member or members concerned.
- c) Actions endangering the security of the organization, as determined by the unit or higher committees, or false statements made to the organization.
- d) In conflicts between the individual and the collective, the collective interest represented by the organization as a whole must receive the benefit of the doubt.

7. We are an organization in which different people can live their lives as part of the people have ties with family, neighbors, people at work, etc. At the same time, we are communists who have made a personal and voluntary commitment to communist organization and responsibilities and this does make our lives different and put different time constraints on us and our families. Our general policy should be to work out these personal contradictions in the context of keeping in mind the overall needs of the organization. Members are encouraged to bring forward problems for discussion in their units and committees.

The organization (i.e., both its units and leading committees) must retain the right to intervene in the personal life of members when matters concern the security and work of the collective.

8. The organization may not intervene in the gender identity or sexual preference of its members. The organization stands for full equality for LGBTQ people, both within the organization and in society as a whole.

9. Dues constitute the minimum financial obligation of a member. The amount of dues is determined by the Central Committee or National Congress. Local or district financial assessments are subject to the approval of the Central Committee or its bodies. In general, 10% of the dues collected locally shall be retained locally to be used for organizational activities.

In order to implement the struggle for equality among our membership, members who have inherited capital resources (which are available to them because of their class background), are expected to view these resources as a class privilege and to put a portion of them at the disposition of the organization. The appropriate percentage will be determined by the Central Committee in consultation with the individual concerned.

It is an absolute necessity for the life of a revolutionary organization to plan finances and be fiscally responsible. Every area of work should make finances a point of discussion.

The Central Committee must make financial reports to National Congresses.

II. Organizational Principles

10. The organization is organized on the principle of democratic centralism. The whole organization must observe democratic centralism: the individual is subordinate to the collective, the minority is subordinate to the majority, the lower levels are subordinate to the higher levels, and the entire organization is subordinate to the Central Committee, except during the meetings of the National Congress.

Democratic centralism therefore means the centralization of the ideas of the people, the disciplined propagation of those ideas once they are centralized, and the continued centralization and propagation of the new ideas which arise in the course of this process. While centralism is necessary to give democracy purpose, democracy is necessary to give centralism life. Only through wide ranging political debate can the organization progress in its grasp of the reality of the U.S. Only through wide-ranging political debate can the synthesis of ideas take place. The collective centralizes the ideas of the individuals; the higher levels centralize the ideas of the lower levels, and the Central Committee centralizes the ideas of the whole organization, except during the meetings of the National Congress. A vigorous internal debate underlies each step.

11. Election of delegates to organizational congresses and of members of leadership committees should be by secret ballot and by separate consideration after democratic consultation in the committee or body considering the candidates, and should occur in accordance with the aims, methods, and program of the organization. The organization recognizes the value of conserving experienced leadership; it should also attempt to rotate executive positions, for the good of leading members as well as the organization as a whole.

12. Organizational committees at all levels operate on the principle of combining collective leadership with individual responsibility under a division of labor.

The creation and strengthening of collective bodies at the unit/branch, district, and national levels is the emphasis. It is out of such collectivity that both the ability to know and the ability to lead will arise. All leading bodies have the responsibility to train and promote new leadership.

13. On the relationship between the majority and the minority: being in the minority does not make a line wrong. Truth always first arises in a minority (although being in the minority is not therefore a sign of truth). If we see it necessary to drive minority lines out of the organization, or to demolish ideologically a line simply because it is in the minority, we will never grow as an organization, never be able to change our line, never be able to adjust to a changing situation, never be a Marxist-Leninist organization. A minority line can become a majority through people changing their minds or conditions changing. Respect the rights of a minority: you may be tomorrow's minority and want tomorrow's majority to respect you.

At the same time, our faith and trust must reside in the organization as a whole to reach a reasonably correct decision and not simply in our own selves. A member has the right within the organization to defend and struggle for their opinion or against any other opinion as long as the National Congress, Central Committee or other relevant committee has not adopted a decision. The method we will use to settle questions of line and policy is by majority opinion, majority vote. This is the principle for all bodies for resolving questions and settling differences. Following the adoption of a decision, all members, including those who during discussion took the opposite view, are duty-bound to strive to understand the decision and based on this understanding, to explain, carry out and fight for it to the best of their ability. Members who were in the minority have the right to reserve differences and re-raise them in the future. They also have the obligation to abide by the decision of the majority: discipline is voluntarily assumed by members upon joining the organization.

Ultimately the right and wrong of views is not settled by debate but by the testing out of line and policy through the common implementation of plans and the unfolding of events.

The Central Committee shall encourage the widest discussion by the membership of all questions of theory, line and policy. It has the right and responsibility to determine when a period of discussion should take place, when questions under discussion have been resolved, and when the continuation of discussion would hamper the implementation of the majority's organizational policy and decisions or weaken the unity of the organization in action.

14. Members have the right to criticize organizational bodies and working personnel in leading posts at all levels and to make such criticisms known to those bodies or personnel, provided it is done in appropriate organizational meetings, committees, or through the appropriate channels. It is absolutely impermissible for anyone to suppress criticism or to retaliate against it. Criticisms arising at a certain level and not resolved at that level, however, should be brought to the higher committee, and not to other committees on the same or lower level. If a district committee erupts in a lot of bad feeling against certain of its members, and the committee cannot resolve the right and wrong of the conflict, it will not help matters for each participant to gossip widely about the people the comrade has the problems with. Urgent or long standing unresolved differences of opinion are sometimes best taken to the next highest committee, and sometimes back to lower committees for more input or new experimentation. Committees should not get paralyzed by unresolved differences of opinion, however, and when major criticisms of individuals or big differences cannot be resolved, committees have the responsibility to report this promptly to the next higher committee.

Because there must be a high standard of integrity within the organization, there can be neither power of leading bodies to change arbitrarily and then insist on line without full discussion; nor can there be leeway for members to uphold only what they like. The guideline on this point should be that members are not allowed to oppose the line of the organization publicly, outside the organization. In this context, "line" will mean that so designated following a Congress or so designated by national leadership in bulletins or

other publications. Individual leaders do not set line. National propaganda, while usually not "line," should not be attacked publicly in the case of disagreements. No member should make destructive statements publicly about the organization, organizational leaders or members, including gossip about organizational members. No member should disclose confidential information to non-organization members. Members should reserve criticisms to the appropriate time, and not present them in the middle of a difficult external situation, except where the security of the organization is at stake.

15. Rights to appeal. Any member or committee disagreeing with a policy or decision has the right to appeal a decision to the next highest committee and to express their views through the channels established for that purpose during pre-Congress or other designated discussion periods. Any member has the right to appeal disciplinary decisions to higher committees and to the National Congress. No one has the right to violate decisions.

Factionalism is incompatible with organizational membership. A faction is a grouping of members organized outside the recognized structures of the organization. Factional activity includes acting as a grouping outside the recognized organization, disregard for the democratic-centralist life of the organization, and unprincipled attacks on the organization, its leaders and members. Factional activity does not include the horizontal communication and cross fertilization of ideas so crucial to the organization's democratic internal life.

To allow factions to campaign for changes in policy means the formation of alternate political centers and leadership, and alternate organizational loyalties. Such activity would destroy the unity and effectiveness of the organization, and ultimately the organization itself. The cadre and the leadership will be able to differentiate between factionalism and the rights of a minority. The surest guard against factionalism is a full democratic internal life, including the broadest possible forums for discussion.

The Central Committee (or other leading committees when appropriate) has the right to delegate its own or other members to attend any meeting among members in the organization.

16. The organization is established to be able to shift its functioning and continue to work under the most repressive conditions of bourgeois rule. It is established in a country where Marxist-Leninist parties have been outlawed during three periods of its history, and where a number of revolutionary or socialist oriented parties have been devastated by repression, most particularly oppressed nationality revolutionary organizations. An organization dedicated to a relentless struggle against white supremacy must draw particular lessons from the history of oppressed nationality revolutionary organizations. The necessity of security will inhibit democracy in our organization in certain ways. The fullest socialist democracy remains the general principle we strive for.

17. Organizational committees at all levels should report regularly on their work to higher committees. The Central Committee presents its report to the National Congress and is

dissolved. All committees, including the Central Committee, must also report and listen to the membership as well as constantly listen to the people.

18. All committees, including the Central Committee, decide their affairs by simple majority vote, and can co-opt new members to their ranks by two thirds vote. Except in the case of the Central Committee, cooptation is subject to the approval of higher committees. (Cooptation is not a process of recruitment to the organization). The Central Committee may release or remove its members by two-thirds vote. Suspensions of Central Committee members should be considered by the next Congress, and to prevent purges, the removal of groups of individuals from national bodies which would change the overall political balance of the body must be approved by referendum of the membership. The removal of more than a third of the Central Committee would necessitate such a referendum.

III. Organizational Structure

19. The highest body of the organization is the National Congress which is convened by the Central Committee at least once every three years. Under special circumstances it may be postponed.

Congresses must be called when the majority of the Central Committee votes for one. They can also be called when a body of the Central Committee charged with calling Congresses decides to call a Congress. Prior to National Congresses at least three months shall be provided for discussion in all units and leading committees of the main resolutions and problems before the Congress. During this period, all committees and members have the right to propose resolutions or amendments to resolutions, to propose changes in the organizational Rules, and to participate in the pre-Congress discussions through the channels provided for this purpose by the Central Committee. All policies and decisions remain in full force during the pre-Congress discussion.

20. The Congress establishes the general line of the organization, hears and acts on reports of the organization, and amends where necessary the Rules of the organization. The Congress elects the Central Committee, determining the number of members. To the extent possible, delegates to the Congress are democratically elected. The Central Committee determines the number and methods of selection of delegates. Delegates are free to vote at the Congress according to their understanding of Marxism Leninism and are not bound by any previous decisions or policies established by the organization or any of its committees.

In electing the Central Committee, the Congress should consider the factors of national, sexual and class composition as well as geographical and political representativeness.

21. When the Congress is not in session, the Central Committee is charged with the direction of all work of the organization, in accordance with the line set at the Congress. The Central Committee has the responsibility for developing, implementing and adjusting the general lines, views and orientation of the organization as set by the Congress. The

Central Committee also reviews and adjusts the work of the organization and is in the best position to authorize and facilitate mass campaigns.

The Central Committee will usually elect a smaller committee or committees to exercise its functions and powers when it is not in session. The Central Committee therefore has the task of supervising the work of these committees.

The Central Committee itself should be allowed to determine the sphere of its competence, since any local matter may affect the interests of the organization as a whole, and the Central Committee must be in a position to intervene in all organizational affairs, even going against local interests should such action be in the interests of the socialist struggle and the organization as a whole.

22. The Central Committee has the exclusive right to establish or dissolve lower committees or to delegate that right. In particular, the Central Committee has the responsibility to establish committees to exercise the leading functions and powers in a given locale. To the extent possible, established local committees will have elected leadership.

23. Where necessary, leading committees may establish commissions, fractions, or other working bodies to assist leadership in a particular area of work. These commissions or working bodies are subordinate to the leading committees.

The Central Committee may, when it deems necessary, call organizational conferences that are not National Congresses, and establish procedures for the election of delegates to these conferences. The decisions of such conferences are not valid and binding on the organization (unless endorsed by the Central Committee).

24. The primary units or branches of the organization are the foundation of its work and structure and the main link between the organization and the people. This is where the political work of the members among the people can most regularly be examined and summed up. Wherever possible, units should be organized around stable work concentrations. It is essential that each branch have a viable political life, which is not simply a question of concentration policy. Branches or units should always be characterized by both ongoing discussion of the mass work of its members and broader organizational, social and political questions.

25. Where several branches or collectives exist, a section or district committee should be organized. There are no set blueprints for a well functioning section or district, but four general characteristics can be identified. (a) A certain minimum size, to be able to have ties among different sectors of the people, to carry out a minimal division of labor, and act as somewhat of a social force. (b) Internal unity, marked by the ability to sum up and function together, a group spirit and a positive attitude toward local work. (c) A capable leading core able to analyze situations, mobilize the membership to formulate plans and to sum up, and actually lead the section or district. This core must develop the ability to work together, given the understanding that it will inevitably make mistakes and that its

composition will change over time. (d) An analysis of the local area, its economy, its oppressed nationalities movements, its labor movement, the forces on the Left and the local political situation.

26. On the relationship between lower and higher bodies:

a) People should not sit on higher bodies as representatives of lower bodies; in other words, there should be no "binding up." Otherwise higher bodies become stale, with no inventiveness or tactical flexibility, without the ability of people to change their minds based on other than their own experience. At the same time, all people sitting on higher bodies have the responsibility to report fully the views and opinions of cadre on lower bodies. They are not allowed to only state their own views.

b) There should be no "binding across." Members of the Central Committee and of its other committee or committees are all on the same level of responsibility. People at this level have an equal unrestricted right to struggle for their views.

c) Bodies must have the right to bind their members around carrying out decisions. A balance has to be struck between reporting down fully the differing views and the process that leads to decisions with a sincere unity of will to implement decisions. In general, leading people should have the right to state their views at all levels of the organization. They cannot have the right to agitate against or sabotage the line or policy decisions of the organization. This will only be resolved satisfactorily in practice and over time. Questions of "binding down" will arise within this general guideline, and will have to be settled by majority vote, keeping in mind the need for overall unity and the rights of the minority.

27. The Rules may be amended by a National Congress meeting. In extreme circumstances, a three-fourths majority vote of the Central Committee will suffice to amend the Rules.

28. Rules of discipline:

a) No member can commit any crime against the people and cannot steal or take from the people.

b) Members must avoid all non-politically related arrests because they endanger the organization.

c) No member will be intoxicated or high while doing political work.

d) Any person addicted to or habitually over using alcohol, or any illegal substance may not continue as a member of the organization. This point is not meant to exclude alcoholics and addicts who have been in recovery for a significant period of time, nor is it meant to imply permanent expulsion from the organization.

- e) Every member is expected to conduct themselves in an ethically exemplary way and to serve the people at all times.
- f) The organization's "Policy on Handling Allegations of Sexual Harassment and Sexual Violence in the Organization" is part of the rules of discipline.