

# Constitution of the Communist Party of Aotearoa

## Preamble

The Communist Party of Aotearoa (CPA) is the vanguard party of the working class of Aotearoa and a part of the international communist movement.

The Party bases itself on the theory of Marxism-Leninism-Maoism; the Party is waging a resolute struggle against modern revisionism and all forms of right and left opportunism.

The strategic objective of the CPA is socialist revolution in Aotearoa. This can only be achieved when the masses, led by their Party, wage armed struggle to overthrow the capitalist's state power in order to establish a peoples socialist republic in Aotearoa.

The CPA upholds proletarian internationalism. It strives to unite with the genuine Marxist-Leninist parties and organisations in the world. It supports the struggles for national liberation, in dependence and revolution of the peoples of the world.

## Membership

1. Any person, 18 years or older who agrees with and applies the Party's political line and its constitution, belongs to and works actively in one of the Party's collectives, carries out decisions of the Party, and supports the Party financially, may be a member of the CPA.
2. Any person who wishes to join the party must make an individual application through a full member. The application is considered by the Party member's collective, and may be approved only after a full discussion of the applicant's suitability. In special circumstances, the Central Committee may admit members.
3. A successful applicant may be admitted as a provisional member with the rights and duties of full members, with the exception of the right to vote or be elected to any post.
4. At the completion of six months membership the collective must evaluate the work of the provisional member and decide whether to admit the member to full membership, extend the provisional membership to a maximum of a year, or ask them leave.

## Rights of Members

1. To take part in all debates to contribute to the development of the political line of the Party.
2. To make principled criticisms of all that is incorrect in the Party's work, including the work of any comrade, including leading cadres, by directly addressing higher bodies, free from any sanction.
3. To disagree with the resolutions or directives of Party bodies or reserve one's opinion. A member has the right to submit this opinion for discussion in Party meetings and to directly address a higher body.
4. To receive assistance from members if they are hit by the class enemy in the revolutionary struggle.
5. To elect and be elected to leading positions.

## Duties of Members

1. To study Marxism-Leninism-Maoism, apply it to local conditions and propagate it among the masses, fight the influence of capitalist ideology and struggle against revisionism and all forms of opportunism within and beyond the Party.

2. To serve the masses with all energy, ability and courage; to extend and consolidate the Party's links with them; particularly the working class; to learn from the masses; to actively seek out and to listen attentively to their needs, criticisms and suggestions; to report these in time for appropriate action; to patiently and fully explain to the masses the Party's programme, line and policies; to be vanguard fighters in the interests of the masses; and to actively recruit new members to the Party.
3. To practice proletarian internationalism by actively supporting and developing support for Marxist-Leninist parties and organisations around the world, for peoples struggling against colonialism and imperialism.
4. To build the Party's solidarity and effectiveness.
  - a. to resolutely carry out decisions of the Party, even in the face of disagreement or reservations.
  - b. to be open and above board, avoid splits and factionalising and work with a comradely way with those who have differing views, and to place the interest of the Party above personal interests.
  - c. to practice criticism and self criticism within the Party in order to strengthen it; to go against the tide when the proletarian line is threatened.
  - d. to participate fully and actively in the life of the Party; to attend all scheduled meetings, read and study Party documents, contribute financially to the Party, and assist other comrades when in need.
  - e. to not publicly disclose the Party's internal affairs.

### **Discipline and Cessation of Membership**

1. Any member who violates the rules of the Party or does not carry out their duties as a member shall be called to account for their actions by their collective.
2. Each collective has the immediate and constant responsibility for the rehabilitation of comrades who breach Party discipline. Collectives must be vigilant and resolute in combating opportunism, particularly liberalism and factionalism, which have wrought immense damage to the international communist movement.
3. Disciplinary action may involve a warning, or period of probation, or dismissal from any post held, or expulsion from the Party.
4. Any member subject to disciplinary action shall be informed of the matter, be called on to attend a meeting of the collective to discuss the matter, and be asked to state their case. The member has the right to be present throughout the discussion of the matter.
5. All instances of disciplinary action must be reported to a higher body and a decision to impose a probationary period, dismiss from a position of responsibility, or expel a member must be ratified by a higher body.
6. Any member subjected to disciplinary action may appeal to the Central Committee.
7. Any member wishing to withdraw from the Party must give a letter of intent to their collective. Before withdrawing, all documents and property belonging to the Party must be returned. All resignations must be reported to a higher body.

### **Structure and Functioning**

1. The Communist Party is a discrete organisation. It combines maximum airing of line and policies with organisational secrecy. It combines overt and covert work, legal and illegal work, parliamentary and non-parliamentary work.
2. The organisational principle of the CPA is democratic centralism. Democratic centralism ensures the tightest possible unity of action, along with the greatest possible freedom of discussion.

Centralism is necessary to accomplish our revolutionary tasks, whereas democracy is necessary to strengthen unity and conscious discipline in the Party.

3. According to these principles, the Congress is the highest decision-making body of the Party and between Congresses the Central Committee directs the Party's work, lower bodies are subordinate to higher bodies, the minority is subordinate to the majority, and the individual is subordinate to the collective.
4. Members of leading bodies in the Party at all levels shall be elected and are revocable on an individual basis through a process of free nomination by members, democratic discussion of candidates and secret ballot.
5. The leading bodies of the Party must submit reports regularly to the membership. Lower bodies must report regularly to higher bodies, and upon request.

### **The Congress**

1. The highest leading body of the Party is its Congress. The Congress establishes the general political line of the Party, adopts and amends the Party's programme and constitution. The Congress receives reports from the Central Committee, elects the new Central Committee and establishes any special commissions or other bodies.
2. The Congress is convened at least once every three years. In exceptional cases, the Congress can be delayed by decision of the Central Committee. Extraordinary Congresses can be convened by decision of the Central Committee and must be convened if the Central Committee is presented with a petition from at least half of the Party collectives.
3. The Congress shall consist of the members of the Central Committee and delegates from each Party branch. Branch delegates shall be elected by secret ballot of branch members. The number of delegates from each branch shall be determined by the Central Committee to reflect the branch's proportion of the total membership. Delegates must report the views of their members in the course of debates but are free to express their opinions and vote as they see best.

### **The Central Committee**

1. Between Congresses, the Central Committee is the Party's highest leading body. It directs all Party work in accordance with the programme and constitution and carries out the decisions made at the Congress.
2. The Central Committee shall elect a Chairperson and Political Secretary from among its members. The Chairperson shall convene and chair the meetings of the Central Committee. The Political Secretary shall ensure members are informed of relevant decisions of the Central Committee, and gather reports from the membership as required.
3. The Central Committee shall meet at least monthly. It shall combine collective leadership with individual responsibility under a proper division of labour. All members of the Central Committee must remain members of a basic Party collective. The Central Committee must report regularly to the membership.
4. The Central Committee shall appoint the members of the Editorial Board of the Party Journal and other working committees as required.
5. The Central Committee shall determine the number, formation and dissolution of Party branches, and the transfer of members between branches.
6. The Central Committee may co-opt additional members as required, provided that no more than one third of its members are co-opted between Congresses.

## **The Party Branch**

1. The Party Branch directs the work of the Party in a particular geographic locality, in accordance with the programme and constitution, Congress decisions, and decisions of the Central Committee. The branch applies the line of the Party to specific local conditions.
2. The Branch shall hold a conference before and after each Party Congress. Before the Congress, the Branch conference shall review the Branch work since the last Congress, discuss the political line in preparation for the Congress and elect delegates to the Congress. After the Congress, the Branch conference shall determine how to apply the political line of the Congress to local conditions, and to elect a Branch Committee to lead the work. The Branch Committee may convene additional conferences as required.
3. The Branch Conference shall consist of the members of the Branch Committee and delegates from each Party Collective belonging to the Branch. Collective delegates shall be elected by secret ballot of Collective members. The number of delegates from each Collective shall be determined by the Branch Committee to reflect the branch's proportion of the total membership. Delegates must report the views of their Collective members in the course of debates but are free to express their opinions and vote as they see best.
4. The Branch Committee oversees the work of the Party Branch. It shall meet at least monthly. It shall combine collective leadership with individual responsibility under a proper division of labour. All members of the Branch Committee must remain members of a basic Party collective. The Branch Committee must report regularly to the Central Committee and to the membership. The Branch Committee is responsible for the size, number, formation and dissolution of collectives in its locality and the transfer of members between them.
5. The Committee may co-opt additional members as required, provided that no more than one third of its members are co-opted between Branch conferences.

## **The Party Collective**

1. The Collective is the basic organisation of the CPA. All Party members belong to a Collective. Workplace Collectives are the foundation of the Party; the Collective includes all members who work in a single workplace or section of a workplace. Members who are not in Workplace Collectives belong to neighbourhood Collectives.
2. A Collective has at least three members. When it has more than six members, the Collective must be divided into two Collectives.
3. The Collective must meet at least monthly and practice criticism and self-criticism.
4. Each Collective is led by a Secretary who is elected every year, and ratified by the Branch Committee. The Secretary is responsible for leading all the Collective's activities, ensuring the ideological and political education of its members and maintaining close links between the Party leadership and the rank and file.
5. The Collective must accomplish the following general tasks:
  - a. ensure the Marxist-Leninist education of its members, contribute to the development of the Party's political line, carry out political education of its sympathizers and the masses.
  - b. direct the Party members in their work, apply the political line, carry out broad agitation and propaganda, show initiative and good judgement, and be self-reliant in its work.
  - c. struggle to recruit new members and increase the Party's influence.
  - d. contribute to the financial support of the Party's work.
  - e. report regularly to higher bodies on its activities.

The Workplace Collective must accomplish the following tasks:

1. Communist agitation and propaganda in the workplace.
2. Take part in or start economic and political struggle, take part in workers' movements fighting for their demands in order to broaden and deepen them politically, work to create trade union organisation or within existing trade unions and win them to the Party's line.
3. Build support for Maori self-determination.
4. Unite the working class; build links between employed and unemployed, support oppressed nationalities and immigrant workers, undertake specific work among women and youth.
5. Fight to eliminate the influence of capitalist political parties on the workers.

The Neighbourhood Collectives must:

- a. Carry out communist agitation and propaganda in the area.
- b. Take part in or start economic and political struggle in the area; join workers and local masses' struggles for their demands in order to broaden and deepen them politically. Work in existing mass organisations or create new ones for educational, health and other social services and democratic rights. Undertake specific work among women and youth.
- c. Build support for Maori self-determination
- d. Support the work of the workplace cells.

### **Fractions**

Fractions, or special working bodies, formed of Party members, are set up to help the work in mass organisations. The fraction is subordinated to the leading body at each level. The fraction cannot admit new members into the Party.