



*Political Education  
Series*

**THE STRUCTURE  
OF THE COMMUNIST PARTY  
OF THE SOVIET UNION  
(BOLSHEVIKS)**

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LANGUAGES PUBLISHING HOUSE

Moscow 1951

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PUBLISHER'S NOTE

This pamphlet is a translation of Part 10 of the *Political Education Series*, published by the *Pravda* Publishing House, Moscow 1951.

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# **1. THE BOLSHEVIK PARTY IS A SINGLE, MILITANT, WORKING-CLASS ORGANIZATION**

## **The Importance of a Militant Party Organization**

The Communist Party of the Soviet Union (Bolsheviks) is carrying out its tasks successfully not only because it has a clear aim and is conducting a correct policy, but also because its ranks are properly formed and its internal life properly organized. A party may have a good program and a correct political line, but if this program and line are not reinforced by a definite system of organization, the party may not achieve its aims.

The Bolshevik Party is not a casual conglomeration of individuals, but a compact organization that operates according to a single plan and under a single leadership. This is what enabled it to lead the struggle of the working people to overthrow capitalism and to build Socialism. And this is what enables it successfully to fulfil its role as the leading, directing force of Soviet, socialist society.

The Bolsheviks have always attached great importance to organization and resolutely combated the attempts of the Mensheviks, Trotskyites, Bukharinites and other traitors to weaken this organization, to shake Party discipline, to disrupt Party unity, to transform the Party into an amorphous, diffuse conglomeration of diverse groups, factions, and so forth. In this the Bolsheviks were guided by the realization that any weakening of the Party is to the advantage of the enemies of the working class.

Lenin and Stalin elaborated the doctrine of the revolutionary proletarian party, and upheld this doctrine in the struggle against its enemies. This doctrine invariably serves as our Party's guide in all its practical activities. The Party is the organized vanguard of the working class, the highest form of proletarian class organization. It must always be a single, strongly-welded, disciplined organization, closely connected with the broad masses, and operating according to a single plan and under a single leadership.

Comrade Stalin points out that the Party is not only the sum of local Party organizations. "The Party at the same time represents a single *system* of these organizations, their formal amalgamation into a single whole, with higher and lower leading bodies, with subordination of the minority to the majority, with practical decisions binding on all members of the Party. Without these conditions the Party cannot be a single organized whole capable of exercising systematic and organized leadership in the struggle of the working class."\*

Lenin and Stalin teach that the entire Party must act like one man, as one whole, in which the minority must submit to the majority, and the lower bodies must be subordinate to the higher. The decisions of Party congresses and the decisions of the Central Committee and local leading Party bodies must be the law for the Party organizations, and for every individual member. After a given task has been thought out, discussed and a decision taken on it, it is the duty of every Party organization and of every Communist to carry out that decision. If these conditions do not exist, the Party cannot be the single, organized vanguard of the working class and lead all the working people.

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\* J. Stalin, *The Foundations of Leninism*, Moscow 1950, p. 145.

## The Party Rules Are an Indefeasible Law of Party Life

The fundamental principles of the Lenin-Stalin doctrine of the Party find expression in the Party rules. What are the Party rules and how do they differ from the program? The Party program defines and scientifically substantiates the Party's aims and objects and indicates the way these are to be achieved. The Party rules define the Party's practical activities, its structure and internal regulations.

The Party rules follow from the program and are determined by it. The Party establishes such internal regulations as will best facilitate the achievement of its objects. In conformity with these objects, the Rules of the C.P.S.U.(B.) define who is eligible for membership, the duties and rights of members, the structure of the Party, of its higher and local bodies, the mutual relations between them, the functions of the local Party organizations, and so forth.

Organizational forms and methods of work cannot, however, be fixed once and for all time. The situation in which the Party lives and conducts its struggle changes, the Party acquires new experience, and taking this into account, the Party reforms its ranks accordingly. Naturally, in the period of tsarism, when the Party was subjected to severe persecution, its methods of work were different from what they are now, when it is at the head of the Soviet state and is the governing Party. For example, at that time the Party was unable to form its leading bodies by the method of election as it does at the present time.

The Party rules take into account the circumstances under which the Party is living and fighting. When circumstances require, the Party introduces the necessary amendments in its rules. The Party has adopted different forms of accepting new members, different organizational

structures and different forms of work for the local Party organizations, in conformity with changing circumstances. But however much the Party rules may have been changed, the fundamental principles on which they are based have remained unchanged.

These fundamental principles underlying the organizational structure of our Party are: the strictest centralism in the activities of the Party organizations, internal conscious discipline, unity of will and unity of action, prohibition of factions and groups, great discrimination in accepting new members, safeguarding the Party from opportunist petty-bourgeois elements, constant care to increase the activity of Party members, and development of inner-Party democracy and criticism and self-criticism.

The rules are the unshakeable foundation of Party life and Party development. That is why the Party insists upon strict obedience to all points of the rules. The enemies of the Party—the Trotskyites, Bukharinites and other hangers-on of the bourgeoisie, camouflaging themselves as Party members, tried to disrupt Party discipline and Party unity. The Party routed these enemies and strengthened the unity of its ranks.

The Party rules that were adopted in 1922 at the Twelfth Party Conference and endorsed by the Central Committee of the R.C.P.(B.), established different categories for the acceptance of new members (workers, peasants, office employees) and laid down different probation periods for each category. The victory of Socialism in the U.S.S.R. brought about a change in the class structure of Soviet society; the capitalist elements have been eliminated, and the working class, the peasantry and the intelligentsia have undergone a fundamental change. The borderline between the working class and the peasantry, and between these classes and the intelligentsia, is being obliterated. The firm moral and political unity of Soviet society has been established. These profound changes in

the life of the U.S.S.R. made it necessary to abolish the rule laying down different conditions of membership in conformity with the social status of applicants.

The Rules of the C.P.S.U.(B.) that were adopted at the Eighteenth Party Congress laid down the same conditions of membership, and the same probation period, for all applicants irrespective of whether they belong to the working class, the peasantry or to the intelligentsia. The Eighteenth Party Congress introduced a number of other changes in the rules called forth by the growth of activity of the Party membership and by the necessity of still further expanding inner-Party democracy.

The Rules of the C.P.S.U.(B.) first of all distinctly define the nature of our Party. They state that the Communist Party of the Soviet Union (Bolsheviks) "is the organized vanguard of the working class of the U.S.S.R., its highest form of class organization. The Party is guided in its work by the theory of Marxism-Leninism.

"The Party exercises leadership of the working class, the peasantry and the intelligentsia—the entire Soviet people—in the struggle to strengthen the dictatorship of the working class, to strengthen and develop the socialist system, and to achieve the victory of Communism.

"The Party is the leading core of all the organizations of the working people, public and state, and ensures the successful building of communist society."

## **2. PARTY MEMBERS, THEIR DUTIES AND RIGHTS**

### **Who Are Eligible for Party Membership?**

The Party's fighting efficiency is determined first of all by the composition of its membership and the activity of its members. Upon this depends the degree to which the Party fulfils its role as the organized vanguard of the working class. Hence, the significance of being a Party member and conditions of membership, have always been stressed in our Party.

As far back as 1903, at the Second Party Congress, when the first Party rules were adopted, V. I. Lenin said that the title "member of the Party" must be constantly exalted. Today, too, the Party is guided by these words of Lenin's.

The Party cannot accept in its ranks all those who would wish to join it. It accepts only the most politically enlightened and active members of the working class and of other strata of the working people. Comrade Stalin has said that our Party is a fortress, the gates of which are opened only for the worthy, only for the tried and tested.

The first paragraph of the Rules of the C.P.S.U.(B.) defines who is eligible for Party membership. It reads as follows: "A Party member is one who accepts the program of the Party, who works in one of its organizations,

submits to the decisions of the Party and pays membership dues.”

Hence, the first condition of Party membership is acceptance of the Party's program. The strength of the C.P.S.U.(B.) lies in the unity of its views, in that all its members are united by the same great aims, the same tasks, which are formulated in the program. It goes without saying, however, that acceptance of the Party program is not by itself sufficient to make one eligible as a Party member. Chatterboxes may be found who are ready enough to accept the Party program, but are incapable of doing anything to carry it out in practice. There is no room for such people in the Party.

The Bolshevik Party is a party of revolutionary struggle, of revolutionary action. It not only proclaims great aims, but fights resolutely to achieve them. From every Communist it demands action, demands that he should devote all his knowledge, experience and strength to the struggle for the happiness of the people, for Communism.

By accepting the Party's program, the Communist pledges himself to do all in his power to have it carried out. Obviously, it is the Communist's duty to know the Party's program, to know what the Party is fighting for, by what road the Party is proceeding towards its goal. It is the Communist's duty to fight those who are hindering the execution of the Party's program, who distort or violate Party decisions.

The members of the Party can successfully carry out the Party's program only when they are united in a single, compact organization. That is why the Party rules lay it down that a necessary condition of Party membership is that every member must conduct work in one of the Party organizations and submit to all the Party's decisions.

The Communists do not act individually, not each one by himself, but in a Party organization, which directs and supervises the activities of its members. All the Communists in factories, kolkhozes, offices, educational establishments and in military units are combined in Party organizations. The general meetings and the Party Bureaus of these organizations discuss all questions concerning the activities of the Communists, and pass decisions and set tasks in conformity with instructions received from the higher Party bodies. It is through the Party organizations, through the members of the Party who lead the non-Party people, that the Party carries out its program. The Party demands from all Communists that they should work like a single, united body, bound by Party discipline.

An essential condition of Party membership is the regular payment of Party dues. This duty of the Communist is of great importance. The regular payment of dues is an indication of the Communist's discipline and of his connection with the Party organization. If a Communist does not pay his dues regularly, it shows that his thoughts are not with the Party, and that he is lax in the performance of his Party duties. Furthermore, membership dues are the source of the Party's funds. A Communist who fails to pay dues for three months is deemed to have lapsed from membership.

### **The Mode of Accepting New Members**

The Rules of the C.P.S.U.(B.) state that membership of the Party is open to politically enlightened and active workers, peasants and intellectuals who are devoted to the cause of Communism. Members are accepted only individually.

• What does accepting members individually mean? It means carefully examining the personal merits of each applicant for membership. The organization to which he applies must know how he behaves at his work, whether he takes an active part in social life, whether he is worthy of the lofty title of Communist. All the members present at the meeting at which the individual's application is discussed must be conscious of the great responsibility that rests upon them in accepting a new member in the Party. Only if these rules are adhered to can the penetration of undesirable elements into the Party be prevented.

Applicants for membership of the C.P.S.U.(B.) are first accepted as candidates, or probationers; they are accepted as full members after a year's probation. During this period of probation, the Party organization can, and must, test the new member and also make him familiar with the Party's program and rules.

Probationers must fulfil all the duties the Party rules impose upon full members of the Party. They attend Party meetings with right to voice but not to vote. This means that they may participate in the discussion of all questions, but have no right to vote when a decision is taken; they have no right to vote in the election of Party bodies or to be elected to such.

The rights of probationers are restricted because the Party wishes to test them and make sure that they are worthy of becoming members of the C.P.S.U.(B.), and it depends upon the probationers themselves as to whether they pass the test or not.

Every applicant for membership in the C.P.S.U.(B.) must present to the Party organization recommendations (guarantees) from three Party members.

To recommend a new member is a serious matter. Only members of a definite Party standing, and who know the applicant well, may recommend new members. Ac-

ording to the Rules of the C.P.S.U.(B.), only members of not less than three years standing have the right to recommend new members, and they must know the applicants they recommend from having worked with them for not less than a year.

The Party holds members responsible for the recommendations they give. The Party organization verifies the correctness of the recommendations given, ascertains where, when and for how long the one giving the recommendation has worked with the applicant, and whether he really does know thoroughly the person for whom he is standing guarantee.

Applications for membership are discussed and decided by the general meeting of the local Party organization in which the application is made, and are finally accepted after endorsement by the District Party Committee; in towns that are not divided into districts, endorsement is given by the Town Party Committee.

At the Eighteenth Congress of the C.P.S.U.(B.), Comrade Stalin set the Party the task: "To systematically improve the composition of the Party, raising the ideological level of its membership, and admitting into its ranks, by a process of individual selection, only tried and tested comrades who are loyal to the cause of Communism."\*

### **The Communist's Duties**

It is a great honour to be a member of the Bolshevik Party. Comrade Stalin has said: "... we Communists are people of a special mould. We are made of a special stuff. We are those who form the army of the great proletar-

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\* J. Stalin, *Report to the Eighteenth Congress of the C.P.S.U.(B.) on the Work of the Central Committee*, pp. 98-99.

ian strategist, the army of Comrade Lenin. There is nothing higher than the honour of belonging to this army. There is nothing higher than the title of member of the Party whose founder and leader was Comrade Lenin.”\*

Honourably to bear the lofty title of member of the Party of Lenin and Stalin means, primarily, conscientiously carrying out the duties imposed upon every Communist by the Rules of the C.P.S.U.(B.).

The Rules of the C.P.S.U.(B.) impose upon every Communist the duty of taking an active part in the political life of the Party and the country, and of putting into practice the Party's policy and the decisions of the Party bodies. But in order to be an advanced, active builder of communist society, to put the Party's policy into practice and explain it to the working people, the Party member must clearly understand the Party's aims and the means by which it achieves them. In its policy, the Party is guided by the Marxist-Leninist theory. To be a worthy member of the Party, to understand its policy better, the Party member must constantly study hard to improve his knowledge and understanding of the principles of Marxism-Leninism.

The political intelligence and activity of the working people in the U.S.S.R. are increasing day after day. The Communist can be a leader, be in front of the non-Party masses, only if he constantly enhances his knowledge and enriches his mind, if he constantly studies revolutionary theory. A Party member who neglects his political studies drops behind.

Under tsarism, the study of Marxist-Leninist theory was beset by enormous difficulties. The tsarist government prohibited the publication of revolutionary literature and persecuted those who read it. Many revolutionaries relate

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\* J. Stalin, *On Lenin*, Moscow 1950, p. 25.

how they wrote out by hand whole books by Marx and Lenin in order to be able to study them. At the present time the widest opportunities exist for studying Marxist-Leninist theory. In our country, the works of Marx, Engels, Lenin and Stalin and other political books and pamphlets are published in millions of copies; there are numerous schools and circles for the study of this theory, and public lectures are delivered on the subject. Millions of Communists, members of the Young Communist League and non-Party people take advantage of these opportunities.

To study Marxist-Leninist theory is the constant duty of every Communist. The Party cannot be indifferent to the matter as to whether a Communist studies or does not do so. The Party rules impose upon all Communists the duty of constantly improving their knowledge and understanding of the principles of Marxism-Leninism.

The Party rules demand the strictest Party discipline from every Communist.

Party discipline means that every Communist strictly adheres to the order established in the Party, strictly keeps to the Party's program and rules and the decisions of the Party bodies. Discipline is the basis of the Party's existence as a single, compact organization that is striving towards a single goal. Our Party is leading the struggle of the industrial workers, and of all working people, successfully, because it is operating according to a single plan and is welded together by a single will. The achievement of its fundamental aims by the Party depends upon the discipline of every Communist. Without iron discipline, the Party could not have achieved its great victories.

The internal enemies of the Soviet Republic were routed and liquidated, and the invasion of our country by external enemies was repulsed, primarily because the

Bolshevik Party, which led the struggle of the workers and peasants, was most strictly disciplined; because, in response to the call of the Central Committee of the Party, hundreds, thousands and millions of Soviet people went to the most important sectors of the struggle. The extremely difficult tasks of socialist development were carried out successfully in our country primarily because of the solidarity and discipline of the Bolshevik Party. On instructions from the Party, the Communists rose to a man to wage a resolute struggle to overcome the difficulties. There were no fortresses that the Bolsheviks could not capture by their solidarity and discipline, by their unity.

Lenin and Stalin teach that the discipline of the revolutionary proletarian party is tested and strengthened primarily by the Party members' sense of duty, by their devotion to the cause of Communism, by their fortitude, self-sacrifice and heroism. Comrade Stalin, in his article, "The Proletarian Class and the Proletarian Party," wrote that only those can be regarded as members of the Party who "...deem it their duty to merge their wishes with the wishes of the Party and to act in conjunction with the Party."\*

The Communist adheres to the order established in the Party not formally, but because he himself is convinced that it is necessary to do so. This is the manifestation of his sense of duty, of his ardent desire constantly to strengthen the Bolshevik Party and the socialist state. The potency of Bolshevik Party discipline lies in the Communists' sense of duty.

The Party cannot tolerate violation of party discipline. Members and probationers must always bear in mind that they must not commit any act that is incompatible with the title of Communist, that they are answerable to

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\* J. Stalin, *Collected Works*, Russ. ed., Vol. 1, p. 66.

their Party organization, which is responsible for the behaviour of every one of its members. Lenin said "... it must not be forgotten that every member of the Party is responsible for the Party, and that *the Party is responsible for every one of its members.*"\*

The Rules of the C.P.S.U.(B.) state: "The Party is a single, militant organization, bound by conscious discipline, which is equally obligatory for all members of the Party. The Party's strength lies in its solidarity, unity of will, unity of action, which are incompatible with deviations from the program and rules, with violation of Party discipline, factional groupings and duplicity. The Party purges its ranks of those who violate the Party program, Party rules, and Party discipline."

The decisions of Party bodies must be carried out promptly and to the letter. For violations of Party discipline the Rules of the C.P.S.U.(B.) lay down definite penalties. caution, rebuke, reprimand and, lastly, expulsion, which is the supreme Party penalty.

The Communist is a member of the governing party. It is, therefore, his duty to fight not only for Party discipline, but also for civic discipline. The Party guides the state. This imposes great obligations on every Party organization, and on every Communist. In the factories, the Communists are responsible for the fulfilment of production plans; in the kolkhozes they are responsible for increasing output and for the timely fulfilment of the plans for delivery to the state of grain and other agricultural produce.

The Rules of the C.P.S.U.(B.) impose on Communists the duty of setting an example in labour and civic discipline, of becoming highly skilled at their work, and of constantly improving their proficiency.

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\* V. I. Lenin, *Collected Works*, Vol. 6, 4th Russ. ed., p. 458.

It is the duty of the Communists engaged in industry, agriculture, or in the transport services, to increase the productivity of their own labour and to stimulate the other workers to do the same. It is the duty of those who work in industry to be in the front ranks of the Stakhanovites, and those who work in kolkhozes, sovkhozes and machine and tractor stations to be skilled producers of high crop yields. They must safeguard public, socialist property. They must by their own example stimulate their fellow workers to self-sacrificing labour. They must exert all efforts to strengthen the defence power of the socialist state.

The Communists are always in the front ranks of the working people and therefore exercise enormous influence among the non-Party people. The broad masses of the Soviet people regard our Party as their own; it is near and dear to them; they realize that it is in their vital interest to strengthen it; they accept its leadership and voluntarily place their fate in its hands. The Communist Party enjoys the love and confidence of the entire Soviet people. The Party highly appreciates and prizes this confidence.

The Rules of the C.P.S.U. (B.) make it incumbent upon all Communists constantly to strengthen their ties with the masses, promptly to respond to the requirements and needs of the working people, and to explain the Party's policy and decisions to the non-Party people. To strengthen their ties with the non-Party people and to work constantly among the masses is a most important duty of all Party organizations and of all Communists.

Comrade Stalin says:

"We Bolsheviks would never have achieved the successes we have now achieved had we not been able to win for the Party the confidence of millions of non-Party workers and peasants. And what is needed for this? What is needed is for the members of the Party not to

isolate themselves from the non-Party people; for the Party members not to withdraw into their Party shell; not to get puffed up about belonging to the Party, but to heed the voice of the non-Party people; not only to teach the non-Party people, but also to learn from them.”\*

The Party demands that the Communists should not domineer over the non-Party people, but explain the Party decisions to them. The Communists must be attentive and responsive to the needs of the working people. Conceit and boastfulness are unbecoming for a Communist. Modesty is the hallmark of the Bolshevik.

The Central Committee of the Party, and Comrade Stalin himself, urge the Party cadres to pay heed to the opinion of the broad masses and to take their experience into account. All the members of the Political Bureau of the Central Committee of the C.P.S.U.(B.), headed by Comrade Stalin, were present at the All-Union Conference of Stakhanovites, and they not only spoke at the conference, but also listened closely to all the other speakers. At the conclusion of the conference, Comrade Stalin said: "...we leaders of the Party and the Government must not only teach the workers, but also learn from them. I shall not undertake to deny that you, the members of the present conference, have learned something here at this conference from the leaders of our Government. But neither can it be denied that we, the leaders of the Government, have learned a great deal from you, the Stakhanovites, the members of this conference. Well, comrades thanks for the lesson, many thanks!"\*\*

The Communists turn a sensitive ear to the moods of the masses, but they do not allow themselves to be in-

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\* J. Stalin, *Speech Delivered at the First All-Union Congress of Collective-Farm Shock Workers*, Moscow 1950, pp. 27-28.

\*\* J. Stalin, *Speech at the First All-Union Conference of Stakhanovites*, Moscow 1950, pp. 34-35.

fluenced by the moods of backward elements. To pander to backward people, to those who whine and complain about difficulties, is contrary to the very spirit of Bolshevism. Communists do not try to wriggle out of awkward questions, but give straightforward answers to them. They explain the Party's policy, show how the Party fights unrelaxingly to overcome difficulties, to increase the might of the socialist state and to improve the welfare of the people. They organize the non-Party people for the purpose of carrying out the Party's policy.

Lenin and Stalin teach the Bolsheviks to overcome all difficulties and obstacles that stand in the path to the goal and not to yield to them, not to surrender positions. Comrade Stalin has said that difficulties exist in order to be overcome. Most people have read Comrade Stalin's splendid characterization of courageous fighters and his withering criticism of whining panicmongers in the picture he drew of the behaviour of fishermen faced by an oncoming storm.

Comrade Stalin said: "Have you ever seen fishermen when a storm is brewing on a great river—say the Yenisei? I have seen them many a time. In the face of a storm one group of fishermen will muster all their forces, encourage their fellows and boldly head the boat to meet the storm: 'Cheer up, lads, hold tight to the tiller, cut the waves, we'll pull her through!' But there is another type of fishermen—those who, on sensing a storm, lose heart, begin to snivel and demoralize their own ranks: 'What a misfortune, a storm is brewing: lie down, boys, in the bottom of the boat, shut your eyes, let's hope she'll make the shore somehow.'"\*

In obedience to the behests of Lenin and Stalin, Communists allow no difficulties to daunt them; they go out boldly to surmount them. They put all their strength

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\* J. Stalin, *Problems of Leninism*, Moscow 1947, p. 243.

into their work, they never rest content with what has been achieved, they always push forward and carry the entire people with them.

The Communists personify the best qualities of the Soviet people; they set an example in devotion to the people's cause, in efficiency, in self-sacrifice at work, in understanding, and in organization.

### **The Party Member's Rights**

Members of the Party enjoy extensive rights, which enable them to take an active part in Party life. The Eighteenth Congress of the C.P.S.U.(B.) supplemented the Party rules with a point concerning the rights of Party members.

According to the Rules of the C.P.S.U.(B.), every member of the Party has the right:

a) to take part in the free and businesslike discussion at Party meetings, or in the Party press, of practical questions concerning Party policy;

b) to criticize at Party meetings any Party official;

c) to take part in the election of, and to be elected to, Party bodies;

d) to demand that he himself take part in the discussion of every decision concerning his own activities or behaviour;

e) to submit any question or statement he desires to any Party body, up to and including the Central Committee of the C.P.S.U.(B.).

Party organizations cannot exist and develop unless the rank-and-file members take an active part in their work. The free and businesslike discussion of practical questions concerning Party policy by all the members of our Party, which has a membership numbering millions, is a demonstration of its strength. Lenin and Stalin urged the

necessity of learning from the rank and file, of paying heed to their opinion. Comrade Stalin said: "To be able to lead properly, the experience of the leaders must be supplemented by the experience of the rank and file of the Party, the experience of the working class, the experience of the working people, the experience of the so-called 'little people.' "\*

Lenin said that the Bolshevik Party is a militant, fighting party. The Bolsheviks, members of the Party of Lenin and Stalin, are militant, bold and persevering. They cannot with indifference overlook mistakes; they have no right to close their eyes to defects. For the Bolsheviks, the interests of the people come first and foremost.

Comrade Stalin teaches that if we want to train and steel cadres, we must not be afraid of offending people, we must not be afraid of honest, bold and frank criticism. If there is no criticism, defects may be driven below the surface, and then it is more difficult to combat them. Bold and frank criticism alone helps our people to develop, to perfect themselves; it stimulates them to go forward and to eliminate defects in their work. Where there is no criticism there is stagnation, no progress is made.

The Party rules protect the rights of Party members. Their aim is to give every Communist the opportunity to take an active part in the discussion of practical questions concerning Party policy, to make it uncomfortable for anybody who persecutes a Communist for expressing criticism, to prevent Party bodies from discussing a Communist's conduct in his absence, and to prevent anybody from encroaching on the rights of the Communists.

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\* J. Stalin, *Concerning Defects in Party Work and Measures for Liquidating Trotskyite and Other Doub'edealers. Report and Reply to Debate at the Plenum of the Central Committee of the C.P.S.U.(B.), March 3-5, 1937.*

All these rules are of enormous importance for increasing the activity of the rank-and-file members and for enhancing the responsibility of every Communist for the Party's work. They are powerful weapons for combating conceit and opinionativeness among individual Communists, for strengthening the ties between the leaders and the rank and file, and for improving the entire work of the Party and the state.

### 3. STRUCTURE OF THE PARTY

#### The Guiding Principle in the Party's Structure

The guiding principle (rule) in the Party's organizational structure is democratic centralism. This means that in our Party, centralism and democracy supplement one another. On the one hand, all Party work is directed from one centre; the lower Party bodies are subordinated to the higher ones; the strictest discipline reigns in the Party. On the other hand, all Party bodies are elected and have to report to the Party organizations.

Democratic centralism means:

firstly, that all leading Party bodies, from bottom up, are elected;

secondly, that the Party bodies report periodically to their Party organizations;

thirdly, strict Party discipline and subordination of the minority to the majority;

fourthly, that the decisions of the higher bodies are absolutely binding on the lower bodies.

All these principles of democratic centralism make it possible to combine the Party's organization and compactness with activity and initiative on the part of its members.

Democratic centralism ensures for the Party unity of will and action. This makes it possible to direct the entire work of the Party towards a single goal, to give its policy and practical work a single direction.

The fact that the Party is built up on the basis of democratic centralism enables it at any moment to reform its ranks, to redistribute its forces, to concentrate them on the fulfilment of new tasks.

Our Party consists of numerous town, district, factory, kolkhoz and other Party organizations. To direct their activities towards a single goal we have a single centre—the Central Committee of the Party, under whose guidance all the local Party organizations are united into a single Party organization.

Democratic centralism in the leadership and structure of the Party is the basis of its organization and fighting efficiency.

### **Organization on Production-and-Area Lines**

The Communists are united first of all in the primary Party organizations at the places at which they are employed: factory, kolkhoz, office. In this way, factory, kolkhoz, office and other Party organizations are formed. Thus, the lower, or primary, Party organizations are built on production lines.

The primary Party organizations form district area organizations. In Districts, Okrugs, Regions, Territories and Republics, organizations corresponding to the respective areas are formed. They unite all the primary Party organizations in their respective areas. This is the area principle in the structure of our Party.

The Bo'shevik Party was built on production-and-area lines right from the beginning. Before the revolution, this enabled the Party to fight successfully to carry out the task set by Lenin, viz., to convert every factory into a Bolshevik stronghold. During the period of the building of Socialism, the production-and-area principle enabled the Party to draw closer to production activities, to go

into the details of the work of every industrial enterprise, kolkhoz and office.

The production-and-area principle of organization helps the Party to organize the workers, kolkhozniks and office workers for the struggle to carry out production plans. The fact that the Communists are organized in primary organizations on production lines enables the Party to deploy its forces in such a way that they are able to work directly among the masses of the working people and influence the work in industrial enterprises, kolkhozes and offices.

The Party organizations are formed in conformity with the administrative division of the country (District, Okrug, Region, Territory, Republic). This enables the Party successfully to direct all the organs of state power and all branches of economic and cultural development.

### **The Higher Party Bodies**

The supreme body of the Party is the congress of the C.P.S.U.(B.). The congress hears and endorses the reports of the Central Committee of the C.P.S.U.(B.) and of the Central Auditing Committee, revises and amends the Party's program and rules, determines the Party's tactics (mode of action) in fundamental questions of current policy, and elects the Central Committee of the C.P.S.U.(B.) and the Central Auditing Committee.

Delegates to the congress of the C.P.S.U.(B.) are elected at Regional and Territory conferences, and at congresses of the Communist Parties of the Union Republics. The decisions of the congress of the C.P.S.U.(B.) are binding on the whole Party.

Every congress of the C.P.S.U.(B.) is a great event in the life of the Party and of the entire country. The decisions of the congress of the C.P.S.U.(B.) express the

will of the entire Party. The entire Party prepares for the congress. The Central Committee announces the agenda of the congress six weeks before it assembles. This is done in order that the Communists may discuss the extremely important questions that are to come before the congress.

In the intervals between congresses, the Central Committee of the C.P.S.U.(B.) convenes all-Union Party conferences of representatives of local Party organizations. The all-Union Party conferences discuss urgent questions of Party policy.

The all-Union Party conference has the right to replace some of the members of the Central Committee of the C.P.S.U.(B.), i. e., to remove those who have failed to carry out their duties and to elect others in their place. Such a change must not, however, affect more than one-fifth of the total number of members of the Central Committee of the C.P.S.U.(B.) elected by the Party congress.

The all-Union conference replenishes the Central Committee of the C.P.S.U.(B.) from among the alternate members who had been elected by the Party congress, and in their place elects the corresponding number of new alternate members.

The decisions of all-Union conferences are endorsed by the Central Committee of the C.P.S.U.(B.), except for decisions to replace members of the Central Committee and to elect new alternate members; such decisions do not have to be endorsed by the Central Committee of the C.P.S.U.(B.).

Decisions of all-Union conferences endorsed by the Central Committee of the C.P.S.U.(B.) are binding on all Party organizations.

The supreme body of the Party in the periods between congresses is the Central Committee of the C.P.S.U.(B.). To the Central Committee are elected the best, most experienced Bolsheviks—outstanding workers in the Party,

in economic and military affairs, and in science and culture. The Central Committee concentrates within itself the wisdom of our Party. It is the leading core of the Party.

The Central Committee of the C.P.S.U.(B.), headed by Comrade Stalin, is the political, ideological and organizing centre of the Party.

The Central Committee of the C.P.S.U.(B.) represents the Party in relations with other parties, organizations and institutions. It exercises leadership of the local Party organizations. It organizes the various institutions of the Party and guides their activities. It appoints the editorial staffs of the Party's central organs (newspapers and magazines) which work under its supervision, and endorses the editorial staffs of the Party organs of big local organizations. It distributes the Party's forces and funds and directs the work of the central Soviet and public organizations.

Major political and organizational questions are discussed at plenums of the Central Committee of the C.P.S.U.(B.), that is to say, by all the members and alternate members.

The Central Committee of the C.P.S.U.(B.) sets up a Political Bureau, which directs political work; an Organizing Bureau, which directs organizing work, and a Secretariat for current work of an organizational executive character.

The present members of the Political Bureau of the Central Committee of the C.P.S.U.(B.) are Comrades J. V. Stalin, V. M. Molotov, G. M. Malenkov, L. P. Beria, K. E. Voroshilov, L. M. Kaganovich, A. I. Mikoyan, A. A. Andreyev, N. S. Khrushchov, N. A. Bulganin and A. N. Kosygin. Comrade N. M. Shvernik is an alternate member of the Political Bureau.

The present Secretaries of the Central Committee of the C.P.S.U.(B.) are Comrades J. V. Stalin (General

Secretary), G. M. Malenkov, P. K. Ponomarenko, M. A. Suslov and N. S. Khrushchov. Comrade Stalin was elected General Secretary of the Central Committee of the C.P.S.U.(B.) on Lenin's proposal in 1922 and has acted in that capacity ever since.

### **The Local Party Bodies**

The supreme bodies of the Communist Parties of the Union Republics are the Party congresses; the supreme bodies of Territorial, Regional, Town and District organizations are the Party conferences. They hear and endorse the reports of the Party Committees, discuss questions concerning Party, Soviet, economic, trade union and Young Communist League work, elect the Party Committees, Auditing Committees and delegates to conferences called by the superior Party organizations, or to the congress of the C.P.S.U.(B.).

In the intervals between congresses or conferences, the supreme bodies of the local organizations are the Central Committees of the Communist Parties of the Union Republics and the Territorial, Regional, Okrug, Town and District Party Committees.

The District, Town, Okrug, Regional and Territorial Committees of the C.P.S.U.(B.) and the Central Committees of the Communist Parties of the Union Republics elect bureaus and secretaries to conduct current work.

The Party bodies are organs of collective leadership. All fundamental questions are discussed and settled collectively. When any important question is discussed, the opinion and experience of every member of the given body is taken into account.

Collective leadership is the fundamental method of Party work. Comrade Stalin teaches: "The ability to act collectively, readiness on the part of individual comrades

to submit to the will of the collective body, is precisely what we call real Bolshevik courage. Because, without such courage, without the ability to overcome one's pride, if you like to call it that, and to submit one's will to the will of the collective body—without these qualities—there is no collective body, there is no collective leadership, there is no Communism.”\*

It is the duty of the local organizations to carry out the instructions of the higher bodies of the C.P.S.U.(B.) unreservedly and to the letter.

The local Party bodies guide the work of the lower Party organizations.

The local Party bodies direct the activities of the Soviet, trade union, Young Communist League and other organizations and are responsible for their work. This, of course, does not mean that the Party Committees must do the work of these organizations and decide everything for them. They must not usurp the functions of the Soviet bodies and economic organizations and push them into the background, but constantly help them, strengthen them and direct economic and cultural development through them.

### The Primary Party Organizations

The primary Party organizations constitute the basis of the Party.

They are formed in factories, sovkhozes, machine and tractor stations and other economic enterprises, in kolkhozes, Soviet army and naval units, in villages, offices and in educational establishments where there are not less than three Communists. They link the leading Party

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\* J. Stalin, *The Right-Wing Factionalists in the American Communist Party*, Gosizdat 1930, p. 43.

bodies with the masses of the workers, peasants and intelligentsia.

The functions of the primary Party organizations are multifarious.

They conduct agitation and organizational work among the masses of workers, kolkhozniks and office employees, explain the Party's policy and carry out the Party's decisions.

They recruit new members for the Party and organize their political education. The Bolshevik education of the Party members is one of the most important functions of the primary Party organizations. For this purpose they organize political schools and circles for Communists, arrange lectures and consultations for those comrades who are studying Marxist-Leninist theory independently, and supervise the studies of the Communists.

Party members are trained in the course of practical work. The primary Party organization gives every member definite Party tasks to perform. In the course of performing these tasks the Communists develop and acquire experience. By participating in the entire work of the Party organization they receive schooling in practical activity and are steeled in the struggle against difficulties.

The primary Party organizations help the District (or Town) Committee in its practical work. Every primary Party organization is a part of the District (or Town) Party organization. It must carry out all the tasks set by the District (or Town) Committee to the letter and participate in the general Party work in the district (or town).

The primary Party organizations rally the masses of workers, kolkhozniks and office employees for the purpose of fulfilling production plans, for strengthening labour discipline and developing socialist emulation and the Stakhanov movement. They combat laxity and misman-

agement in factories, sovkhoses and kolkhoses, and constantly see to the improvement of the cultural and living conditions of the workers, office employees and kolkhozniks.

The Party strives to enhance the role of the primary Party organizations in all enterprises where production is carried on. With this end in view, the primary Party organizations in industrial enterprises, sovkhoses, kolkhoses and machine and tractor stations have the right to supervise the activities of the management of these enterprises. They have the right to call upon the managers of such enterprises to report on their activities at Party meetings, to criticize defects in their work, and to adopt decisions with the view to eliminating these defects. The right to supervise the work of production managers enhances the Communists' sense of responsibility for the state of affairs in the given enterprise.

The primary Party organizations in Soviet administrative offices have no right to supervise the work of the managers of these offices. Why? Because supervision of the work of Central, Regional, District and Town Soviet administrative offices is exercised by the corresponding Party body. The work of administrative offices covering the whole Soviet Union is supervised by the Central Committee of the C.P.S.U.(B.); Regional offices are supervised by the Regional Party Committees, and so forth. The fact that primary Party organizations in such offices have not the right to supervise does not mean, however, that they can ignore mismanagement and defects in the work of these offices and their managers. It is their bounden duty to report such defects to the superior Party body.

Experience shows that the primary Party organizations achieve success when they properly combine Party-political work with the struggle to carry out the tasks confronting the given factory, kolkhoz or office.

## Inner-Party Democracy

An important basis of the work of all Party organizations is inner-Party democracy. Lenin said. "... all the Party's affairs are conducted, directly or through representatives, by all the members of the Party on an equal footing, without any exception. . . ."\*

Inner-Party democracy finds expression first of all in that all the leading Party bodies from the bottom up, from the bureaus of the primary Party organizations to the Central Committee of the Party, are elected. In order that the will of the members of the Party may find most precise expression, the Rules of the C.P.S.U. (B.) prohibit the voting for candidates for office by lists. Every candidate for office must be voted for separately. Moreover, every Party member has the right to object to a candidature and to criticize candidates. The voting for candidates takes place by secret ballot.

Democracy in our Party is not limited to democratic elections. The entire work of the Bolshevik Party is based on democratic action which means that the entire membership decides questions and takes action on these decisions. Comrade Stalin has pointed out that real democracy lies in that the membership of the Party organizations should act, that the Party membership should decide Party and general practical questions, that the Party membership should pass its resolutions and oblige the respective organizations to carry them out.

The Party bodies have to report to the organizations that elected them. By hearing and discussing the reports of Party bodies, the members of the Party check up on the work of the leading bodies they have elected and exercise control over them.

Comrade Stalin has said: "Some comrades think that

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\* V. I. Lenin, *Collected Works*, Vol. 11, 4th Russ. ed., p. 396.

it is possible to check up on people only from above, when leaders check up on those they lead by the results of their work. This is wrong. Checking up from above is needed, of course, as an effective measure for checking up on people and on the execution of tasks. But checking up from above is far from being the only kind of checking. There is another kind, checking from below, when the masses, when those who are led check up on the leaders, point to their mistakes and indicate the way to rectify them. This kind of checking is one of the most effective methods of checking up on people.”\*

Inner-Party democracy ensures the active participation of every Communist in the life of the Party. The Party membership discusses and decides most important questions of Party policy and of everyday practical work. The rules of the Party state: “The free and businesslike discussion of questions of Party policy in individual Party organizations, or in the Party as a whole, is an inalienable right of every member of the Party that follows from inner-Party democracy.”

As a member of a primary Party organization the Communist takes part in the discussion of all questions that come before that organization, and he may make proposals on them. When a decision is taken, it is the duty of the Communist to submit to the majority and carry out that decision.

An important manifestation of inner-Party democracy is Bolshevik criticism and self-criticism. A Communist cannot gloss over or conceal mistakes and defects in his own work, or in that of other comrades. If there is no criticism and self-criticism, the Party cannot develop and make progress.

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\* J. Stalin, *Concerning Defects in Party Work and Measures for Liquidating Trotskyite and Other Doubledealers. Report and Reply to Debate at the Plenum of the Central Committee of the C.P.S.U.(B.), March 3-5, 1937.*

It often happens that a man who honestly performs his public duties himself, deems it permissible to close his eyes to the anti-social conduct of other people. One does not want to "cause unpleasantness"; another thinks that it is not right to offend a friend. So, according to such people, it is better to sacrifice the interests of the state and of the people rather than offend a friend. But this is not a Bolshevik, not a Soviet point of view. Whoever thinks this way commits a grave political error.

A Bolshevik not only criticizes others; he must also critically appraise his own work. Comrade Stalin has repeatedly pointed out that a most important condition for our development is that every Soviet citizen should daily sum up his work and fearlessly ask himself: "Have I done all I could have done today? Have I overlooked anything? Have I made any mistake? What must I do to be able to work better tomorrow and do more for the state, for society, for the Party?" He who boldly and truthfully appraises and criticizes his work in this way will always forge ahead.

We have achieved enormous successes. But often success gives rise to self-satisfaction, conceit and boastfulness. The object of criticism and self-criticism is precisely to combat such evils. It helps the Party to eliminate defects, to consolidate achievements and to gain new achievements.

The Party takes strong measures against attempts to gag criticism and inner-Party democracy. Every Communist or non-Party working man who comes out with healthy criticism and wants to secure the elimination of defects must feel that he has the organized support of his comrades and be confident that effective measures will be taken to remove defects.

An important school for Bolshevik education is the Party meeting. At Party meetings all the most important questions of general political and Party life, as well as local affairs, are discussed. Party meetings serve as a

school for Party education, for increasing the activity of Communists, for developing criticism and self-criticism, for raising the sense of duty and responsibility of Party members. Party meetings can play this most important role only if careful preparations are made for them, and if the execution of the decisions adopted at them is systematically verified.

Inner-Party democracy and Bolshevik criticism and self-criticism are important means of strengthening conscious Party discipline and of increasing the activity of Party members; they are important means of continuously improving the whole of our work, and of the Bolshevik training of Party cadres and of the Party membership as a whole.

## BRIEF SUMMARY

The Bolshevik Party is a single, strongly-welded organization that operates according to a single plan and under a single leadership.

The rules of the Party define the structure of the Party and its chief internal regulations. The Rules of the C.P.S.U.(B.) are based on the organizational principles of Bolshevism that were elaborated by Lenin and Stalin.

It is the duty of Communists undeviatingly to carry out the Party's program and rules, and to work actively in one of the Party organizations.

Communists must work continuously to improve their political understanding and to master the principles of Marxism-Leninism. It is their duty to maintain the strictest Party discipline and to take an active part in the political life of the Party and the country.

It is the duty of Communists to set an example in labour and civic discipline, and to become proficient at their work. The Rules of the C.P.S.U.(B.) make it incumbent on Communists continuously to strengthen their ties with the masses. The Communists must set an example to the non-Party people and get them to follow their lead in carrying out the decisions of the Party and the Soviet Government.

The Communist Party of the Soviet Union (Bolsheviks) is built on the principle of democratic centralism, which is a condition of its organization and fighting efficiency.

The Party is organized on the production-and-area principle. The basis of the Party are the primary Party organizations.

An important function of the Party organizations is to develop inner-Party democracy. Inner-Party democracy and criticism and self-criticism are means for strengthening conscious Party discipline, for the Bolshevik education of Party members, for increasing their activity and improving the whole of Party work.



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