

Working in the masses

Theses on the struggle of the working class

in abridged form, based on the “Decision on Work
in the Masses” of the 2nd Plenary Assembly
of the Communist Organization, July 2019



**KOMMUNISTISCHE
ORGANISATION**

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At the 2nd Plenary Assembly of the Communist Organization (KO) in July 2019, after months of fruitful discussion, a resolution was passed on work in the masses. In order to make this very long document more easily accessible, we present here a strongly abbreviated version limited to the essential statements.

Political justification

Building the Communist Party

The communist, revolutionary workers movement in Germany has been heavily weakened. Characterized by ideological disagreement and ambiguity, it has frayed itself into various organizations and is therefore hardly able to unfold its political effect. The KO was founded with the aim of overcoming this state through a process of organization and clarification and creating the conditions for the creation of a Communist Party in Germany – a revolutionary working class party capable of steadily expanding its influence on the working class and ultimately leading it in the decisive struggle for power.

One of the essential challenges in building this party is that we must work out common orientations for the class struggle. We hereby present and discuss our preliminary conclusions on the struggle of the working class. For the unity of the communists, which we ultimately strive for, is only possible on the basis of a unity of content, political-ideological unity. The question of organizing the working class is of central importance in this struggle for the correct political line of the communists.

Our Goal: Organizing and Winning the Class Struggle

The revolution won't come by itself. This requires the revolutionary act, the revolutionary uprising of the entire working class. For this the workers must gain the consciousness that they are being exploited as a class and can overthrow the exploiting system as a class. So the revolution cannot be the work of a small conspired community, but only the work of the workers themselves. In a revolutionary situation in which capitalist rule is fundamentally shaken and the masses rebel against the system, the workers must take power in their own hands and build the new society of socialism. For the workers in the revolutionary situation to be able to do this, they must already have gained experience in mass organizations: The experience of democratic self-organization, decision-making and pulling on one strand, the experience of defeat and rising up again, the experience of solidarity and mutual help. Revolutionary times are times of crisis in which many experiences can be gathered, but only a working class that is as experienced as possible in questions of organization, trained in struggle, focused on the goal and acting uniformly will then be able to deal the fatal blow to the rule of capital. Our work is dedicated to the preparation for this goal.

The goal of the communists in mass work must be the politicization of the masses, the raising of their consciousness – it must be understood that the goal of the struggle can only be the overthrow of the capitalist class and that the working class must unite and organize itself under the leadership of the Communist Party.

The struggle must therefore have the goal of state power, otherwise the capitalist class remains in power and the struggles will ultimately subordinate themselves to the rule and political goals of the capitalist class.

Class-oriented mass work and mass organizations are not to be understood separately from the Communist Party / Organization. Without them they will not exist, nor will the Communist Party be a revolutionary vanguard, the highest form of organization of the proletariat without mass work and mass organizations. Thus, although these are two different and in practice separate forms of organization, their structure and development inevitably go hand in hand.

The struggle of the classes takes place objectively, even without our intervention. In every previous society, the interests of oppressors and the oppressed were irreconcilable and manifested themselves in a constant clash. The recognition of this permanent struggle, however, does not necessarily lead to a revolutionary course. On the contrary, the real questions begin here, namely the questions of the specific problems, the nature and the goal of the proletarian class struggle.

Limitation of struggles, generality of class struggle:

The ongoing confrontation between the working class and the bourgeoisie is always the seed of the class struggle as we conceive it, the organized struggle of the working class for power. Strikes and other forms of economic struggle are seed forms of class struggle. So they contain the potential to unfold the entire political struggle of the class for state power. But only the potential, only the germ. The interest of the capitalist class is that this seed does not unfold, but remains a seed. From the point of view of capital, the struggle should on the one hand be restricted and limited to individual companies and sectors, but on the other hand also remain confined to wage demands, working time issues, etc., without posing the question of power. By contrast, from the point of view of the communists and those who represent the interests of the working class, the struggle must not remain limited, but must be extended to the struggle of the entire class and must relate to all questions, above all to the question of state power, which the working class must conquer.

This does not mean that the demand for a soviet republic should be imposed on every strike. That would be ridiculous and sectarian. Rather, it means that the workers must recognize in the struggles that there must be more at stake – regardless of whether they win or lose that struggle. They must recognize that they are irreconcilable with an organized opposing class and must therefore organize themselves in a long-term and disciplined way. In independent mass organizations closely linked to the organization of revolutionaries, this experience can lead to the realization that the power of the working class is the only solution to their problems. In these organizations an understanding can mature about how

they can get there and what role the individual strike, the individual action of struggle can play in this long-term struggle.

According to this comprehensive understanding of class struggle, every small joint action of workers against their living conditions gains potentially far-reaching significance. For it is the starting point where we can practically demonstrate that organization is necessary; and where we can at the same time politically demonstrate that it is part of the whole class struggle in which the question of power must be posed.

This is not just about expanding struggles such as strikes and pushing the demands forward, even though these are important tasks. But our task goes beyond that and consists mainly of something else: In building an organization that is able to connect the struggles with each other, to show everywhere why it is a struggle of the whole class and against the other class, why the question of power is decisive for it.

For this we have to focus our whole organization on class struggle and mass work. We must understand the activities and demands that result from them in their unity and context. For example, the question of education is not separate from our work in the masses, because there we must constantly develop even better means of communicating our program and our positions. In order to be able to combine our activities in the masses well with scientific socialism, we need good knowledge of the history of the workers' movement, of social conditions and their development, and of the experiences workers gain in their struggle, as well as of the class enemy and his strategies.

The question of cadre development is also closely connected with and determined by the demands of class struggle. In order to create the preconditions for the construction of the Communist Party, what we currently lack, apart from ideological clarity and unity, are cadres. The cadres are the people who lead the struggle most actively and consciously, who know it from all sides and who can connect all aspects with each other. They are communists who are up to the demands of the class struggle. We must win them mainly from the masses and be able to train them, train them, develop all the skills they need to lead the struggle.

Our Orientation: Internalizing Principles

Our orientation does not include a detailed, technical proposal, such as that everyone should go to a certain committee of the trade union. Nor do we propose a uniform recipe, which should always be applied in the same way in every city, such as the establishment of a neighborhood association. Rather, it is first a question of understanding the goal, the principles and the fundamentals and then

applying them after evaluating the concrete conditions and possibilities according to local conditions. It is a matter of evaluating the work on the basis of these principles again and again collectively and regularly and drawing practical conclusions from them.

This means that in all places where it is possible, we try to organize workers or other working people – in the company, in the residential area, at schools and universities. This means that we also have to extend our influence in other, existing mass organizations and promote the independent organization of the workers in them: in trade unions, in sports and cultural associations. We and the people we reach must apply and spread the principles of autonomy and activity everywhere.

We do not decide on a general rigid orientation towards company and trade union policy in the sense that everyone should go into the company at all times and everywhere. This may well be right and necessary, but it must be decided in one place according to conditions and capacities. Depending on the situation, the best starting points must be found. For example, if we start a sports club in a town and organize people there, there will be young workers who will later work as trainees in a company.

We also find sons and daughters of the working class at the university or technical college. There we also find sons and daughters of the middle-class who we can inspire for our mass work in the neighborhood or in the company and who side with the working class practically and ideologically together with us. They also have to organize themselves in order to do justice to their own specific interests and to gain organizational experience which they can bring to the companies. Moreover, a part of the working class works at the universities themselves, the struggles of all these parts must be united.

On the organization of the masses

Social situation and necessity of organization

Since the defeat of 1989, the smashing of socialism in the Soviet Union and Eastern Europe, the workers movement has been in a serious crisis. Social democracy and opportunism have decimated the labor movement, organizations (trade unions, associations, etc.) have been subordinated to bourgeois ideology or have been decimated. Many formerly revolutionary workers parties have dissolved. Independent, class-conscious and revolutionary organizations of the working class hardly exist any more in the FRG. Most workers and their families

in Germany today are not politically organized or tied to the interests of the ruling class through social-democratic organizations.

Nevertheless, the widespread assumption that most workers are fundamentally not interested in political issues is false and an expression of a lack of contact with the working class. Rather, workers have no larger context in which to discuss and think through political and social issues. All the more so, they have no context in which they can become active on their own. They are exposed to the influence of the bourgeoisie, its state, its media and offers of the culture industry without any real counterweight.

As a result, many workers, especially young people, experience psychological, social and cultural brutalization in various forms. These include selfishness, superficiality, inability to build personal relationships, hedonism and drug use and other expressions of disruption of social relations. These phenomena pose problems for our mass work, as they complicate the organization and development of class consciousness.

Atomization and isolation are also experiences that many workers and their families have. So it is not only and not necessarily loneliness, but a limited experience of sociality. Fewer and fewer people collect the experience of joint activity and thus the capacity to act. With it they can hardly recognize possibilities to fight with the others.

In order to counteract these negative phenomena, we must bring people together in all areas, in the residential district as well as in the workplaces. We have to be patient. Our work is long-term and designed for continuity. The need for patience and continuity arises from the matter itself: We are not doing a campaign or a temporary project, but have a lifelong task ahead of us – organizing the working class. Thus our own process of organization will not stop, we will have to further develop it all the time. This will also be an important task in socialism.

Therefore, we do not have to have a political motto for everything at once; a political topic that is discussed quickly comes up anyway. Mutual help can play an important role in this task, because it is linked to the needs of the people we can and want to reach, who reject egoism and ruthlessness. Mutual help can take many different forms, from an open ear for the problems of the colleague to shopping for the elderly neighbor to coaching for the young people in the settlement. Patience is also important because not every worker will immediately realise that collectivity and organisation will pay off for him personally in the short term. And we must also be patient with those who want to organise themselves but have little time and energy objectively and do not make unrealistic demands on them.

What are mass organizations?

By mass organizations we mean organizations in which the workers organize themselves along their economic, social and cultural needs and interests. They can take different forms depending on the field and historical situation. They are places where one's own social power as a collective subject, one's own abilities can be experienced. They are places where one learns to decide for oneself and to implement these decisions. They are also spaces for social, political and ideological debate. In them, there is no separation between the different areas of life, since they serve to organize people according to the different sides of their life.

Their character as mass organizations also results in a great fundamental openness and low threshold of participation, which is in contrast to the high demands on membership in the Communist Party. Every worker must have the opportunity to participate in a mass organization, even if he has little time and strength at his disposal. The principles described below should therefore form the basis of cooperation: Willingness to act for one's own class interests, preservation of the independence/self-sufficiency of the mass organization and solidarity towards the other participants. Examples of mass organizations are the trade unions, but they can also be workers' sports clubs or an association in a residential area in which workers organize mutual help.

Who do we want to organize with our revolutionary mass work?

When we speak of the masses, we mean all those whom we can organize in the class struggle on the side of the working class. So, the masses comprise larger parts of the population than just the working class – for example, parts of the petty bourgeoisie (e.g. small self-employed) and the intelligentsia (e.g. scientists, engineers). But necessarily a large part of the masses consists of workers – and that is why our mass work is directed primarily at the working class itself.

We assume that in Germany the vast majority of wage earners belong to the working class or have very similar living conditions to the working class. Industrial workers, cashiers in supermarkets, caretakers in hospitals, tram drivers or train drivers, part-time workers, the unemployed or temporary workers may have different living, working and fighting conditions, but they share both their relationship to the means of production – they have none – and the (differently pronounced) threat to their social status.

The organisation of brain workers, whose share in industry is increasing, is also an important task. If this task is neglected, the division of the workers in the company increases. This organization of brain workers into offices, etc., does not result automatically from the organization of workers in production, but must be

understood as a task with its own problems and contradictions, which requires its own answers and forms of organization.

The working class is the revolutionary subject – so before there is a stabilized class-oriented workers' movement, the organization of other parts of society (small self-employed, intelligentsia, etc.) cannot be successful either. For the organization of these layers can only take place in connection and alliance with the interests of the working class. It follows that our mass work is aimed at the working class. We basically orient ourselves towards the working class – not exclusively, but fundamentally. This means, for example, that we build up mass work in a district where the majority of workers live. When petty-bourgeois people join in, we do not deny them participation, but the focus is on the interests, circumstances and concerns of the workers and their families. In companies and trade unions we do not focus on engineers or executives, but on workers and ordinary employees, whose situation is almost identical to that of workers.

The organization of youth

We should pay particular attention to young people and address them in the various areas of life – school, culture, sport, but also through other interests. Young people are more open to the ideas of communism and more agile, usually not yet so resigned or ideologically stuck – in other words less fixed overall. The youth will also be particularly involved in the struggles of the near future. We can positively influence the formation and development of the personality. All in all, our wealth of experience is still very small, so we will have to try to organize young people in different ways. However, young people have specific needs: For example, some forms of mutual help may not yet play the same role for young people as for older workers, because they are not confronted to the same extent with the state bureaucracy or are less concerned about it. Young people, on the other hand, can be much more easily organized through culture, sport or mutual tutoring. In our mass work we must therefore always reflect the specific situation of young people. We must also give more concrete thought to mass organizations for pupils and students.

Furthermore, we will deal with the question to what extent the foundation of a Communist Youth Association is necessary in order to prepare the young workers for work in the Communist Party at an early stage.

Comprehensive mass work gets us into the workplaces

From a strategic point of view, our goal is to achieve a presence in the workplaces through all-round organization. We must not look at workplaces and workers in

isolation from other areas of life. For the class struggle and especially in its intensified phase, the workplaces play a special role because there the masses of the workers are concentrated and their collective actions can both effectively harm the class enemy and be big steps in the common experience. On the other hand, this special importance of the workplaces must not lead to an economicist view that underestimates the political character of the class struggle and that focuses on workplace struggles without regard to the situation and the political goal. In many cases, this can hardly lead to much more than trade unionist work.

Companies and trade unions

The DGB unions are today the largest mass organizations of the working class in Germany. They are organizationally independent and democratically structured in principle, even though democracy is often undermined by the social democratic and other bourgeois forces.

However, many ways and methods are used to enforce “social partnership”, cooperation with capital, and thus the interest of capital. They describe themselves as unified trade unions, in which workers of all political directions are to be united, but they are in fact social democratic directional trade unions, in their history communists were regularly excluded. The DGB trade unions are also closely linked to the state and to corporations through alliances and personnel overlaps. Nevertheless, it is essential that we develop options for action within trade unions by using, strengthening and insist on respecting formal democratic structures. This will enable us to attract and activate more members to trade unions and to thwart the implementation of social partnership. Our goal must be to make the unions into truly unified unions based on class struggle and thus an important driving force for the revolution.

As communists, we are simultaneously striving for the politicization of the trade union movement and the workers organized there. The trade unions must not confine themselves to the narrow framework of workplace issues, but must see themselves as a comprehensive organization of the working class for its interests, which must in principle take a class-oriented position on all issues affecting the class. In principle, this politicization takes place no differently than in other forms of mass work. Moreover, it must neither be put off for a long time, e.g. with reference to the lack of consciousness, nor limited to economic questions, nor must it overshoot the mark and lose the workers in the process.

The concept of unified trade unions, however, not only refers to the unity of different ideological and political currents, but also to the dimension of bringing together all workers from the most diverse sectors and branches in a single overall organization. The centralization of the trade unions is thus an important prin-

principle of the trade union movement, because it counteracts the division of the working class into occupations, branches, etc. Syndicalist ideas, which assume that independent trade unions are the right form of organization, must be fought against, because they stand in the way of the unification of the class struggle. We must examine more closely what form of centralization currently prevails in the DGB unions and how and whether centralization can be achieved on the basis of the unified revolutionary class struggle. In addition, we must analyze to what extent the trade unions are organizationally and politically connected with social democratic organizations (especially with the SPD, but also with the Left Party). Undoubtedly, the majority of secretaries and members are under the ideological influence of social democracy.

The same principles of mass work as listed below – activity, independence, solidarity – apply to the struggle in the trade unions. Partly these principles are also part of the statutes of the trade unions, which results from their history. It is important to us that they are also implemented and that we find forms with which our colleagues can implement them.

Mass work and the question of the social alliance

What is the relationship between mass work and the revolutionary strategy of the Communist Party?

The councils represent the historically grown form of the organs of the workers' power and therefore also of the dictatorship of the proletariat. Councils are organizations in which people meet and organize counter-power by collectively deciding, administering and organizing social affairs. In socialism they are decisive structures of the socialist state. The basis of the councils is the social alliance of the various social classes under the leadership of the working class. This alliance, however, must be established beforehand, under capitalist conditions in struggle, by bringing together the various struggles, including different strata. This leads to many open questions: What kind of councils make sense? Which people organize themselves through the councils? How do we get from mass organizations to council structures? What historical experiences have we had with councils?

One task of our class analysis must be to clarify which parts of the working class and the other parts of the people we reach with our mass work and which not yet. How do we bring these different social strata together under the banner of the working class? To what extent can councils be formed before a revolutionary situation? At the present time we can state that we must always consider and develop mass work from the point of view and with the claim of uniting the struggles.

Principles of mass work

We can name three basic principles of mass work, which generally apply to all areas of mass work and serve as the basic orientation of our practice:

- a) Activity
- b) Independence
- c) class solidarity

Activity

The activity and self-activity of the people in the mass organizations is the most important principle and condition for the realization of the other two principles.

Activity must relate to all aspects of organization: On practical-structural questions, on social communication between people, on all political questions and on organizational management. The activity ranges from the cleaning service to the maintenance of the premises, from mutual care and openness, to the ability to talk about all problems, to the discussion of political issues and the management and expansion of structures.

The forms of organization must be developed in such a way that this principle is not only a formal principle, but is real and can be experienced in practice. This can be achieved, for example, through a joint plenary session designed in such a way that workers, in particular, who are often not used to being asked, can express themselves and realize that it matters whether or not they do so.

The basis of mass organizations can only be democracy. Everything must be discussed, thought through and decided from below. At the same time, collectively adopted decisions apply to everyone. The mass organizations should also organize themselves according to the principle of democratic centralism: Free discussion, democratic decision-making and election of possible leaders from the bottom up, but at the same time binding decisions. Of course, this principle does not apply with the same severity and discipline as in a Communist Party.

Democratic structures also mean that we must consciously break with every form of representation that encourages passivity among the working class. This is true in the structures we have developed, where we must above all ensure that as many people as possible take on a task and that we do not do everything ourselves. But it also applies to existing mass organizations in which we are active. In the trade unions, such forms of representation that encourage passivity are particularly widespread and institutionally entrenched. We must recognize this

with particular attention and, wherever possible, push it back by activating and involving our colleagues.

The principle of activity also applies particularly to ourselves: we must be the most industrious in mass work. We must be the first to take on tasks without taking everything from us and doing it ourselves. The motto is to take responsibility without incapacitating ourselves. We make sure that we do not live out our lead without reflection, for example in education. For example, we take a back seat when writing the newspaper, but not when sweeping the common premises. It is not always central that everything should be done quickly and as perfectly as possible, so it is a false temptation to let students professionalize work and thus leave the workers out in the cold.

To be exemplary in questions of activity also means to always be reliable and to complete tasks as well as possible.

Independence

A central characteristic of mass organizations is their autonomy and independence. Independent has two meanings: independent in order to be able to do something – self-activity – and independent in the sense of independence from something else.

Independence in the sense of self-activity means: we do it ourselves, not everything is already there. We gain our own experience in planning, organizing and implementing. As described above, the revolution can only be the work of the working class, self-activity and activity is therefore an important element of mass work, which we have to consider and implement very concretely. As a member of a workers' council, we must avoid colleagues thinking "he'll do it for me". When helping each other, if we have more knowledge than others, we must make sure that we do not fill out all the applications ourselves or sort the papers, because it is quicker, or if we are dealing with a wall newspaper in the company, not to write the articles in the newspaper ourselves, because we are used to it and can write better anyway.

Independent in the sense of independence from the state and all kinds of civic institutions means above all financial and material independence. This is a point that is not easy to communicate in practice, since not all forms in which the class enemy appears (whether as neighborhood management, cultural office, foundation, etc.) are directly recognized as such by the workers and there is not sufficient awareness of why it should be a problem to get money from the city if one can finance the premises with it.

The core issue of independence is financial and in the broad sense material independence. Money, but also premises, technical means and favorable business relations are, however, means to secure the influence of the state on associations, trade unions or other forms of organization. Permanent larger donations from companies or individuals are also a gateway to adaptation to foreign interests. Donations without any conditions can be useful. But three active and conscious workers are worth much more than three generous donors. The orientation must be: We can do it ourselves! Through the participation of many people in the organization, one can achieve great potential in voluntary work and also financial participation.

The principle of independence and autonomy also applies to the Communist Organisation/Party. This is the condition for the openness of the mass organization and at the same time for the vanguard role of the party. In principle, the functions of the organizations are different and therefore they cannot be identical, even if they must have an organic connection and in some respects represent a unity in the struggle. This unity, however, cannot be decreed from above, but must develop organically through the insight of the struggling workers. Decisions must be made collectively and democratically in the mass organizations, with the votes of the participating communists being no more and no less valid than those of all others. We conduct the struggle on the ground as full members of the mass organization by trying to convince other members of our positions. The ideological struggle, which must be conducted everywhere, must take the form of open discussion, address all issues, identify all contradictions. Communists cannot sit back and refer to party congress decisions and thus supposedly have answered questions. Our goal is that the Communist Organization/Party and its program is as widespread as possible, that its goals are hegemonic in the workers movement, that opportunist and reformist forces are pushed back. In mass organizations we lead the ideological struggle as members of the KO/KP, as communists, but not as delegated deputies, but as active and vanguard parts of the mass organization. In concrete terms this also means that we may lose this struggle, that we may lose structures of mass organization built by us when other political forces gain the upper hand in it. It is therefore all the more important that we position ourselves as well as possible and as communists deal systematically with the questions of mass work.

This does not mean, however, that we in the Communist Organization do not reflect on what is done in the mass organizations and what is the role of comrades in the mass organizations. But the decision is made in the mass organization. There we want autonomy and openness of the debate – on the one hand so that as many workers as possible take part in the debate and present their point of view, but also so that we can lead these discussions and are not excluded. We reject the

idea of fiddling around – everything must be named openly and transparently. Nevertheless, the highest discipline for our comrades is that of the Communist Organisation/Party. Only the Communist Party has the ability to see through the circumstances and to have a better overview of the overall situation.

So on the one hand there is a necessary clear organizational separation between the party and mass organizations. On the other hand, they are not hermetically sealed off from each other. We must not think them apart from each other and separate them from each other. It is a mistake to separate the Communist Organization/Communist Party from the workers out of fear or insecurity, to talk to them much later about communist standpoints and thereby prevent the raising of their consciousness.

The principle of financial independence of the mass organizations also applies completely to the Communist Organization or Party. It is fatal when a relationship of dependence develops between the mass organizations and the Communist Party. For this leads to the mass organization being perceived as an appendage of the communists and thus uniting fewer workers in itself. We must therefore take care not to use the financial means of the KO or the party at any time out of pragmatism, e.g. to enable the mass organization to make a purchase that would otherwise not be possible.

The working class must be able to recognize and classify the various political forces and their proposals for solutions. It must become clear who is proposing which path, who is developing which organization and what this means for the goal of the working class. This must be evident in concrete disputes. Because for the working class the difference between the forces that rely on sham solutions and illusions and the Communist Party/Organization must be visible, alliances with other organizations are problematic and a participation must therefore be decided with special responsibility towards the concrete demands of the class struggle and on the basis of a careful analysis of these forces. This means that at the level of mass organizations we must also work towards rejecting alliances with organizations that spread bourgeois and counterrevolutionary influences among the masses.

Solidarity

Solidarity is the (conscious or unconscious) expression that man is a social being and cannot exist without other people. However, we are not interested in just any kind of solidarity, but, since we live in a capitalist class society, in class solidarity. Class solidarity is always based on the understanding that one belongs to a class and has common interests with it. So we strive for the solidarity of all workers, the workers of every nationality, religion, gender and social situation, in order

to overcome the division of the class. The existing division of the class along all imaginable lines of division is one of the most important means of the ruling class to secure its rule. Only by creating opportunities to get to know and trust one another can such prejudices be overcome and an attitude of solidarity be built.

We should avoid two mistakes when dealing with unsolidaristic behavior: Over-emphasized political correctness and exaggerated indignation in the wrong place prevent getting to know each other and build trust, they distract and are thus an expression of false intolerance. On the other hand, too much tolerance, e.g. towards targeted racist agitation, can also become a problem and an expression of opportunistic conflict avoidance. In summary one can say that it is also our task to find such a way of dealing with racism and misogyny within the labor movement, which is enlightening and does not lead directly into sectarianism through simple exclusions. Of course there is also misogyny in the working class, but we do not change this by pushing our class brothers out, but only by struggling against it together.

The Role of the Communists in Mass Work

The Relationship of the Communist Organization/Party to the Mass Organizations

We assume that at the moment there is no organized force in Germany that is pushing the organization of the working class to overthrow the bourgeoisie. So there is no Communist Party that can prove itself in practice as the vanguard of the working class. In order to lead and win the struggle against capitalism, the working class does not only need mass organizations. It also needs the Communist Party, which can lead the class struggle as the bearer of the scientific worldview and organized core of the most advanced people of the working class.

The most important difference between mass organizations and the Communist Organization is that the Communist Organization is the basis for the construction of the Communist party, but the Communist party is the most highly developed form of the working class organization. It has the overall view for the class struggle of the working class, it unites the different demands of the class struggle – economic, political and ideological. It includes the cadres that are most disciplined and trained and can lead the struggle. The revolutionaries who pursue the common political goal are organized in it. It is therefore not a mass organization, even if it may include mass membership, in the sense of many people. Mass organizations in the sense meant here, on the other hand, are organizations that unite workers and want to reach all workers – regardless of their political convictions, as long as they are willing to stand up for their interests with their class brothers.

The Communist Party we want to build is the revolutionary party of the working class. This means that it can best organize and lead the class and, of course,

should consist to a large extent of workers, especially in the leadership. This does not mean, however, that members of other strata cannot be members and cannot play an important role. Our mission is the political struggle of the class and to gather all forces that lead or support it.

The Communist Organization/Party is generally the prerequisite for the existence of independent mass organizations. Without the conscious, political power there are no organizations with which the workers can develop their struggle. Also historically we can see that the essential impulses for the creation of trade unions and other forms of organizing the workers usually came from revolutionary forces. So it is wrong to assume that the right forms will automatically emerge from the development of struggles or that an upswing of struggles must first take place for the communists to be able to take them up and become effective. We can and must already now develop forms of organizing the working class in order to be prepared for all possible social developments, for ups and downs of the struggles. Our goal is the conscious, structured and planned leadership of the struggle of the working class.

So we are not only a silent observing part of the mass work, but we actively and creatively participate in these projects. We observe the workers and discuss with them. We develop assessments of the people around us and promote our organization. The capable and interested will then become supporters, candidates and later members. Many of our future cadres should be recruited and developed from the mass work.

The ways in which we bind people from mass work closer to the KO will be further developed with the development of our mass work. We want the approach of people to our organization to be an organized process rather than a random one. The mass organizations, for example, will stand in social confrontations, in concrete struggles – and in these struggles we as the KO must make proposals for further action. We can also raise the awareness of the workers through training courses for the mass organizations (worker training courses, lectures, discussion evenings etc.) and introduce the most conscious among them to our goals through extra training courses. An important point is the mediation of historical experiences.

We are not perfect cadres and do not appear as such. We are normal people who also talk about their problems, we are people with rough edges who reflect about it and strive to become better. This does not mean that we can let ourselves go and lose sight of the fact that as communists we have to meet certain requirements of the organization. We also criticize and self-criticize within the mass organizations – not as a formal item on the agenda, where everyone says when they

came too late. Criticism and self-criticism means dealing openly and honestly with shortcomings both of the organization and of one's own activity and personality and should be part of all our activities. Honesty, sincerity and authenticity are the keys to success when it comes to getting in touch with the working class. If we pretend, it will be realized by others and hinder the building of trust.

Bringing mass organizations together

We strive for the direct interlocking of the various forms of mass work, but we do not force them artificially. They should grow together organically. It must currently be a growing together over individuals, not over organizations. In a later, developed stage, it will be necessary to develop nationwide associations of our mass work in order to bring the class together as a whole. Each of us and also the people we organize in mass work should represent the principles of activity, independence and solidarity and spread them wherever they have access. We do not create a new scene of like-minded people, we want to grow into all spheres of society. This means that it is quite possible and right for the masses to be active in several mass organizations – e.g. in workers' sports and in the neighborhood meeting, in the trade union and in mutual help. Thus, there will be a lively exchange between the mass organizations by the organized individuals. This exchange can lead to the connection and mutual support of struggles.

Organizing along economic, social and cultural lines is itself a political question. This does not exclude offers like open meetings against war, for solidarity with Palestine or a union for anti-fascist self-protection. This, too, can be mass work, where the principles of democracy and independence should not be suspended. Whether and when such direct offers make sense to political questions is a concrete practical question, which must be answered concretely. On the whole, we must gather further experience in order to be able to better assess the usefulness of such forms of mass work.

Agitation and Propaganda

Agitation and propaganda are closely related and must not be artificially separated. Neither the one nor the other is allowed to get a one-sided overweight. With propaganda we spread the knowledge of scientific socialism, apply it to concrete circumstances and their development and justify the necessity of socialism. Propaganda shows the overall context, it is clear and to the point. Propaganda is relentless, scientific enlightenment about the circumstances. Agitation, on the other hand, tries to mobilize the masses by means of generally known social developments and to show the necessity of socialism only in general, without giving a comprehensive reason for it. Agitation thus relies more on scandalization, on fomenting anger and hatred for the circumstances. Agitation is aimed at broader sections of the working class because certain insights into social conditions are

already required in order to understand communist propaganda. Propaganda is therefore not only directed at intellectuals. Both our agitation and our propaganda are directed at the working class.

Agitation leads to action by organizing and mobilizing the masses with the urgent goal of recognizing and leading the class struggle. The power of agitation lies in the fact that it openly and directly denounces the circumstances and calls a spade a spade. It is based on a systematic study of the experiences of the masses and the background of social conditions.

We also develop agitation as the Communist Organization/Party (not only through the mass organizations, that is) and use for it the collected experiences and our structures of the mass organizations. But we also operate them at any time in everyday life, as individual communists. Agitation also serves us as a school and a touchstone for our ability to get in touch with the class. We sharpen our arguments, learn about the consciousness of the working class and how and at which points it can be won for us. Agitation is never preaching. Agitation is scandalization and activation, daily and in all areas of social life. A successful agitation therefore requires a great closeness to the working class: Only when I know what is happening to the workers in my neighborhood will I be able to successfully discuss the fundamental contradiction of capitalism and the need to overturn these conditions without falling into revolutionary phrases with which one is more likely to lose one's interlocutors.

Organizing the working class for class struggle and socialist revolution is a huge task for all of us. We are only at the very beginning and it may be difficult to imagine where this path will lead us in the years and decades to come. At the same time we know that there is simply no alternative – because capitalism has nothing to offer us and nobody else will get rid of this barbaric system for us. We need everyone for this challenge. Let us rebuild the workers' movement and the Communist Party!

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