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# Statement of Party Activities.

**A document prepared by William Z. Foster and  
unanimously adopted by the CEC of the WPA,  
March 18, 1924.**

A document in Comintern Archive, f. 515, op. 1, d. 292, ll. 1-3.  
Less readable copy in d. 289, ll. 1-3. Original 4 page version in d. 292, ll. 4-7.

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At the present time some controversy exists in the Workers Party relative to the general propositions of education, organization, and Party strategy. This is because the Party has not yet established a clear-cut, well-balanced program for the schooling, building, and functioning of our organization. Various groups lay greater or lesser stress upon one or another of the several activities necessary to the development and life of our Party, some overstressing education, others attaching too much importance to bare organization, and still others devoting themselves almost entirely to actions and maneuvers of the Party, to the neglect of education and organization. The consequence is much confusion, wasted effort, and one-sided development. Only by a clarification and unification of the membership's conception of the questions can this intolerable condition be remedied. Hence the C.E. [Central Executive Committee] feels the necessity for the following statement upon the general proposition of Party activities.

In the development and utilization of the Workers Party in the class struggle, it must be constantly borne in mind that it is a Communist party. This means that it must be thoroughly educated, firmly organized, and possessed of a militant strategy. It must be a revolutionary fighting [organization], the membership of which understands not only the ultimate goal of communism but also

the everyday program of the movement; it must be a compact, centralized, disciplined, mass body; and it must take a leading part in all the political and industrial struggles of the workers. The building of such a well-rounded, balanced Party must be our aim. Only a Party which carries on simultaneously the necessary work of education and organization, and which is animated by a militant strategy, can be in fact, as well as in theory, the vanguard of the proletariat.

## **Education.**

Educational work is one of the basic features of the general activities of the Workers Party. This must reach not only the circle of sympathetic workers about the Party, but especially the members of the Party. In addition to the fundamentals of Marxian theory, this educational work should include an intensive instruction regarding the practical policies and everyday life of the Party. Thus the stream of new members constantly entering the Party will be assimilated and equipped for active party life. The Party must lay greater and greater stress upon its educational program, systematizing it and institutionalizing it as it develops. But this does not mean that the Party shall be allowed to become merely an educational body, as some in our ranks think it should. Such a course would condemn it to a sectarianism like that of the Socialist Labor Party and the Proletarian Party, and would eliminate it as a vital factor in the class

struggle. Our Party must first of all be a fighting organization and its educational program must be calculated upon the principles of bringing forth the Party's greatest virility and fighting strength. When thus connected and coordinated with the everyday struggles of the working class, the Party's educational work will be lifted above the academic atmosphere and made a dynamic factor, at once reinforcing the Party in the class struggle and being itself vitalized and stimulated by the Party experiences in the battles of the workers.

As things now stand, the educational work of the Workers Party, both for the masses in general and for the members in particular, is still in a primitive state of development. It is the intention of the CEC to remedy this condition as rapidly as possible, and to develop an effective campaign of educational work. A lead idea in this campaign will be to establish systematic routine that will constantly bring the educational work before the Party committees for attention and action. Within the CEC itself an educational committee is being established to coordinate and stimulate this phase of Party work everywhere. It will put into effect the educational program, published in *The Worker* of November 3rd, 1923, as rapidly as resources will permit. That program is, briefly, to provide definitely in the Party budget for the educational work which shall be developed along the following lines: [1.] Selection of a national Educational Director; [2.] founding of "Lenin College," a central school for Party workers; [3.] establishment of classes in various cities, organized in circuits and covered by professional teachers; [4.] extensive tours for lecturers on theoretical subjects; [5.] publication of popular theoretical pamphlets and books; [6.] periodic discussions at branch meetings of current events and decisions of the CEC on Party policy. The beginnings so far made, in the establishment of a circuit of study classes in Dist. 8 [Chicago] and Dist. 1 [Boston], a Party school in New York, the projected publication of the "Lenin Library" of 10 volumes, all a part of

the national educational system, will be supported and extended until every member of the Party and every sympathizer has full and complete opportunity for sound education in every phase of the international communist movement. The youth movement shall be utilized more and more in this same field.

### **Organization.**

The Party organization must be gradually and systematically transformed from its present territorial basis to that of shop and factory units. Special articles, communications from the CI, and plans for this reorganization work will be published in the near future.

In the meantime, all educational and political activity must be closely followed by organization. The Party must absorb and make use of all the workers brought into sympathetic contact with the Party through education or common participation in the struggle. Organization is a question of life and death to a communist movement; our activities of every sort must receive special organizational attention, they cannot be allowed to drift along in a vague and uncrystallized form. The Party is the organizational center for the entire movement, and must therefore have first organizational attention. Many thousands of workers are ideologically prepared now for membership in the Workers Party, and it is a major task for us to reach them and bring them into the organization. From the Workers Party as the center must radiate a complete network of auxiliary organizations, crystallizing all communist activity and permeating the masses in all fields of struggle. In every case where communists are active, organization and the party must follow closely behind, the object of constant and energetic attention.

Our campaigns for amalgamation, the Labor Party, and other issues of immediate appeal to the workers, must be followed up closely by the organizing machinery of the Party so that the

elements made sympathetic to us shall be absorbed into the Party. Every action supported by non-party elements must be made the basis for an appeal to them to join the Workers Party as the instrument that made effective action possible. Every party unit must have a permanent committee on recruiting new members. Party members must be systematically instructed in organizational methods and plans for work within trade unions, fraternal societies, etc. Only when system and order, with definite and authoritative organizational forms, follow all communist activity, will the full result of our work be obtained.

On the other hand it must be pointed out that just as a one-sided emphasis upon education at the expense of other sides of Party activities produces sectarianism, so does undue stress placed upon organization (the tendency to organizational fetishism) produce sterility and political bank-

ruptcy. Organization alone is futile. Thus the Socialist Party once had 100,000 members, quite an organizational showing, but because it had [neither] solid educational basis nor possessed of a sound and militant strategy in the class struggle, its organization melted away overnight. The problem of organization for a Communist Party is the problem of keeping pace at all times with Party education and Party strategy, without allowing organizational work to become an end in itself.

It is the intention of the Central Executive Committee to intensively develop organizational methods and activities, to constantly survey and appraise the working of each unit of our organization, to stimulate lagging sections, to correct errors and abuses, and to draw the movement more tightly together everywhere. This it also lays down as the basic organizational duty of every Party committee.

***Edited by Tim Davenport.***

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