

CONSTITUTION

of the

COMMUNIST PARTY OF BRITAIN

(MARXIST - LENINIST)

Adopted at First Congress
April 12th/14th 1968-London
and as amended at the Second
Congress April 9th/12th 1971
LONDON.

PREAMBLE

The Communist Party of Britain (Marxist-Leninist) is the political party of the proletariat.

The basic programme of the Party is the complete overthrow of capitalist class power and its replacement by the dictatorship of the proletariat for the building of socialism.

The ultimate aim of the Party is the realisation of Communism.

ARTICLE ONE

Name The name of the Party shall be the Communist Party of Britain (Marxist-Leninist).

ARTICLE TWO

1. Flag The flag of the Party shall be a red flag of which the length shall be one-and-a-half times its width. At the centre of the flag there shall be an emblem of a clenched fist in a five-pointed star.
2. Anthem The anthem will be the Communist Internationale.

ARTICLE THREE

Membership

1. Any person living in Britain who accepts the Programme and the Constitution of the Party, agrees to work in one of the Party Organisations, to pay regularly the Party Membership dues and to carry out decisions of the Party shall be eligible for membership.
2. New members are admitted to the Party on individual application and through a Party branch on the recommendation of two Party members.
3. The General Body meeting of the Party Branch shall decide on the question of admission, subject to approval by the next higher committee, and, if the applicant is admitted to the Party, he or she shall be regarded as a Candidate Member for a period of six months commencing from the date of such admission.
4. Candidate Members have the same duties and rights as full members except that they have no right to elect or to be elected.
5. By the end of the period of candidature, the Party branch concerned shall discuss whether the Candidate member is qualified to be admitted to Full Membership or is to be given an extended period of candidature. If a candidate member is found unfit, the Party branch may cancel his or her Candidate Membership with the approval of the Central Committee.

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Article three cont/

6. A Party Member may transfer his or her membership from one unit to another with the approval of the unit from which transfer is sought. (2)

ARTICLE FOUR

MEMBERSHIP DUES All Party members, Full as well as Candidate, shall pay a Party membership due and such other dues as may be determined by the Central Committee.

ARTICLE FIVE

Duties of Party members are as follows:-

- (a) To regularly participate in the activity of the Party Organisation to which he or she belongs and to faithfully make and implement the policy, decisions and directives of the Party.
- (b) To observe the Party Constitution and Party discipline and behave in the spirit of proletarian internationalism and in accordance with the ideals of Communism.
- (c) To place the interests of the people and the Party above personal interests.
- (d) To cultivate comradely relations towards one another and constantly develop a fraternal spirit within the Party.
- (e) To practise criticism and self-criticism with a view to helping each other and improving individual and collective work.
- (f) To defend the Party and uphold its course against all enemies of the Party and to uphold the working class.
- (g) To be frank, honest and truthfull to the Party and not to betray the confidence of the Party.
- (h) To study and practise the ideology of Marxism-Leninism.

ARTICLE SIX

Rights of the Party members are as follows:-

- (a) To elect Party organs and Party Committees and be elected to them.
- (b) To make criticism about Party Committees and Party functionaries at Party meetings.
- (c) When any Party member disagrees with any decision of a Party Committee or organisation, he or she has a right to submit his or her opinion to the next Committee of authority and control, including and up to the Central Committee and the Party Congress. In all such cases decisions and the differences shall be sought to be resolved through the test of practice and through comradely discussions.

- (d) To address any statement, appeal or complaint to the next Committee of authority and control up to and including the Central Committee and the Party Congress. (3)

ARTICLE SEVEN

Principles of Democratic Centralism. The structure of the Party is based on, and its internal life is guided by, the principles of democratic centralism. Democratic centralism means central leadership based on full inner-Party democracy under the guidance of the central leadership.

In the sphere of the Party structure, the guiding principles of democratic centralism are:-

- (a) All Party organs shall be elected.
- (b) The minority shall carry out the decisions of the majority, the lower Party organisation shall carry out the decisions and directives of the higher Party organs; the individual shall subordinate himself to the will of the majority.
- (c) All Party Committees, particularly the leading Party Committees, shall pay constant heed to the opinions and criticisms of the lower Party organisation and the rank-and-file Party Members.
- (d) All Party Committees shall function strictly on the principles of collective decisions and check that decisions be carried out, combined with individual responsibility.
- (e) All questions of international affairs and questions requiring decisions for the whole country shall be decided by the Central leadership between Congresses. All other Committees can, and should, send their opinions and suggestions in time for consideration by the Central leadership. The Central Committee shall, in seeking the fullest democracy and expression, convene where necessary regional and national conferences in between Congresses in order to consult and be advised on any major political question.

ARTICLE EIGHT

Party Congress

1. The supreme organ of the Party for the whole country shall be the National Party Congress.
 - (a) The regular Party Congress shall be convened by the Central Committee ordinarily once every three years; and to convene Extraordinary Party Congress if demanded by the majority of the total Party Members; or by their own decision as Central Committee.
 - (b) The date and venue of the Party Congress shall be decided by the Central Committee at a meeting especially called for the purpose.

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Article eight cont/

- (c) Party Congress shall be composed of delegates elected by Party units directly under Central leadership. (4)
- (d) The basis of representation at a Party Congress shall be decided by the Central Committee.
- (e) The members of the Central Committee shall have the right to participate as full delegates in the Party Congress.
2. Function and Powers of the Party Congress are as follows:-
- (a) To discuss and act on the political and organisational report of the Central Committee.
- (b) To create, revise and change the Party Programme and the Party Constitution.
- (c) To determine the tactical line and the policy of the Party on the current situation.
- (d) To elect the Central Committee.
- (e) To elect the Chairman of the Party.

ARTICLE NINE

Central Committee

1. (a) The Central Committee shall be elected at the Party Congress, the number of members being decided by the Party Congress.
- (b) Members of the outgoing Central Committee are eligible for re-election. The outgoing Central Committee may make recommendation on all nominations.
- (c) Any delegate can raise objection with regard to any name proposed as well as propose any new name or names.
- (d) The election of the Central Committee will be by vote of the delegates of the Congress.
2. The Central Committee shall be the highest authority of the Party between Party Congresses.
3. It is responsible for enforcing the Party Constitution and for carrying out the political line and decisions adopted by the Party Congress.
4. The Central Committee shall represent the Party as a whole and be responsible for directing the work of the Party.
5. The Central Committee shall elect from among its members a Secretariat. The number of Secretariat shall be decided by the Central Committee. The Chairman of the Party will be ex officio Chairman of the Central Committee and the Secretariat. The Secretariat carries on the work of the Central Committee between meetings.

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Article Nine Cont/

6. The Central Committee shall discuss and decide (5) political and organisational issues and the problems of mass work, and guide the Party units, and individuals, in all spheres of our work. At the same time, the Central Committee has the responsibility of maintaining the closest relationship at all times with Party units and individuals, of being alive to their problems and receptive to their suggestions and recommendations. This relationship between Central Committee and Party units and individuals must be a two-way process, from the Party membership to the Party membership.
7. The Central Committee shall submit its political and organisational report to all Party units in ample time for full discussion before the Party Congress, whenever it is convened.

ARTICLE TEN

Primary Units and Other Party Organs

1. (a) The primary unit of the Party is the Party Branch organised on the basis of place of work or residence.
(b) The number of members in a branch, the structure and functions and other matters relating to a branch will be determined by the Central Committee.
2. (c) The Central Committee shall decide on the various Party organs to be set up between the Primary Unit (the branch) and the Central organisation, and shall make the necessary provisions relating to their composition and functioning.

ARTICLE ELEVEN

Party Discipline

1. Violation of Party Constitution and decisions of the Party as well as any other action and behaviour unworthy of a member of the Communist Party shall constitute a breach of Party discipline and is liable to disciplinary action.
2. Such disciplinary action may be any or all of the following:-
 - (a) Warning.
 - (b) Censure.
 - (c) Removal from the post held in the Party.
 - (d) Suspension from full Party membership for any period but not exceeding one year.
 - (e) Expulsion.

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3. Disciplinary action shall normally be taken by Party units where the member belongs where other methods, including method of persuasion, have failed to correct the comrade concerned. But, even where disciplinary measures have been taken, the effects to help the comrade to correct himself shall continue. In a case where the breach of discipline is such that it warrants an immediate disciplinary measure to protect the interest of the Party or its prestige, the disciplinary action shall be taken promptly.
4. No disciplinary measure involving expulsion or suspension of a Party member shall come into effect without confirmation by the next higher committee.
5. The comrade against whom a disciplinary measure is proposed shall be fully informed of the allegation, charges and other relevant facts against the member. The member shall have the right to be heard in person by the Party unit in which such cases are discussed.
6. There shall be right of appeal in all cases of disciplinary action to the Central Committee. There shall also be the right of appeal to the next Party Congress.

ARTICLE TWELVE

AMENDMENT

The Party Constitution shall be amended only by Party Congress. The notice of proposals for amending the Constitution shall be given before the said Party Congress.

Dear Comrade,

You have applied and have been admitted as a Candidate Member to our Party.

We treat your application with the seriousness that it deserves, that is to say, it is the duty of our Party, the leadership in all levels, to assist, cherish and support you in the work you undertake for our Party for the working class.

It is imperative that you should know that in your application for membership we accept that however much you may have to learn more of Marxism/Leninism, nevertheless you have taken the most serious step in all your political life, that you do accept that it is a for all time act; henceforth you shall endeavour to become a Communist and a better and better one, that this involves you in all the hours of your working life, that you will swiftly come to learn - What is a Communist Party? - First of course, that you do agree and accept the Constitution of the Party, the Party line as formulated at the Second Congress and to strive whole-heartedly for its application, that you undertake and will seriously study the syllabus of Party education and that you will do this in the practical way, practice theory practice and relate it to your own work and try as best your ability to apply it in your work, that in joining the Party you accept you assist in the making of Party policy, that you must contribute actively in this connection, that you will speak and express yourself on matters under debate, that you will not sit in silence, in doing so and working out your own clarification you assist everyone else.

It takes courage to be a Communist, one must have confidence and true confidence is only possible with true modesty. Always to remember that "we learn only through doing", that the greatest error is of omission, much more serious than an error of commission and that you are called upon in working as a Communist to stand up and be counted, that you shall learn to work a correct way without rash acts or rashness itself, that you attend a Branch meeting regularly, read and sell The Worker, that you pay your dues, you keep up-to-date and study all Party documents, remembering to learn from your own experience and to pass it on to other Comrades, that you work with those nearest with you, especially at your place of work, that you study carefully a style of work that within the Party Comrades must have an affection one for another and love the whole Party, that in being

part of the working class and in assisting them and in seeking leadership, we do this too with a great respect for that class with a humility, not by brow-beating or bullying; neither our working class or our Comrades in our Party will tolerate this.

If at this time and on other occasions according to events you should be alone for a little while, there is no need to be despairing, only that with the strength of the Party will you be able to change this, that your strength is the line of our Party, the Party itself, the paper, and above all the working class and we build from where we are.

Comradely greetings to you,
We are joined together,
Let us ever assist each other.