

WORKER DISTRIBUTION CONFERENCE

Party Centre, 155 Fortess Road, N.W.5. - Sunday, 18th October, 1970.

The Conference was attended by representatives of Central, West, South London (Croydon), East London, South East London, Sussex and Cambridge Branches and there were written submissions from Liverpool and Bristol.

The Conference was primarily concerned with distribution and sales of the Party paper and content was dealt with only in so far as it directly affected circulation. Discussion took place around the following subjects :-

1. Distribution of the paper as a political task.
2. Using the paper as the Party's voice in political work at points of production or community activity.
3. Present list of subscribers and numbers of copies distributed by each branch.
4. Methods of selling and distributing based on experiences of various branches.
5. Financial report.
6. Other questions relating to distribution such as size and frequency of publication of the paper, experiments in other methods of production and raising money for a press fund.

The following conclusions were drawn from the day's discussion :-

1. The necessity of continuity in all/forms of sales, whether at places of work, factory gates, street corners, door-to-door or wherever. The intention must be to establish a regular readership and this requires regularity both in respect to time and place on the part of our sellers.
2. It is essential to follow up all contacts made in the courses of distributing the paper. Those who seem interested in our line should be noted down, if possible, so that they can be invited to public meetings, film shows, etc. Some may be found who are sympathetic enough to be prepared to take papers to sell themselves. Get in the habit of keeping lists of all who can be considered as friendly to our Party.
3. People find it easier to sell a paper they believe in. The more they are involved in the content and production of THE WORKER the more they will feel that it is their Marxist-Leninist journal to be offered with conviction. Thus the maximum participation by all Party members in the work of preparing and bringing out the paper, which is correct on political lines, will also assist comrades in having the right attitude toward its sale. All comments about the paper's contents and appearance picked up in the course of distributing it should be passed to the WORKER Committee - as well, of course, any suggestions from comrades themselves about how the paper can be made a more "saleable" expression of our political line.
4. It is mainly in areas of struggle where people are being forced by circumstances to think politically that we would expect and hope to find readers interested in THE WORKER. Mass meetings, picket lines or any other assemblies of workers in struggles are the first priority in terms of our "market".

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Whenever THE WORKER has dealt with a particular conflict on the industrial front, it is essential to see to it that copies of that issue reach those who have been or still are engaged in struggle. Those involved in such struggles must know of our solidarity with them and only they can help us analyse and learn the lessons of their battles to pass on to others.

What is said of struggle on the industrial front is also true of protests, demonstrations and agitation on the anti-imperialist front or around local issues in the community. Where people are in ferment and movement there we must be with our paper.

To meet this need of making sure that WORKERS are available where they are most wanted and will do the best job of Party building, it is suggested that there should be two co-ordinators, one from the Industrial Branch and a student representative from one of the London Branches, who would be responsible for seeing that all meetings in either of these two struggle areas are covered by WORKER sellers. A list of volunteers relatively free to undertake assignments to cover, even at fairly short notice, events such as described should be in the hands of the two co-ordinators.

5. In order to help those concerned with finance and distribution of the paper would all branches regularly each month report the number of papers actually sold as well as the number received and paid for - so that a true picture of the situation can be built up.
6. Branches outside the London area are reminded that they should have a WORKER representative responsible for sending in news items on events in their area of interest to our Party and the readers of the paper. They are also encouraged, of course, to send in any contributions from their branch members which are thought suitable for publication. They should also be prepared to undertake any journalistic assignment suggested by the WORKER Committee. Some branches have appointed such representatives but we have had very little from them. Others have yet to make such an appointment. Please inform the Committee of arrangements made.
7. All are reminded that sets of back issues are available for £1. Many people interested in our Party as well as members will want to have a set of papers covering the whole period from its beginning two years ago.
8. There is now a proper office for the WORKER at Party premises. This makes it possible to start files of photographs, newspaper clippings, journals of other M.L. parties and all other material which help to improve our own paper. Send in any material which you think may be useful. The whole work of laying out the paper and planning further issues is much more closely integrated now at the Centre and this should help to promote the kind of participation mentioned above.

The WORKER is your paper as a Marxist-Leninist fighter. It should be your staunchest weapon in struggle. Hold make sure that it is and USE IT!

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