

the *Irish People* and in some cases to contribute articles and stories for publication. Frequent discussion should take place in the branches on the content and sales and distribution problems of the paper. Some thought might be given also to local *Irish People* readers meeting as part of a local promotion of the party paper.

Other party publications should be discussed, particularly *Report* which is produced to facilitate political education.

Party Campaigns

Party activity is the key to party expansion and growth. Participation in campaigns should be properly planned and constantly evaluated to achieve maximum effect. At local level every effort must be made to relate the National policies of the party to the local circumstances. This is particularly important in respect of such issues as employment, social policy, local health and education services, and local authority services. Particular attention must now be paid to the Draft Development Plans for the City and County and the vital role that local committees can play in influencing these plans.

Each constituency must take steps to participate in the National Recruitment Campaign. Recruitment must be linked to on-going party activity and the impetus of the Recruitment Campaign used to boost other local activity.

The Workers' Party Dublin Regional Council

Regional Party Development Proposals

Introduction

The Greater Dublin area has a population of over 1 million representing approximately one third of the population of the State. It has the greatest concentration of PAYE workers, unemployed, students and working class families on the island and inevitably has the greatest potential for the development of the Workers' Party. Already we have three Dáil Deputies elected in the Region, six City Councillors and three County Councillors (with one County Councillor being a member of Dun Laoghaire Borough Council). In the recent Dáil elections we secured 36,828 votes, or 7.5% of the total valid poll.

More importantly, we have developed some party organisation in all but one of the Dáil Constituencies (although steps are being taken to develop a party presence in that area). That organisation has slowly but surely made the presence of our Party felt in virtually all working class communities and made the politics of our party known in virtually all institutions and people's organisations. The quality of our public representatives (both elected and non-elected) has generally ensured that the views and analysis of our party are considered seriously now by more people than ever before. The consistency of our political activity has won grudging respect from more and more people in the Region and objective commentators are increasingly forced to acknowledge this. Our opponents increasingly resort to more and more underhand measures in an effort to restrict the influence of our Party and politics.

Our task now must be that of ensuring the rapid growth of our party in the Dublin Region, the development of the political consciousness of our

members, supporters and the working class in the Region. It should not be unthinkable that the Workers' Party would emerge as the single most effective and politically influential party in the Dublin Region. Any obstacle to that development must be either overcome or removed by us as quickly as possible. There is no serious reason why our Dublin membership could not be doubled in the next twelve months and why the number of branches would not increase by fifty per cent. The electoral support for the party must now be translated into political support and that political support organised into a more consistently effective political force for Socialist politics.

In conjunction with the party centre, the Dublin Regional Council is taking specific measures to improve its own procedures, structures and organisation and now wants the support of every member, branch and constituency for the process of reorganisation. We are determined that such a task be undertaken now, when our class is under consistent attack and when the party has the capacity for providing serious political leadership and direction in the 'fight back' on behalf of our class.

We require all members, branches and constituencies to use these draft development proposals as a basis for serious analysis and discussion. It is intended as a stimulus for planning, organisation and development. The proposals form part of the overall development plans of the party and represent the thinking of the Dublin Regional Executive on how the party's work can be revitalised in our area. It is hoped that the ideas in this document will be fully considered and steps taken to implement as many of them as possible. The very least expected is a plan for future development and a disciplined approach to party work.

Party Organisation

If the party organisation is to grow and develop with the capacity for becoming the dominant political force in this country, greater attention must be paid now to the quality of that organisation. Its efficiency must be improved considerably and its effectiveness constantly monitored to ensure that it is responding properly to the current needs of our members and our class.

Each element of our organisation must develop a more dynamic approach to its work tasks and be capable of applying our revolutionary political principles to new situations, developing new tactics for new struggles and demonstrating constantly an ability to combine political analysis with political work. No part of our organisation can be fully effective if it does not constantly review activity, draw conclusions from the practical experience of political campaigns or elections, and identify accurately our weaknesses and strengths.

Such reviews must now be carried out in a comradely and constructive

way and be divorced from the destructive tendencies of personality politics. The morale of our organisation depends on co-operation and collective intelligence.

The Party Branch

The party branch is the fundamental element of our organisation. It is the basic work unit of the party but it must also be developed as the basic growth centre and educational core of the party. A proper balance must now be achieved between political work and political development. The neglect of either element undermines the effectiveness of the branch and ultimately retards the growth of the party.

The work of the branch must be properly planned to ensure that no single activity dominates. Regular meetings must be held and be conducted in accordance with a properly structured agenda or workplan. If administrative matters such as minutes, correspondence or finance tend to dominate the agenda, a conscious decision must be made to ensure the dominance of politics, of political work, political ideas and political activity. Each chairperson must plan the party branch meeting in advance and provide leadership and advice to party members as required. Discussion and debate should be encouraged and positive measures taken to achieve participation by all branch members. Meetings must start and finish on time and be held at the most convenient time and place to facilitate all members. Particular attention should be paid to the needs of women, parents of small children, shift workers or others with special family responsibilities. A determined effort should be made to avoid boredom and time-wasting. Meetings should always concern themselves with events and activities in the community or workplace and not be confined simply to internal party affairs. A typical agenda should provide for:

- (a) Minutes
- (b) Matters arising therefrom.
- (c) Correspondence and reports, e.g. from constituency, region or Head Office.
- (d) Finance and fundraising.
- (e) Education.
- (f) *Irish People* and party publications.
- (g) Local campaigns and/or national campaigns.
- (h) Political matters of topical interest.
- (i) Any other business.

N.B. On occasions the order of the agenda can be changed to ensure that the top four items do not dominate each branch meeting.

Branch Officers

To be fully effective all branch officerships must be filled and all work functions undertaken as efficiently as possible. Where we lack particular skills or particular talents, attention must be paid to the educational and training needs of the branch and these should be discussed with the Constituency or Regional Council officers. Each branch requires a Chairperson, Secretary, Treasurer, and also a PRO and Education Officer. Every branch member should be given a specific priority task and every effort be made to facilitate people in their choice of that priority work. While some tasks must be shared by all members, we must learn to make the most effective use of our personnel and in that way achieve the greatest work satisfaction and enthusiasm possible among members. That means discussing work functions more openly and more imaginatively with members to match their work to their ability and availability.

Good members should not be lost because of an unduly rigid interpretation of party work in the local branch. This issue of work sharing and distribution of party work should be discussed openly in branches and a serious effort made to match work to the personnel available.

Constituency Councils

The Constituency Council is a very important element in the overall party organisation and must be structured and streamlined to function properly. Each branch in the constituency must be represented on the Constituency Council and meetings arranged regularly to co-ordinate the activities of the party in the constituency.

All posts must be filled,¹ and direct liaison established between officers and their counterparts in the Dublin Region. Each Constituency Council must now prepare a development plan² based upon a proper analysis of organisation, support, potential support, membership, branches and potential branches. Attention must also be given to party supporters and their relationship with the local organisation, assistance can be provided by the Regional Secretary and Regional delegates to the CEC. When drawing up an education programme for the year, arrangements should be made to include public meetings and social events (linked if possible) to involve the greatest spread of local support. Constituency education should cater for (a) new members, (b) policy development for existing members, (c) public education on current topics for members, supporters and the general public. Each Constituency Council should now propose experienced members with 'positions of responsibility' to train as educators and to work in conjunction with the Regional Education officer.

1. See appendix I

2. See appendix II

Each Constituency Council should identify the areas where new branches are required and take the necessary steps to establish 'probationary' branches, (i.e. establish a small work party with the responsibility for developing the party presence in that area of the constituency). This can be discussed with the Regional officers and assistance can be given in developing activity in such areas. Where party representatives are elected in any area, they must work in close co-operation with the Constituency Council and as far as possible attend all Constituency Council meetings.

Workers' Party Youth

A Workers' Party Youth group should be established in each constituency, however small, and positive steps must now be taken to organise some youth activity. Again the Regional Youth Officer will provide assistance as required and will undertake a programme of work in co-operation with the local youth group.

Where no youth group exists at present an immediate meeting of young members and supporters or relatives of members and supporters must be convened urgently. The activity of the youth group can be designed to facilitate the needs of the particular local group but the contact with young people in the constituency cannot be ignored any longer.

Women Officers

Regular meetings of branch and constituency women officers will be held on a Regional basis so that support and advice will be made available to all concerned. It is also recommended that each constituency hold at least one meeting in the year dealing with party policy on women, and the involvement of women in the party organisation. The Regional officer will co-operate with constituencies when arranging such meetings and the Regional organisation will provide any assistance required in support of such activity.

Constituencies are also asked to organise daytime meetings of members and supporters in homes where local women could meet the local Workers' Party TD, Councillor or other Party rep. The objective of such meetings would be to increase the party's contact with women who are generally denied direct access to the centres of political activity and decision making. The Regional Executive will be organising a Regional Seminar on women and politics but local activity is the key to our long-term development. Constituencies are also asked now to consider establishing a local women's group to cater for the special concerns of women members and supporters and to advise the Constituency Council.

Party Finance and Administration

Measures must be taken to place party finance on a proper footing. This requires a systematic approach to branch, constituency and regional finances. We have already initiated a consultative process to establish consistency in our book-keeping methods but also we require streamlining of procedures for registration of branches, stamping of cards and re-registration of members.

Within the first two weeks of May branch secretaries must (1) ensure that all party cards are fully stamped-up to the end of the lapsed year; (2) collect and forward to the Regional Office all cards with £1 re-registration fee. In the event of Party cards being lost, the standard registration form should be filled in accompanied by a letter from your constituency treasurer stating that the required number of stamps have been purchased during the year. New cards will be returned to branch secretaries within two weeks. Branch secretaries who have not registered their members yet should collect and forward fully stamped up cards immediately.

Steps are also being taken now to ensure that the Council's levy is being paid regularly. The Regional Executive are also taking measures to secure additional fund-raising activity; i.e. it is our intention to avoid duplication of such activity or to clash with constituency or branch fund-raising. Over the past number of years the party has increased and expanded resulting in different sections of the party dealing with branches and constituencies in different ways. In the area of finance, new treasurers and finance officers have not fully recognised that there are separate accounting systems for separate sections of the party, and this has led to confusion regarding who is being paid for what.

To overcome some of the misunderstandings about who pays who and for what particular reason, we set out below the position regarding levies passed by the EMC and Regional Council. We also include the position regarding printing bills and *Irish People* bills.

1. All bills for *Irish People* whether by cheque or standing order should be made out to Repsol Printers, 30 Gardiner Place, Dublin.
2. Bills relating to elections and referenda should be made out to The Workers' Party.
3. Other bills, relating to leaflets throughout the year, including national collection leaflets, should be made out to The Workers' Party.
4. All constituencies are required by the CEC to pay a yearly levy, the amount being determined by the National Finance Committee. This levy should be paid immediately after the national collection.
5. All branches are required to pay an affiliation fee of £50 (£20 in the case of new or student branches). This should be paid immediately after the branch AGMs. Cheques to The Workers' Party.

6. To support, build and expand the party in the Dublin area, branches are required to pay £10 per month levy to the Dublin Office. The Regional Executive will discuss any difficulties facing new branches arising from this decision with the branches involved. Payment should be made by standing order to The Workers' Party, Dublin Office Fund, Trustee Savings Bank, Lower Abbey Street, Dublin 1, Account No. 21265881.
7. Bills for *Report* should be made out to The Workers' Party Dublin Office.
8. Stamps for Party Cards can be purchased from either the Dublin Treasurer or Dublin Secretary and should be purchased and distributed by the Constituency Treasurer. Payment should be made to the Workers' Party Dublin Office. *All cheques should be crossed and should be accompanied by a brief note outlining who and what payment is for. Such payments will be receipted as soon as possible by the relevant officer of the Party.*

Recruitment

The party will be conducting a major recruitment drive in the near future and all branches and constituencies will be expected to participate. However, apart from the actual recruitment activity there is need for facilitating the integration of new members and supporters into party activity. That is best achieved on a one to one basis. Individual members of the party should undertake to assist new members from their initial contact with the party until they are integrated fully into the party. (If each member recruited and took responsibility to recruit one new member, that would double the membership.)

When the national recruitment campaign is launched each constituency should undertake public activity to increase local public awareness of the party. A visit to all lapsed members in the constituency might also prove worthwhile to find out why some members have dropped out of activity. Particular people should be canvassed such as local community activists, local shop stewards, youth leaders, women's rights campaigners, or members of people's organisations such as ACRA, NATO, CND, the Anti-Apartheid Movement, DAG or other single issue campaigning organisations.

The Irish People

The party paper has an important role to play in expanding the influence and impact of the party in all areas. It is our intention to expand and develop the paper and to adapt it to the needs of a growing party. An effort should now be made to secure both commercial outlets and new centres for sales promotion. People should be canvassed to take out annual subscriptions to

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