



Building
Workers' Party Youth
A LEADERS HANDBOOK:

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A LEADERS' HANDBOOK

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Introduction

The purpose of this pamphlet is to give youth officers, leaders of youth-groups and youth members in general, some ideas and practical information on setting up and running a youth-group. The task of building a progressive youth movement, involving working class youth, is one which is vital to the future of our Party, our class and socialism in Ireland. We long ago recognised that young people have their own interests, needs and levels of commitment, and that therefore we need a youth movement to cater for them.

However, merely recognising this is not enough. We must, from the start, have a coherent vision of the type of movement we are trying to build; its method of work and its aims and objectives. The first thing to state is that our youth movement must not simply be a junior version of the Party, a carbon copy. We need a movement with its own distinctive style of work, geared to the needs of young people, and with its own methods of attracting and organising young people. A youth movement that will complement, not imitate, the work of the Party.

The ideology of Capitalism, of the ruling class is the dominant one in our society. Its values and ideas are spread throughout the educational system, and a myriad of other agencies and organisations legitimise its position in society.

It is not surprising therefore that most young people from working class areas leave school with no real understanding of the world around them. They have not got the conceptual tools to even start asking the right questions about the world, never mind come up with the right answers.

The young working class, unlike their upper class counterparts, are not groomed in school, or led to see themselves as holding positions of power and responsibility in society. Therefore the major part of our work must be educational. We must aim to get young people to start questioning things and to become conscious of their class. If we can even do this much we will have made huge progress.

Every serious revolutionary movement must start at the actual level of consciousness and understanding of people. So it is pointless to lecture young people with solutions we have worked out to problems they may not even recognise as such, but may see as a

sort of pre-ordained destiny, completely outside of their control. We must start from the premise that young people by and large have no interest in politics.

They are alienated not just from the established political process and parties, but from any form of political activity to advance their own and their class position in society. They also have many needs that our youth movement must cater for; needs that cannot be catered for through conventional political activity.

Hopefully it is clear from these brief comments that our movement should be primarily educational, with agitation taking second place. We must seek to develop a range of activities and a style of work that will build young working class people's confidence in themselves, get them to participate in organising things, give them the tools to assess and analyse their society and world.

The best term to describe the sort of youth-groups we should aim for is 'political youth clubs'. A type of youth organisation that, unlike the traditional youth club, takes the development of young people that one logical step further, into politics, into gaining control over their own lives. Youth-groups that deal not just with the concerns of the individual, but also the collective, and see the solution to the problems young people face in terms of collective action.

The process of politicisation of young people will be a long one; in the present circumstances it can be no other way. But if we can instil an ability to think for themselves, and a confidence in themselves in working-class youth, they will reach the conclusion by themselves about the need for radical change in society.

The aim of socialists has always been to build a society where we can guarantee the full development of people's potential, their abilities and talents, free from poverty in all its manifestations. The goal of our work with young people should be to develop their full potential as human beings and in turn to strive to create a society that will guarantee the conditions of this for all.

The relationship between the youth movement and the Party is a very important one. The youth movement, while it must lead its own existence, is ultimately under the political direction of the Party.

For when we say that we want a separate organisation for youth we do not mean a completely autonomous organisation doing its own thing. Rather we mean an organisation under the direction of the Party, an organisation that is a unit of the Party. But that said, we do not want a youth movement that is merely a chain of support groups doing the 'donkey work' for Party branches.

The youth movement must complement the work of the Party by developing its own activities and should not be slave to Party activity. Members of the youth movement must also be allowed to serve their time in the youth before being brought into the Party. Our youth movement will need leaders who can devote all their energies to building the organisation.

Finally, the importance to the Party and the working class of building a strong youth movement cannot be over-estimated. Thousands of young people, conscious of their class and its historical task of replacing capitalism with socialism could change the face of this country in years to come — this should be our goal!

Where to start

For people who have not yet started a youth-group, or maybe haven't even been involved in one, the task of setting one up from scratch may seem a daunting one. There are no hard and fast rules, no set pattern by which our youth-groups have been established, but there are certain ways of approaching the task, in a common-sense fashion.

First of all, before you do anything you should contact the national organiser in Head Office to see what advice and assistance is available. Also if there are any of our youth-groups in your general area they should be contacted for help. Secondly, it makes sense to concentrate in an area of good support for the Party for obvious reasons. You should put all your efforts into this one area and avoid trying to take in too large an area, as there's no point over-stretching yourself. Thirdly, it is important if at all possible to have other people to work with you from the start. No matter how many ideas you have, or how great your enthusiasm, everyone needs support, and the product of collective thinking is generally better than that of the individual.

You should get at least one or two other people to work with you, this could be members of the youth movement from an adjacent area, members of the Party, or young people in your area who have expressed an interest in the youth movement already.

Anyway, you should form a small ad hoc group like this to set about organising the youth-group. There are three main things you will have to deal with at the start:

- 1. Getting members.**
- 2. Finding a premises/meeting place.**
- 3. Organising activities.**

1. GETTING MEMBERS

So where do you get the most important ingredient to start a youth-group? It may seem at the start as if there are no young people in your area.

However, you should go through the following groups and make up a list: young people who are Party supporters — who may have helped out at election time, sons and daughters of Party members and supporters. Friends and friends of other members.. Ask members of the local Party branch, ask supporters, ask around, draw up your list and go to see the young people.

If at all possible it's a good idea to send them a letter also. Most young people don't get many letters in the post and will appreciate this, and it can also serve as a reminder. You should also give out a leaflet at local schools and other places where young people gather.

This could be a recruitment leaflet from Head Office, with your own slip giving details of the first meeting/activity in your area. Draw up some posters as well and put them in local shops, schools etc.

Although our youth movement is divided into the age ranges 10—14 and 15—20, it is probably better to start with the older age group. Working with the younger age group is a big responsibility, this age can require a lot of supervision so it should not be entered into without some previous experience of working with young people. However, when setting up a youth-group it is important to remain flexible in relation to age limits.

For instance, if you have a group of young people most of whom are over 15, but several of whom are 14, it would be foolish to exclude the 14 year olds. It is necessary to apply common sense to these situations, however it is clear that your average 12 year old will not mix well with 15/16 year olds.

2. FINDING A PREMISES/MEETING PLACE

When looking for a premises to meet in there are a couple of things you should keep in mind: it should be easily accessible to the members, it should preferably be warm/dry/clean and should conform to the various fire and safety regulations.

The main areas you should look to are school halls, community centres, Party offices, school rooms. However, you will have to watch the cost of these. Don't be inclined to spend money you don't have. The ideal situation is to have a premises that the members can make their own once a week, and feel at home in.

3. ORGANISING ACTIVITIES

Before your first meeting you should have thought about and discussed a range of possible activities for the group. It is pointless going into a meeting with no ideas and hoping for feedback from people at their first meeting. Neither should you go into a meeting with a list of activities that *you* have decided on, and present it as a fait accompli.

The best approach is to have a list of possible activities for discussion and this should trigger off suggestions from the members themselves. Planning a programme of activities is dealt with later on in this booklet. It is important that there is a fixed time for the group's meetings and that they are held on a regular basis, weekly is probably the best.

After your first meeting the group should be registered with Head Office and membership cards purchased. The holding of membership cards and the paying of subs by members is important in that it gives people a sense of belonging to something.

Don't be too ambitious when you start off, set yourself achievable targets and avoid grandiose plans for activities that in the early stages may fall flat on their face. Finally, if you end up with only a small number of people at the start, don't worry. If a youth-group is active it will undoubtedly attract more members.

If the group's activities are well organised, enjoyable and you're offering something that nobody else is, the word will spread and you could end up with more members than you can handle!

RUNNING A YOUTH-GROUP

1. WORKING WITH YOUNG PEOPLE

The way that we work with young people, the lines along which our youth-groups are run, will of course be based on the aims of our youth movement. Our goals of giving working class youth confidence in themselves, developing their full potential as human beings, and an understanding of their society all dictate what our methods of work with young people will be.

In practice this means that we operate in a democratic fashion, that we encourage our members to participate in the running of their groups and give them an increasing amount of responsibility. Most young people have no experience of democratic organisation therefore it is something that they will become accustomed to only after time. No youth-group should have a formal structure like a Party branch. This will simply not work with young people.

Before we deal with the qualities which an effective leader of a youth-group should have it is important to be aware of the development needs that all young people have as they grow up.

A. The need for love and security — this is probably the most important need as it provides the basis for all later relationships. On it depends the development of the personality — the ability to care and respond to affection.

A continuous, reliable, caring relationship first within the family unit, then with a growing number of others, can meet this need. It can give the individual a sense of worthwhileness and of a coherent personal identity.

B. The need for new experiences — new experiences are a fundamental requirement for mental growth. In early life it is largely through play and language that the child explores the world and learns to cope with it. In adolescence another form of play is important — this time the experiments are with different kinds of roles — girlfriend/boyfriend/worker/leader.

Language remains a crucial factor in intellectual growth — it helps in learning to reason, to think, and in making relationships.

C. The need for praise and recognition — growing up requires a tremendous amount of learning — emotional, social and intellectual. Consequently strong incentives are necessary for the individual to continue through the difficulties and conflicts he/she will inevitably encounter. The most effective incentives are praise and recognition sustained over time.

D. The need for responsibility — this need is met by allowing the child to gain personal independence. Firstly through learning to look after her/himself in matters of everyday care and then through a gradual extension of responsibility over other areas until he/she has the freedom and ability to decide on his/her own actions and, indeed, to be able to accept responsibility for others.

These needs may be met by parents, family, friends, school, and leaders of youth-groups should be aware of these basic needs in their work.

The qualities of an effective leader could be summarised as follows:

(a) An ability to organise, which contrary to popular belief is learnt through experience and not something you're born with.

(b) It's important to be able to see the good in everyone and accept people for what they are.

(c) An ability to talk with young people, again this is something which is learnt through experience, through getting to know young people in a group.

(d) Consistency is also very important. Leaders must be able to deal with people evenly, and need to be disciplined in their approach.

(e) Flexibility — leaders must be able to recognise that different people and situations need different responses.

(f) Ability to work in a team — must be able to work with other people and accept their opinions.

(g) Honesty — leaders need to be open and straightforward in their dealings with young people in order to gain their trust and understanding.

It should be clear that there is no set style of leadership, that different situations require different responses, but the above points should give some idea of the qualities necessary. However, that said, there are three generally recognised styles of leadership which are broadly applicable to different situations.

1. *Authoritarian leadership* — the leader makes all the decisions and tells the group or an individual what to do.

2. *Laissez-faire leadership* — the leader simply behaves as a member of the group and gives all responsibility to it.

3. *Supportive leadership* — the leader proposes several possible decisions — he/she tries to reach consensus in the group. He/she supports the work of the group giving advice where necessary.

The first of the above, the *AUTHORITARIAN* style of leadership would really only be applicable in situations where a leader has to

deal with an individual or individuals who have seriously broken the rules of the group and the organisation.

In these situations there can be no alternative but to take firm action, but care should be taken that control, when applied, must be applied firmly and with consistency. Freedom should be within clearly defined lines. Freedom that does not interfere with someone else's liberty sums it up succinctly.

The second of the above, the *LAISSÉZ—FAIRE* style of leadership would probably only be applicable to a group which has some experience of democratic organisation and whose members have been in the youth-movement for some time.

In general the *SUPPORTIVE* style of leadership is the one which is most suited to our type of work. As was stated at the start, if our aim is to give young people confidence in themselves and their ability to take control of their own lives, then we must see ourselves not just as providers of a service to young people.

Instead our role should be to get them to organise themselves, to get them to participate in the running of their groups, and so introduce them to democratic organisation.

Leaders of our youth-groups should see themselves as creating an activity with the members, instead of providing an activity for the members. So besides the intrinsic value of any particular activity, the actual process of thinking through and organising the activity becomes an educational experience and an opportunity to give responsibility to young people. Therefore the activity becomes not just an end in itself, but also a means to an end.

This method of working is also important because of the opportunities it provides to actually get to know young people and gain their confidence. Leaders should always try to talk to members, listen to their ideas, as this can be one of the principal ways in which young people can be helped to clarify their ideas and feelings.

It is important that conversations with young people are on equal terms and aren't dominated by the leader. As the aim is to draw young people out and help them to clarify their own ideas and thinking, asking them the right sort of questions can be very valuable.

Giving guidance or recalling stories from your own past is not really helpful. Young people should be let reach their own conclusions about things and not offered instant solutions to their problems. We should always aim to challenge young people and cause them to think.

A leader at all times should listen creatively to what young people are saying. Small things like having a relaxed manner, a friendly tone of voice, an open posture, can all help to draw people out.

The importance of the approach outlined above to working with young people cannot be overstressed. The working class has not just been dispossessed of the wealth of this country but of control over their own lives.

This in reality means that many members of the working class feel powerless and do not possess even the basic skills necessary to affect the way society is run and the decisions that affect their lives. This is the overall context in which we should see our work.

Finally, just a brief point about the status of young women in our youth movement. If working class youth in general are oppressed as members of their class, then young women suffer a double oppression as members of the working class and the female sex. They are victims of a conditioning process which leads many to see their sole role in society as mother and housewife.

If our aim is to get young people to develop their full potential then we must take particular steps to ensure that young women participate fully in our youth movement. This means tackling sexist attitudes and behaviour in the group. Ensuring that the programme of activities responds to the needs of both sexes and that young women have an equal chance to express their views.

It is also very helpful to have male and female leaders in a group if at all possible.

2. PLANNING A PROGRAMME

When it comes to actually organising the activities of your group the approach outlined earlier is the basis from which to work. However, it is also necessary for the efficient running of any organisation that things are planned out in advance. Any programme for a young-group should:

- (a) be planned together with the members and reflect their interests.
- (b) include both sexes;
- (c) reflect the needs of the members;
- (d) be suited to the age group involved;
- (e) take stock of what's already available in the area;
- (f) involve everybody some of the time.

It is important at all times to relate the programme of a youth-group to what the aims of our youth movement are. For instance, a

trip to the local amusement arcade to play the slot machines all day would not be our idea of a useful and educational activity.

There is no point running a programme of activities that is in opposition to what we are trying to do with young people, no matter how much demand there may be for it.

In planning a programme of activities, some will take a lot of work and planning while others may take comparatively little. It is therefore a useful exercise to divide your programme into three main categories as shown below.

(a) long-term activities — which include a lot of planning and work. These are usually on an annual basis. Things like holidays, weekends away, major fund-raising events. They require a firm commitment from members over a long period of time.

(b) medium-term activities — not so time-consuming as above, and usually on a monthly basis. These could be visits, day-trips, fund-raising events. They also require a decision and commitment in advance.

(c) short-term activities — these require little planning and are usually weekly. An example could be a discussion on some topic at the group's weekly meeting.

It is important to realise that planning the programme together with the members requires more imagination than simply asking "What do you want to do?". In most cases all you will get from that is a row of blank, expressionless faces looking back at you.

The leader will have to draw people out and then listen to their ideas creatively and encourage their thoughts. The leader should have a range of possible activities on hand to throw out for discussion, to encourage members to express their own ideas.

Every leader should learn to spot experiences and events out of which ideas and eventually activities can be developed. For instance, while away on a hostelling weekend the inadequacy of the male members of the group at cooking is shown up. This leads to a discussion in the group on male/female roles which leads in even to the organisation of a cookery session, mainly for the benefit of the male members!

The leader who uses his/her imagination should be able to seize upon opportunities like this to develop activities that will challenge young people to think.

Also, there are several strategies you could use to develop ideas for the programme: discussions, videos, exchanges, posters, books, interviews, visits, surveys, plays, press reports, photography, brain-

storms, speakers, poems, cartoons, improvisation, simulations.

As well as the activities organised locally by the group, there will be those organised on a national basis by the youth movement, to form part of your programme. Many activities organised will lead people on to think about other things — so you should never be short of ideas, only the time to act on them all!

It is useful after any activity has been organised to evaluate it in line with your original aims. This is necessary in order to learn fully from your experiences, your successes and failures, and so improve the quality of your work with the youth movement.

You should ask yourself the following questions:

- (i) *How well did the activity correspond to your aims?*
- (ii) *How relevant was the activity to the needs of the members? Was it a success for the whole membership or just a particular group?*
- (iii) *Was the event planned together with the members? What part did they play?*
- (iv) *How successful was the organisation of, the planning process, the activity itself?*
- (v) *How could it be done better next time?*

When looking at possible activities for the group you should look at three things:

1. People who may be willing to help you, usually on a once-off basis — these could be local people involved in sports, art, music, theatre etc.
2. Amenities that are in your general area.
3. Resources available to you locally — things like a 35mm camera, a projector, loan of a minibus etc.

All these factors can influence the shape that the programme will take. You should draw up a list of all these things and be continually trying to extend your contacts in these areas.

Below are some of the main areas of activity that you could work on:

(a) **SPORTS** — there is a huge range of sports activities and the aim should be to introduce people to new activities that they might not otherwise experience. Care should be taken that sports activities organised cater for everyone.

(b) **GOING PLACES** — day trips to various places, hikes, visits to cinema/theatre, exchanges, camping weekends, hostelling — members' cards are available from the hostelling associations (An

Oige and Northern Ireland Youth Hostelling Association), which enable you to bring away up to ten young people who do not have to be members of the association. For any trip which involves an overnight stay the parents' consent should be got for everyone under 18. Below is an example of a typical "Parental Consent" form to be given to parents.

WORKERS' PARTY YOUTH

Parental Consent and medical form

I _____ give permission for

_____ to attend the _____

During this period my address will be _____

_____ Telephone _____

MEDICAL DETAILS

1. *Is your son/daughter allergic to Penicillin? Yes/No.*
2. *Does your son/daughter have any allergies? Yes/No.*
3. *Does your son/daughter have to take any regular medication? Yes/No.*
4. *Any other details*

In the event of my son/daughter being taken ill or injured during the period so that surgical operation or serum injection becomes necessary, I hereby authorise the leader in charge to sign on my behalf any written form of consent required, provided that the delay necessitated to obtain my signature might endanger my son's/daughter's health or safety.

Signed _____

(This form to be returned as soon as possible. All information given will be treated as private and confidential.)

A knowledge of first aid is also a necessity for these sort of activities and every youth-group should have a well-stocked first aid kit.

There is also a whole range of other activities that can be used as excellent aids for developing self-expression and creativity in young people.

(a) DRAMA — *short sketches, which could even be written by the group themselves, or the group could put on a short play.*

(b) PHOTOGRAPHY — *the group could take photographs around some theme, and maybe even put on an exhibition of their work afterwards. You'll need a 35mm camera to do this, and you could start developing and printing your own photographs also.*

(c) MUSIC *there's a lot more you can do on this than just organising discos. Members could be introduced to music from other countries and cultures. Members could form their own musical group, even if it was only a guitar and one or two other instruments. They could be got to write their own songs, perhaps using existing airs. There's endless possibilities.*

(d) VIDEO — *video equipment is getting more easily accessible all the time. If you can get access to a camera the group could make its own short programmes. If you can't get a loan of video equipment, it is getting cheaper all the time to hire home video equipment, and the group could raise money to do this.*

(e) ARTS AND CRAFTS — *several very useful skills could be developed out of this — producing your own tee-shirts/posters through screen-printing, making your own badges etc.*

A lot of the ideas listed above are easy to write about but can be a lot harder, and require more specialist knowledge to organise in practice.

However it is planned in the near future to produce more detailed information on this type of work for youth-groups. Also, there's a wide range of organisations working with young people in these and related areas that you can contact for help and advice.

There's a list of useful addresses at the end of this pamphlet.

WORKING WITH THE YOUNGER AGE-GROUP

The 10—14 age group is one which, as yet, we have little experience of working with. The general approach to working with young people outlined so far does by and large still apply, but there are several important differences between this and the older age group.

These young people are in the initial stage of adolescence and will at some stage between about 9 and 14 start to go through the following changes:

1. Begin to become physically mature.
2. Begin to think more critically.
3. Begin to be able to understand abstract theories and ideas.
4. Begin to be more concerned about the future.
5. Begin to formulate values and attitudes that will remain into adult life.
6. Begin to feel more deeply.
7. Begin to get more anxious about problems with friends, home, school, work, their own looks.
8. Get enthusiastic for short periods.
9. Become more self-aware and self-critical.
10. Begin to see life more realistically.
11. Begin to want to be independent of parents and home.
12. Begin to have a curiosity about sex which is motivated by their own physical development.
13. Rely more heavily on group of friends for security, learning new things.
14. Group pressure to conform is very intense, e.g. the need to be accepted by a group is vitally important to them and often stronger than their relationship with adults.

So while young people in this age group are coming into adolescence there is still a significant difference between, say, a 12 year old and a 16 year old. The 12 year old, while he/she may be in the initial stages of adolescence, still exhibits many of the characteristics of the child.

While you can offer opportunities for this age group to participate in the development of the activities of their group, most will not be ready to take on any form of responsibility at this age. The leader will have to exercise a much stronger influence and direction with this age group. They will require a great deal of supervision.

It's a good idea if there's an older group in existence already in an area, to get some of them to work with the younger group. It's also important to be in regular contact with the parents of members in this age group — make sure they know what's going on.

Financing a youth-group

1. RAISING MONEY

Every youth-group will need a certain amount of money to fund its activities. Youth-groups should always be careful about how they spend their money; all costs should be kept to a minimum.

Always check around and see what you can get for nothing, or who you know that might get you something a bit cheaper, before you go out spending money.

There are a few groundrules about fund raising in general. Firstly, everybody in the group should know what the money is needed for. It is much easier to motivate people and raise cash for an identified target.

Secondly, you should start out with simple ideas and avoid grandiose plans. There's no point going for a big event if you've no money to start with.

Thirdly, always work out a budget for everything you organise. Calculate how much money you will have to spend and how much you expect to take in. If you have a good margin of profit left at the end, then go ahead with it, but if there's any uncertainty, scrap it.

Finally, don't try to raise your money from the same group of people as the Party. There are more than enough draws and fund raising events being organised by the Party. Try to widen the net and raise your money outside of Party and youth movement circles.

There are several main methods of fund raising:

(a) draws and raffles, (b) functions, (c) sponsored and other events
(a) DRAWS AND RAFFLES — these are quite easy to organise, the only disadvantage being that there's so many of them around. You can go either for money prizes or goods — the advantage of the latter being that if you look around you might get something for nothing.

When you're organising something like this, first of all estimate how many tickets can you sell, how much are the tickets going to cost you, then what are your prizes going to be. Remember, don't aim too high. Start off with 100, maybe 200 tickets (by law 300 tickets is the limit, after that you need a licence).

Give yourself plenty of time to sell them — at least a month. Any local printers should be able to print tickets for you.

(b) FUNCTIONS — in our case these could be: discos, concerts, or you could use your imagination and have for instance, a talent competition with local amateurs. Functions serve the dual purpose

of raising money and bringing young people into contact with Workers' Party Youth.

Organising something like this can take a lot of planning and work and shouldn't be entered into lightly. The easiest thing to organise is a disco, and there is probably the greatest demand for this. The same general rules apply to organising a concert. except you have to get bands and a PA system.

First of all you need a venue — check school halls, local clubs, pubs etc. See what's available and how much they're asking for before you book anything. Don't go for anything too big. Make sure the place is safe — check for fire exits etc, try to get somewhere that's central and that is well known by young people.

Then price the hire of equipment and a DJ. Try around a few places and ask around — somebody might know someone who'll do it that bit cheaper, or even for nothing if they're a supporter. Next get tickets printed — any local printers should be able to do them.

You'll also want to advertise it well — get leaflets and posters done. Work out what it's costing to run, how many tickets you expect to sell, how much people will pay for tickets, and price your tickets accordingly.

Always give yourself three or four weeks to sell tickets. All tickets should be numbered and signed by the person selling them when they are paid for. You should have a list of who has what tickets and should make sure to have money for tickets in before the night. On the night, have at least one reliable person on the door and one or two other people sitting around in case there's a row. It's always a good idea to organise a raffle there also as people will always buy tickets.

Ask around and try and pick up a few spot prizes for nothing. You should also, if you can, put up a banner or posters and give out leaflets or 'Socialist Youth' to people.

(c) COLLECTIONS — there are three national collections — 1. Easter Lilies, 2, May Day badges, 3. Workers' Party national collection. (These only apply to the Republic).

1. *EASTER LILIES* — a lot of money can be made on these. You should take in at least £100 on every 1,000 sold. Work out with the local Party what areas and pubs you can cover.

2. *MAY DAY BADGES* — this is a Workers' Party Youth collection (permit under IDYA) and all proceeds go to the youth movement. Half of what's collected goes to Workers' Party Youth in Head Office and the other half stays with the local youth-group. Permits are available for May Day itself, for nearly all the country.

3. **WORKERS' PARTY NATIONAL COLLECTION** — the Party carries out an annual national collection in all areas. Ask the local Party about the youth movement getting a slice for working in the collection.

(c) **SPONSORED & OTHER EVENTS** — these are something that Workers' Party Youth should definitely try and build up. A sponsored event could be a run, a cycle, a hike, or anything else you can think of, the more novel the better.

The advantages of this form of fund raising are that, firstly, it costs virtually nothing to organise, only the cost of printing sponsorship cards — so it's virtually impossible to lose money on it.

Secondly, this sort of event can also be a good recreational activity for any youth-group to be involved in. There are also plenty of other related ideas — cake sales, mile of pennies, car-washing, jumble sales — there's endless possibilities.

2. HANDLING MONEY

It is very important to the smooth running of a youth-group that all money is looked after carefully and efficiently. There are some simple rules for handling money which if followed can prevent a lot of headaches.

- (i) A Current Account should be opened in the nearest bank, to which there should be two signatories. A cheque book is available with a Current Account and money can be withdrawn at short notice. All cheques will have to be signed by the two signatories to the account.
- (ii) Receipts should be kept for any money spent, and given out for any money received.
- (iii) Money should be lodged in the bank as quickly as possible and shouldn't be left lying around.
- (iv) Bills etc. should be paid by cheque.
- (v) A record of the payment of subs by members should be kept.
- (vi) Reports on finance should be given regularly to the group.
- (vii) All Bank lodgment slips should be kept and regular statements got from the Bank.
- (viii) Records or 'Books' of how much money has been earned and spent must be kept. Below is a simple book-keeping system, suitable for the type of transactions done by a youth-group.

WORKERS' PARTY YOUTH — SAMPLE ACCOUNTS

Income and Expenditure Account (I&E A/c.)

Sept 1987

Date	Description	Credit	Debit	Balance
1st	Cash in Hand			£36.00
7th	Subs from members	£4.00		£40.00
11th	Purchase of 'Socialist Youth'		£15.00	£25.00
15th	Proceeds from Disco	£25.00		£50.00
21st	Purchase of posters		£10.00	£40.00

RUNNING A CAMPAIGN

No youth-group should rush headlong into organising campaigns left, right and centre, in their areas.

Besides campaigns decided on nationally, campaigns that are initiated locally should stem from the needs felt by the members themselves, and ideally should involve youth-groups whose members have been in the youth movement for some length of time.

Any campaign entered into should be imaginative, but practical, that is, it should have some achievable and tangible goal. Campaigns are important to give our members confidence in themselves, to teach them basic agitational skills, and to enable them to understand the potential power that they and their class have.

However, it cannot be overstressed that young people new to our youth movement should not be rushed into campaigns, and that campaigning overall should take second place to the other work of our movement.

That said, in any campaign there are basic groundrules which should be observed and campaign techniques which can be used.

No campaign should be entered into lightly. Before any campaign is initiated all the facts should be established and the means of taking up the issue analysed. This is particularly important in relation to local campaigns.

Local issues may not always be that straight-forward so before you do anything or start a campaign, check out all the facts, talk to other people, then decide what you're going to do and the form the campaign should take.

Every campaign should be researched beforehand, planned out and carried through to its conclusion. In many campaigns you may not get what you were initially looking for — your 'maximum aim'. So you should always have a 'minimum aim' also, or fallback position.

There's no point in aiming too high. Always have reasonable demands. At least demands which seem reasonable to ordinary working class people. There's no point in calling for something totally outlandish and running a campaign on it — people will only end up disillusioned when you fail.

Every campaign should be planned out in advance. Sit down, work out, and time the stages of the campaign. There is a long list of standard techniques which can be used. Use these (below), but also try to add a new twist, do something novel if at all possible.

PUBLIC MEETINGS — Get a suitable venue — one that isn't too big or too small and one that you can afford, try to anticipate the size of your audience — it's better to have a small hall packed to capacity than a large hall with the same number of people, look half empty.

Make sure you publicise it well, with leaflets and posters. Arrange and confirm speakers and get someone to chair the meeting. Also make sure you ask the press to come along and possibly write to the letters column about it as well.

At the meeting it's a good idea to send around an attendance sheet for people to sign and also take up a collection at the end of the meeting to cover costs.

LEAFLETS & POSTERS — (See section on public relations.

PETITIONS — A petition can be a very effective campaigning tool. It means you're getting out on the streets, talking to people, and people by signing the petition are giving some sort of commitment, no matter how small, to your cause.

It also means that you have proof of how many people support your campaign and you can present this to the relevant authorities, who may take you that bit more seriously.

PRESS RELEASES & LETTERS TO THE EDITOR — (See public relations).

USE PUBLIC REPRESENTATIVES — Contact Workers' Party Councillors or TDs (depending on the issue) and see what can be done at Council and Dáil level. Usually the Council will be more relevant if it is a local issue.

Also put pressure on other public representatives — write to them, get other people to write to them, put pressure on their clinics if necessary etc.

GET OTHER ORGANISATIONS INVOLVED — Contact youth-groups, tenants/residents associations, and any local ad hoc groups and committees. Offer to send someone along to speak at one of

their meetings, keep them informed and try to get them involved in your campaign. Maybe they could help with leaflets, collecting signatures etc. — it's worth a try.

MARCHES/DEMONSTRATIONS/PICKETS — These can be very effective and good for publicity. However always make sure that you can get the numbers. Let people know who you are, carry a banner and hand out leaflets explaining what the protest is about.

Finally, some other important points about running a campaign. Always persevere — don't give up half way through a campaign because it seems to be going nowhere. See it through to the end. Don't be afraid to compromise, a compromise isn't always the same as a sell-out, though it can be.

There's no hard and fast rule, you have to judge each individual situation. Know who your opposition are. When you're planning your campaign think who is going to oppose you, try to anticipate what their arguments are going to be and be prepared to counter them.

Lastly, there should be a clear political lesson to be learned from every campaign. At the end of a campaign the people involved in it and the general public should be able to draw some political conclusions — whether the campaign be successful or unsuccessful.

Publicity

This section covers three main areas of publicity:

(a) **Press releases and letters to the editor, (b) leaflets and posters, (c) Workers' Party Youth publications — 'Socialist Youth'.**

(a) PRESS RELEASES

A press release is a news item issued by you to a newspaper, magazine, radio or TV. It can cover a campaign activity, a speech or just Workers' Party Youth policy on some issue.

There are several different types of press release:

NEWS RELEASE — written like a news story and suitable for use as a news item on its own.

BACKGROUND RELEASE — gives background information on something for the benefit of journalists.

PRESS STATEMENT — this is a straightforward statement giving details of something that's happening or giving an opinion on something. This is the most common form of press release used by Workers' Party Youth.

LETTER RELEASE — this is simply the text of a letter sent to somebody. This could be used by Workers' Party Youth as follows: "In a letter to the Minister, Workers' Party Youth have called for..."

Press releases should be typed on Workers' Party Youth headed paper, using double spacing and wide margins, so the sub-editors can put in their own notes. Every press release should be headed "**PRESS RELEASE — FOR FAVOUR OF PUBLICATION**" and dated.

A further heading giving an idea of what the press release is about should be put under this e.g. *Workers' Party Youth calls for a ban on nuclear testing.*

The press release should be signed by the person issuing it and a contact address and phone number included at the end. They should be typed on one side of the paper only, and always checked for mistakes before being issued. All press releases, as with other publicity, should be checked with the local party PRO or National Youth Organiser before being issued.

There are some basic stylistic points which should be observed when writing a press release. Firstly, as every journalist knows, you should concentrate on the five Ws:

"**What**" — what is happening.

"**Who**" — who is doing it.

"**Where**" — where is it happening.

"**When**" — when is it happening.

"**Why**" — why is it happening, what is the background.

The first two or three sentences of any press release should contain these basic facts as well as the most interesting fact of the whole story.

This is because when the sub-editor is reading the press release he/she will want to know immediately what it's about and to get them to read on you should put the 'most interesting fact' of the story at the start.

Remember when writing a press release that you're not writing a piece of English prose, avoid flowery language and complicated sentence structures. Try to aim for the same sort of style as the tabloid papers. Keep sentences short and to the point. Each sentence should be 20 to 30 words long and contain only one idea. Keep language simple and avoid jargon.

Use arresting language — use aggressive verbs like 'shock', 'warn', 'confront', 'demand', 'challenge' etc. Press releases should be kept to under 300 words.

If you don't want a press release used before a certain date you can put an 'embargo' on it. This means that a date is put on the press release before which it cannot be used by the media. This is most often used in the case of someone delivering a speech, where the speech is given to journalists beforehand. When using an embargo simply write at the top of the press release "Press Release — Embargo" — journalists will always respect an embargo.

Press releases should be delivered to the newspaper/radio/TV offices at least a day before they're to be used, in envelopes marked "The Newsdesk", and the name of the newspaper or station. Remember that a lot of young people don't read newspapers so concentrate on publications that they do read. Copies of all press releases should be kept and filed. Below is the layout of a typical press release.

WORKERS' PARTY YOUTH
Press release: For favour of publication

Date:

Address: (If not with heading)

Workers' Party Youth calls for new sports centre.

.....

.....

.....

ends.

For further information contact:

Name

Address

Phone no.

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR: All newspapers and magazines have a letters column and it's usually easier to get a letter carried than a press release used. You're also guaranteed a fairly large audience as the letters column is read by most people who read a newspaper or magazine.

The same points of style apply to writing letters as do to writing press releases. Keep letters short and to the point and deal with one subject only. A name and address must always be given — anonymous letters will not be carried.

(b) LEAFLETS AND POSTERS

Leaflets are probably our most important form of publicity since we can't always be guaranteed that the capitalist media will give us coverage. Again the same general points apply to writing leaflets as to press releases and letters.

The only difference being that leaflets have to be laid out, have to be designed, unless you're getting them done professionally you'll have to do this yourself.

The three most common paper sizes are A5, A4 and A3. A4 is the size of this handbook, A5 is half this size, and A3 is twice this size. A5 is the standard size for leaflets.

The layout of leaflets should be kept simple. Don't try to put too much on them. Space them well, and whatever you do don't just have a full page of dense type — use different lettering — try and get your hands on an electric typewriter with a "golfball" which can do different typefaces.

Try typing in two colours, underline things different ways. Use plenty of paragraphs, and always have some sort of heading — preferably one with letterset or some other large lettering. Also a drawing or cartoon adds something to a leaflet and helps to break up the monotony of the lettering.

Always have a recruitment ad at the end of your leaflet and the name and address of the youth group. If you're getting leaflets done professionally none of the above really applies as they will be able to do the typesetting and layout with minimal instructions from you.

However, at the same time it's useful to know and you should look at leaflets with a critical eye and get to know what works and what does not work.

What your leaflet is for and what resources you have will dictate how you run off your leaflets. If you're just producing a leaflet as a notice for a meeting — duplicating will do the job but if you're

producing a small pamphlet (and you have the money) you should get it printed professionally.

The three main ways of producing leaflets are: 1. DUPLICATING, 2. PHOTOCOPYING, 3. PRINTING.

1. **GESTETNER** is the most common duplicating machine and takes A4 size paper only. Most areas will have one of these lying around somewhere. Duplicating machines use what are known as stencils.

The art-work is cut into the stencil and the stencil placed on a rotating drum in the machine through which ink is fed. Paper is fed into the machine at one end and your printed leaflet comes out the other end.

There are two types of stencils — wax stencils and electro stencils. With wax stencils you must cut your art-work straight onto them using a typewriter or a special pen, so obviously this limits the layout of your leaflet. An electro stencil on the other hand can give you an exact copy of any art-work you do (except for photographs).

ELECTRO STENCILS are made by placing your art-work and a special stencil in a machine which by a light scanning the original art-work reproduces this on the stencil. Using an electro stencil means you can lay out a leaflet using cartoons, drawings, a Workers' Party Youth heading etc.

ELECTRO STENCILS cost several pounds to make and a good stationery shop or small printers should be able to do them.

Some tips about using a duplicator: if you haven't used one before get someone who has to show you how, before you go near it. Also, be careful not to put too much ink on the stencil, and avoid putting large black areas on your leaflet as the paper will stick and it is hard to get a good image anyway.

Make sure the paper you're using is dry and fan it before you use it — so the sheets won't stick together. Duplicators use special duplicating paper and duplicating ink. Also unless you have very good paper stick to doing one sided leaflets, and preferably do them on A4 sheets.

Each stencil should give 2,000 to 3,000 copies, though electro stencils generally give less than wax stencils — the stencil will start to break up after a while.

Finally if you have a very large amount of leaflets to do you're better off getting them printed as it could work out as cheap, if not cheaper, and save you a lot of time and effort.

2. **PHOTOCOPYING** is really only good if you know someone who can get it done for nothing. It's very expensive, and is only suitable if

you want a very small number of copies of something.

3. **PRINTING** can be expensive but is often worth the money. If you have the money and want to get a good job done, then go to a printer. The Party in the area should be able to recommend a good, cheap printer. Some printers do not do typesetting and layout so you may have to get that done somewhere else. However always make sure that they know exactly what you want — colours, typeface, layout, graphics etc. and that you type your copy using double spacing, and check it before you give it to them.

Giving out your leaflets — always be conscious of your audience — who is your leaflet aimed at. For Workers' Party Youth it's young people, so there's no point in giving out our leaflets to people shopping in the local shopping centre.

There are several main places to give out our leaflets — in the street, town centres, places where young people hang around. Door to door — although you should make sure it's an area with a high youth population — also you can't be guaranteed that once the leaflet goes in the door that the young people in the house will get it.

Institutions, schools, especially senior cycle, labour exchanges, AnCO training schemes, youth clubs, football matches, anywhere that young people are found in numbers.

POSTERS

The same general points apply here as regards layout and design. Try and get somebody who knows a bit about art to help with posters if you're not experienced at it yourself.

There are four ways to get your posters done: (i) by hand, (ii) printed, (iii) silk-screen printing, (iv) photocopying.

(i) By hand — all you need is large sheets of white paper and some felt-tip markers. Use at least two different colours and vary the size of the lettering. It takes time to do, however, if you just want ten or eleven posters to advertise a meeting or demonstration it'll do the job.

(ii) Printing — is expensive and is only worth it if getting large amounts done. You probably won't have any call to get posters printed but if you do the same things apply as getting leaflets printed.

(iii) Silk-screen — this is the simplest form of printing posters and is just a large frame with a silk-screen over which a stencil is stretched. The art-work is cut out in the stencil, a sheet of paper put under it and ink spread over the stencil which is attached to the silk-screen.

It is possible to do this yourself, you could get a frame made up quite easily by a carpenter, but you'll want to read up on it first and talk to other people who have done it.

There are companies who do silk-screen printing. However, as with printing it's expensive and you'd want to be getting a large number done for it to be worth your while.

(iv) Photocopying — the largest size paper a photocopier can take is A3 which is twice the size of this handbook and is a good size for a small poster. Either you can do up a poster A3 size yourself and get it photocopied or you can just get a leaflet you have done enlarged to this size in a photocopier.

A photocopier can only copy in black, but you can get different colour photocopying paper. Again this can be expensive but if you're just getting a small number of posters done it's probably the best method.

BANNERS every youth-group should have its own banner. If you're making it yourself use weatherised cloth and make sure the paint you use is in good contrast to the colour of the material.

Banners are a good thing to have for marches/demonstrations, in fact any public activity that you're engaged in.

(c) **"SOCIALIST YOUTH"** — this should be distributed by all youth-groups, and in the same places as were listed for leaflets.

However, with this it would be more useful to concentrate on the same places every time, instead of spreading it around too much. Information on your group's campaigns and activities should be sent to the national youth organiser for "Socialist Youth", as well as any press releases or leaflets. Members should also be encouraged to write articles for "Socialist Youth".

Youth-groups should ensure that any other leaflets or pamphlets issued by Head Office are used in their area.

Speaking in Public

Undoubtedly you will have to, at some stage, speak in public either at a public meeting, a demonstration or a Workers' Party Youth conference. Many people dread the thought of this and do their best to avoid having to do it.

However there are a few simple guidelines which can be followed to take the pain out of it.

The most important thing is preparation. If you don't prepare what you're going to say you can be fairly certain you're going to make a mess of it. Unless of course you're a born orator who can keep everyone glued to their seats for two hours — but there are very few of them around.

Before you begin writing your speech, think out exactly what the purpose of it is. Do you want to get people to support a particular line or do you simply want to educate or inform them. How much do you expect the audience to know about what you're going to talk about and do you expect them to be friendly or hostile.

This will all influence the nature and content of your speech. When you have thought this through start gathering material. On most subjects you may not need to do much research. However it's always a good idea to read through books, articles, speeches, to refresh yourself on the topic. When you've done that jot down all your ideas, and arrange them into groups. Your speech will need a beginning, a middle and an ending.

The beginning or introduction should catch people's attention and also outline the basis of your argument. The middle is the substance of your speech and should contain detailed points to back up your argument.

For the ending you should sum up and repeat all your main points briefly. A good rule is "Tell them what you're going to say, tell them, tell them what you've just told them". When you've written out your speech in full read through it several times and familiarise yourself with it. Break it down into sections and extract the main points.

Put two or three of these points onto one card so you have several small cards with the order of your speech. Read through these several times and get the feel of the speech.

An important thing to remember when writing a speech is that there's a big difference between the spoken word and the written word. In other words we write differently to the way we talk. You should read over your speech as you go along and check that it sounds okay — make sure it's not too wordy. Avoid complex sentence structures. Keep it simple — use simple language, short sentences and avoid jargon and cliches.

The next stage is giving the speech. If you've never spoken in public before, or even if you have, you're probably going to be nervous. Just remember, if you're well prepared, know what you're going to say, there's no need to be nervous. If you've got butterflies in your stomach or a dry mouth, don't think about it. It'll only make it worse.

Try to keep yourself occupied while you're waiting to speak. Also remember the first twenty or thirty seconds are the worst and after that you'll take it in your stride.

Whatever you do don't read out your speech to the audience. Use the cards. Have two or three points on each card. When you're finished with one, turn it over, put it aside and go on to the next one.

Always look at the audience, look towards the back, and look to each side every now and then. Speak clearly and loudly, if you want to emphasise something don't speak louder, just speak more slowly.

Be natural — speak like you normally do. Don't put on an artificial tone. Avoid mannerisms like playing with your pen, scratching your nose etc... If you feel like you're making a mess of things — don't apologise to the audience. Unless you're speaking to a group of your worst enemies most people will wish you well, and will be prepared to listen.

Keep your speech short — ten to fifteen minutes is more than enough and usually five or six minutes will do for most things you will be speaking on.

When you've finished speaking make sure to thank the audience and sit down.

useful addresses... useful addresses... useful addresses..

The Republic

National Social Service Board, 71 Lower Leeson St, D.2. Tel. (01)682422.
An Oige, 39 Mountjoy Square, Dublin 1. Tel. (01)745734.
Cuspóir (National Sports Council), Teach Haicin, Baile Atha Cliath 2, Tel. (01)714311.
Creative Arts for Everyone (CAFE), 31 North Frederick St, D.1, Tel. (01)728721.
National Association for Youth Drama, 23 Upper Gardiner St, D.1, Tel.(01)743687.
Christian Aid, Christ Church, Rathgar, D.6, Tel.(01)966184.
Trocaire, 168 Booterstown Ave, Blackrock, Co Dublin, Tel.(01)885385.
UNICEF, 4 Andrew St, Dublin 2, Tel.(01)770843.
Community Action on Drugs (CAD), 6 Exchequer St, D.2. Tel.(01)792681.
People's College, 1 Grand Parade, D.6. Tel.(01)974244.
ECO (Environmental Conservation Organisation), Tailors Hall, D.8, Tel.(01)783940.
Dublin Youth Information Centre, Sackville House, Sackville Place, D.1, Tel.(01)786844
USI Travel, 7 Anglesea Street, D.2. Tel.(01)778117.
National Young Women's Forum, 64 Lower Mount St. D.2. Tel.(01)607731.
Women's Advisory Committee, Irish Congress of Trade Unions, 31 Parnell Sq, D.1. Tel.(01)748221.
Youth Advisory Committee, Irish Congress of Trade Unions, 31 Parnell Sq, D.1. Tel.(01)748221.
National Youth Council, 3 Montague St, D.2. Tel.(01)784122.
Comhairle le leas Oige, 70 Morehampton Rd, Donnybrook, Dublin 4, Tel.(01)683198.
National Federation of Youth Clubs, 2 Belvedere Place, Dublin 1. Tel.(01)728833.
Irish Family Planning Association, P.O.Box 908, 15 Mountjoy Sq. D.1. Tel.(01)740723.

Northern Ireland

Youth Hostel Association of Northern Ireland, 56 Bradbury Place, Belfast BT7 1RU, Tel. Belfast 224733.
Northern Ireland Association of Youth Clubs, "Hampton". Glenmachan Park, Belfast BT4 2PJ, Tel. Belfast 760067.
Northern Ireland Youth Forum, 86 Lisburn Road, Belfast BT9 6AF, Tel. Belfast 681447.
Art and Research Exchange, 22 Lombard St, Belfast. Tel. Belfast 224420.
Christian Aid, 48 Elmwood Ave, Belfast BT8 6AZ, Tel. Belfast 668204.
Family Planning Association, 113 University St, Belfast BT7 1HP, Tel. Belfast 225488.
Health Education Unit, Eastern Health and Social Services Board, 16 College St, Belfast BT1 6BX, Tel. Belfast 241771.
Sports Council for Northern Ireland, House of Sport, 2a Upper Malone Rd, Belfast BT9 5LA, Tel. Belfast 661222.

Title: Building Workers' Party Youth: A Leaders Handbook

Organisation: Workers Party Youth

Date: 1987

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