



The PEOPLE

Official Organ of the
Socialist Labor Party

Daily, Sunday, Weekly,

EDITED BY WORKINGMEN
OWNED BY WORKINGMEN
PUBLISHED BY WORKINGMEN
SUPPORTED BY WORKINGMEN

*Should be Read by
Every Workingman*

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CONSTITUTION

OF THE

SOCIALIST LABOR PARTY

OF THE

UNITED STATES
OF AMERICA



ADOPTED AT THE
Eleventh National Convention

HELD IN

NEW YORK CITY, JULY, 1904

SOCIALIST LABOR PARTY



State of.....

Section of.....

Branch.....

Card of Membership

Name.....

Admitted.....

..... Fin. Sec'y.

No..... Page.....

ISSUED BY AUTHORITY OF
National Executive Committee
NEW YORK

1904

19

JAN	FEB.	MARCH	APRIL
MAY	JUNE	JULY	AUG.
SEPT	OCT.	NOV	DEC.

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SEPT.	OCT.	NOV.	DEC.

CONSTITUTION.

ARTICLE I.

MANAGEMENT.

SECTION 1. The affairs of the Party are conducted by the National Executive Committee, the National Secretary, the State Organizations, the Local Organizations, the Sections, the National Conventions, and the General Vote.

ARTICLE II.

SECTIONS.

SECTION 1. Seven persons may form a Section, provided they acknowledge the Platform, Constitution and Resolutions of the Party and belong to no other political party. Not more than one charter shall be granted in any city or town, except in a city comprising a territory greater than a county, in which case not more than one charter shall be granted to each of such counties. But where a part of a county falls inside a city and a part outside of it a charter may be granted to each of the towns and cities located in the part of the county not included in such city.

a. They shall report to their State Executive Committee, or, in the absence of such, to the National Executive Committee, their organization as a Section, with the names and addresses of the members and the dues for the current month.

b. Each Section shall send every six months to the State and National Executive Committees a report of its numerical and financial condition, and shall report to the State Executive Committee, or, in the absence of such, to the National Executive Committee at least once a year the names and addresses of members in good standing and otherwise.

SEC. 2. The Section shall be the unit of organization.

SEC. 3. At every meeting a new Chairman shall be elected, who shall observe the usual parliamentary rules.

SEC. 4. The order of business of the Sections shall be as follows:

- 1.—Reading of Minutes.
- 2.—New Members.
- 3.—Correspondence.
- 4.—Financial Report.
- 5.—Report of Organizer.
- 6.—Report of Committees.
- 7.—Party Press and Literature.
- 8.—Unfinished Business.
- 9.—New Business.

SEC. 5. Every Section shall elect from its members an Organizer, and such additional officers as it deems proper. The Organizer shall conduct the correspondence with the National and State Executive Committee, and shall send an official report once every six months to each of the said Committees; he shall send twelve cents of the monthly dues of each member to the State Executive Committee, or, in the absence of such, to the National Executive Committee; he shall conduct the local organization and agitation.

SEC. 6. Should a protest be entered against the admission to a Section of any applicant for membership, a two-thirds vote of all present at a regular business meeting shall be necessary to admit him.

SEC. 7. No officer of a pure and simple trade or labor organization shall be a member of a Section.

a. Every economic organization that is not endorsed by the Socialist Labor Party or affiliated with it is defined to be a pure and simple trade or labor organization.

SEC. 8. Sections shall have jurisdiction over their own members.

SEC. 9. Every Section shall elect a standing Grievance Committee of three members, which shall investigate all charges and difficulties in the Section and report its decision.

SEC. 10. Charges against members shall not be debated until the Grievance Committee has thoroughly investigated the case and reported to the Section. All charges must be made in writing, signed either by individual members preferring same or the Organizer on behalf of the Section, whereupon the Grievance Committee shall deliver a copy of the charges to the accused and shall proceed to investigate the case without unreasonable delay, hearing the witnesses of both sides. A detailed report of the investigation and the conclusions of the Committee shall be drawn and laid before one of the next business meetings of the Section, the accused party being notified by the Secretary of the Committee in due time to appear

at same. The Section shall then decide the matter and its decision be entered on the minutes. The minutes and all papers concerning the investigation shall be delivered to the Secretary for safe keeping. The Secretary shall inform the accused in writing of such decision.

SEC. 11. All decisions of the Section may be appealed from within three months to the State Executive Committee. Decisions of the State Executive Committee may be appealed from within one month to a general vote of the Sections in the State, or to a State Convention, and the decision then reached, and all decisions of the National Executive Committee in individual grievances, where no State Executive Committee exists, shall be final.

SEC. 12. A majority of two-thirds of the members present at any business meeting shall be sufficient to expel any member or to suspend him for a definite period. Expulsion and suspensions shall be reported at once to the State and National Executive Committees, giving cause for such action.

SEC. 13. No expelled or suspended member shall be accorded the privileges of a member of the Party unless properly reinstated by the Section that suspended him or, if it shall have ceased to exist, by the State Executive Committee, or, in the absence of such, by the National Executive Committee.

SEC. 14. Members who have withheld payment of their dues for two months, unless they are known to be sick or unemployed, shall be immediately notified in writing by the Financial Secretary and at the conclusion of the third

month of delinquency shall stand suspended without further action of the Section. At the end of the fifth month another notice shall be sent to the delinquent and at the end of the sixth month, unless paid up, his name shall be stricken from the list of members and the fact so recorded in the minutes. A member dropped from the roll for non-payment of dues shall not be admitted to membership except upon payment of six months' dues.

SEC. 15. Sick or unemployed members will be excused from payment of dues, but the fact must be noted each month upon their cards.

SEC. 16. Each Section shall hold a regular business meeting at least once a month.

SEC. 17. The result of every election within the Section must be communicated at once to the National and the State Executive Committee.

SEC. 18. In case of the dissolution, suspension or expulsion of any Section, all property of the same must be delivered to the State Executive Committee, or, in the absence of such, to the National Executive Committee.

SEC. 19. No Section shall enter into any compromise with any other political party. No candidate of the Party for any public office shall accept any nomination or endorsement from any other political party, nor allow any such nomination or endorsement to stand without public protest, otherwise his nomination must be at once withdrawn and the fact made known through the Party organs and as much as possible through all other means of publication.

SEC. 20. Members-at-large shall be subject to the supervision of the State Executive Com-

mittee in the same manner as a member to a Section.

SEC. 21. No member, committee, or Section of the Party shall support any political publications other than Party organs by donations of money or procuring subscribers for the same.

SEC. 22. Acquaintance with the current affairs of the Party being essential for an intelligent discharge of the duties and responsibilities of Party membership, each Section shall relentlessly insist upon each member being a regular reader of the Party organ, except when none such is published in the language read by the member, and the Section shall order the paper at its own expense, it necessary, for the benefit of the unemployed.

SEC. 23. For a similar reason as in the preceding, it shall be the duty of each Section to acquire as soon as possible an assortment of Party literature dealing with the fundamental principles and the experiences of the Party and to stimulate their careful study by the members either individually or jointly.

ARTICLE III.

STATE ORGANIZATION.

SECTION 1. When in any State there are three Sections in three different towns or cities, they shall form a State Organization to be known as the State Executive Committee. It shall be the duty of such Committee to conduct systematic agitation within its jurisdiction, form new Sections, and provide the blanks required for the resignation of candidates for public office.

SEC. 2. Every Section connected with such Committee must also be connected with the National Executive Committee.

SEC. 3. The Committee shall send regular semi-annual reports to the National Executive Committee, giving the state of the organization and also a financial report for the six months.

SEC. 4. In a State having a legal State organization under laws permitting non-members of the Party to elect the same, the State Executive Committee shall prepare a set of rules for the government of such organization, subject to the approval of the National Executive Committee, and all members of the Party who are members of such organization shall strive in every way to secure the adoption of such approved rules by such organization, and strive at all times to secure the rejection of any rule in conflict with the same.

ARTICLE IV.

LOCAL ORGANIZATION.

SECTION 1. When in any city or town a Section is subdivided into branches, it shall form a City or Town Organization, to be known as the General Committee, and all local business and all dealings with the Party's National and the State Executive Committee shall be carried on by such Committee. When the general local government embraces a locality greater or smaller than a town or city the same rule shall apply.

SEC. 2. Such Committee shall alone exercise the powers delegated to Sections under Article II as far as concerns the admission, expulsion

and suspension of members, and from all decisions of the Committee in such matters appeal may be taken within one month to a general vote of the Section under its jurisdiction. The Committee shall consider no application for admission to membership unless the same has been accepted by a branch under its jurisdiction.

SEC. 3. In a city, town or other locality having a legal organization under laws permitting non-members to elect the same, the General Committee, and in the absence of such the Section, shall prepare a set of rules for the government of such organization, subject to the approval of the National and the State Executive Committees, and all members of the Party who are members of such organization shall strive in every way to secure the adoption of such approved rules by such organization and strive at all times to secure the rejection of any rule in conflict with the same.

ARTICLE V.

NATIONAL EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE.

SECTION 1. The National Executive Committee shall consist of one member from each State organized with a State Committee.

SEC. 2. The members of the National Executive Committee shall be elected by a general vote of the members of the party in their respective states.

SEC. 3. Every candidate, before his name is submitted to a general vote, shall sign a pledge to support the Party, its principles,

declared resolutions and tactics, such pledge to be filed with the National Secretary.

SEC. 4. The term of office of the members of the National Executive Committee shall be one year.

SEC. 5. Any member of the National Executive Committee shall be removable at will, either:

- a. Upon the application of two Sections of his own state, made to their State Executive Committee and ratified by a referendum vote of the membership of the state, or,
- b. Upon the application of three State Executive Committees, made to the National Executive Committee and ratified by a referendum vote of the whole membership of the Party.

SEC. 6. The National Executive Committee shall meet twice a year in Regular Session, on the first Sunday of January and July, or in Special Session upon the written call, sent to the National Secretary and published in the National Organ, of at least one-third of its members, pledging themselves to attend.

SEC. 7. Five members shall constitute a quorum for the Regular Sessions of the National Executive Committee. One third of the members shall constitute a quorum for a Special Session.

SEC. 8. The Sessions, Regular and Special, of the National Executive Committee shall be held at the National Headquarters of the Party.

SEC. 9. No member of the National Executive Committee shall at the same time

be a member of a State Executive Committee, or hold any other National office.

Sec. 10. The National Executive Committee shall elect a Sub Committee for the purpose of carrying on the executive work of the Party during the time intervening between the Sessions of the National Executive Committee; said Sub Committee to act on its behalf in conjunction with the National Secretary and subject to the instructions and control of the National Executive Committee, and the latter shall elect all other local committees and officers at the National Headquarters that it may deem necessary.

Sec. 11. The whole or any part of the above mentioned Sub Committee is at any time subject to recall by a majority vote of the National Executive Committee, adopted while in session or by written communication.

Sec. 12. The Sub Committee may, at will of the National Executive Committee, be chosen from the membership of the Sections located within a two hours' ride from the National Headquarters.

Sec. 13. The Sub Committee shall be composed of fifteen members.

Sec. 14. The National Executive Committee has for its duty:

- a. To carry out the resolutions of the National Convention and those adopted by a general vote.
- b. To supervise the agitation throughout the country.
- c. To render final decision in all appeals made to it where no State Organization exists.

- d. To expel, or suspend and reorganize any State Executive Committee or Section guilty of disloyalty.
- e. To establish proper relations and communication with the Socialist parties of other countries.
- f. To make all necessary preparations for the National Convention, and make a full report to such convention on all party matters.
- g. To audit the books of the National Secretary and all other books of the Party, every six months, and to issue semi-annually, and in sufficient number, copies of a report of the party's finances.
- h. To submit propositions to a general vote. A proposition sent from any Section if endorsed by at least five others located in at least three different States, shall be submitted to a general vote; but if in the opinion of the Committee the proposition is not in the interest of the Party, it shall not be submitted to a general vote unless five per cent. of all the Sections in good standing shall subsequently re-endorse it.
- i. To be represented at the National Convention by the National Secretary, who shall have no vote, but merely an advisory voice, and shall bear no other credentials.
- j. To annually and in due time call upon the Sections to make nominations for not more than three delegates to represent the Party in the annual conven-

tion of the Socialist Trade & Labor Alliance, the delegates to be elected from the nominees by a general vote.

k. To issue application cards bearing a plain exposition of the principles of the Party and the duties required from the applicant.

l. To issue membership cards, including a copy of the Party Constitution, also to provide transfer cards to members moving.

m. To publish in the official Party organ all expulsions and suspensions reported and all its decisions on appeals.

SEC. 15. The Committee may make its own order of business, and may compensate its officers from the Party treasury according to the labors performed.

SEC. 16. No editor of a Party publication, and no permanent, salaried employee of the Committee, excepting its own officers, shall be a member of the National Executive Committee.

ARTICLE VI.

NATIONAL SECRETARY.

SECTION 1. The National Secretary shall be elected by the National Convention, the election to be specifically approved by a general vote of the whole Party.

SEC. 2. His term of office shall be four years and he shall sign a pledge similar to the one required of the candidates for the National Executive Committee.

SEC. 3. The procedure in removing the National Secretary from office shall be the same as that provided for the removal of a member of the National Executive Committee by Article V, Section 5, clause b.

SEC. 4. In case of vacancy in the office of National Secretary the National Executive Committee shall fill the vacancy temporarily, and at once proceed to nominate two candidates and submit the same to a general vote of the whole Party for the selection of a permanent National Secretary.

SEC. 5. He shall be the Financial Secretary of the Party and shall act as Secretary for Foreign Affairs. He shall not be a member of the National Executive Committee, but shall have an advisory voice in all its proceedings.

ARTICLE VII.

NATIONAL CONVENTION.

SEC. 1. The National Convention of the Party shall be held every fourth or presidential election year; but, if five sections in three different States so demand, a general vote shall be taken as to holding a special convention. A general vote shall decide as to the place, but the date of the convention shall be fixed by the National Executive Committee.

SEC. 2. The State shall be the basis of representation, each State to be entitled to one delegate for every fifty members in the State on December 31 of the year next preceding, and one additional delegate for a major fraction thereof. Any State having less than fifty members to be entitled to one delegate; a territory to be treated as a State.

SEC. 3. The National Executive Committee shall call for nominations for the place of the convention in January of the convention year, and the State Executive Committee in transmitting the call to the Sections shall call for nominations for delegates, the nominations to be submitted to a general vote of the Sections with instructions as to the number of candidates each member has a right to vote for.

SEC. 4. Delegates shall be members in good standing of the Party for one year and citizens of the United States, but a State unable to comply with this provision may dispense with the same as far as may be necessary, subject to the approval of the National Executive Committee. Each delegate shall have but one vote.

SEC. 5. The expenses of the delegates shall be borne by the States sending them, but the National Executive Committee shall set aside two cents of the moneys received for every due stamp sold to be used as a mileage fund, each State to be paid from said fund for the railroad fare of its delegates upon the basis of an equal percentage for every delegate attending the convention.

SEC. 6. The National Organization of the Socialist Trade & Labor Alliance may be represented in the National Convention by three fraternal delegates, who must have the qualifications of regular delegates of the Party.

SEC. 7. The National Convention shall frame the National Platform, decide the form of organization, select the seat of the National Executive Committee, and investigate and decide

all difficulties within the Party. A majority vote shall be necessary in selecting the seat of the National Executive Committee.

SEC. 8. All acts of the National Convention shall be submitted to the Sections for approval by a general vote.

ARTICLE VIII.

DUES.

SECTION 1. The Sections shall levy upon each of their members a monthly tax of twelve cents, to be paid monthly to the State Executive Committee.

SEC. 2. The dues shall be receipted for by stamps to be furnished by the National Executive Committee to the State Executive Committees at the rate of seven cents each, and in the absence of such to the Sections at the rate of twelve cents each.

Sec. 3. Every State Executive Committee or Section shall receive a first quota of stamps on credit, to be measured by the size of the membership; such quota to remain a standing indebtedness. All stamps received subsequently must be paid for in cash, and the National Secretary, as well as Secretaries of State Executive Committees, shall not send out any stamps other than in compliance with this rule.

ARTICLE IX.

THE PARTY PRESS.

SECTION 1. The National Executive Committee shall have control of the contents of all Party organs, and shall act on grievances connected with the same.

SEC. 2. The editor of every Official Party Organ shall be elected by the National Convention, the election to be specifically approved by a general vote of the whole Party.

SEC. 3. The procedure in removing the editor of an Official Party Organ and in case of a vacancy in his position shall be the same as that provided for the National Secretary, but any such editor who may prove incompetent or disloyal shall be at once suspended by the National Executive Committee.

SEC. 4. The election of editors of other publications recognized as Party Organs, but not Official, shall be subject to the approval of the National Executive Committee. The National Executive Committee shall demand from the publishers the immediate removal of an editor who may prove incompetent or disloyal, and in case of non-compliance with this demand, the National Executive Committee shall at once repudiate the publication.

SEC. 5. No member, committee, or Section of the Party shall publish a political paper without the sanction of the National Executive Committee, and then only on condition that all the property of such paper be vested as far as practicable in the National Executive Committee free from any financial or legal liability, the editor of such paper to be subject to the provisions of the preceding section.

ARTICLE X.

OFFICIAL PARTY ORGANS.

SECTION 1. The Daily People and the Weekly People shall be official Party organs.

SEC. 2. The management of official Party organs shall be administered by the National Executive Committee, said committee to hold the property of the official Party organs in trust, subject to the Constitution and Resolutions of the Party affecting their management.

ARTICLE XI.

MISCELLANEOUS.

SECTION 1. This constitution may be amended by the National Convention or by a general vote. Within five weeks after the issuance of a call for a general vote relative to changing the constitution, except that required for approving the acts of a National Convention, amendments may be proposed by any Section to any proposition so laid before the Party, and such amendments shall then also be submitted to be voted on together with the original proposition. The result of the vote must be reported fifteen weeks after the first call was issued.

The National Secretary shall forthwith transmit to the Sections a tabulated statement of the vote cast by each Section.

SEC. 2. All officers and committees of a Section, or of State and Local Organizations, shall be subject to removal by their constituents upon charges duly made and tried.

SEC. 3. No applicant shall be admitted to membership without the presiding officer shall explain the significance of the class struggle to him, and his pledging himself in writing to its recognition and support. A copy of the constitution and platform shall be handed to every new member.

SEC. 4. In subscribing to the platform and constitution, the members take upon themselves the obligation to assist each other to the extent of their ability, in case of need.

SEC. 5. A member in good standing of one Section shall have the right to attend and speak at any meeting of another Section or branch of a Section, but shall not be allowed to vote.

SEC. 6. No person shall participate in hearing or deciding an appeal who is a party to the proceedings.

SEC. 7. No person who has not been a member of the Party for at least one year, and who has not identified himself with the Party by active participation in its work, shall be nominated as a candidate for any public office without the specific approval of the State Executive Committee.

SEC. 8. On accepting a nomination of the Party for a public office, the candidate shall at once give the Section in charge a signed resignation, dated blank, of the office for which he is nominated, and shall assent in writing to its being filed with the proper authorities if, in case of election, he proves disloyal to the Party, such resignation and assent, immediately upon execution, to be turned over to the State Executive Committee.

SEC. 9. All General Organizers employed by the National Executive Committee shall propagate the principles of the Socialist Trade and Labor Alliance in conjunction with those of the Socialist Labor Party, and, if eligible, shall be members of the Socialist Trade and Labor Alliance.

SEC. 10. At all elections and in all voting, unless otherwise provided, a plurality vote is sufficient to decide.

SEC. 11. Sections and Local and State Organizations may make rules for their action, but such must not conflict with any rules duly provided for their formation and procedure nor with any rules of the State or National Organization, all rules of the Sections and Local Organizations, to be approved by their respective State Executive Committees; and all rules of State Organizations to be approved by the National Executive Committee.

SEC. 12. Robert's Rules of Order shall govern the organization in so far as special rules are not provided.

SEC. 13. The functions of a State Executive Committee under the Constitution and Regulations of the Party shall be exercised by the National Executive Committee where no State Executive Committee exists.

SEC. 14. It is the duty of every State Secretary and Organizer to transmit promptly to their respective Sections and members all official matters and communications sent to them from the National Executive Committee for that purpose.

SEC. 15. If a member is expelled or suspended after being elected delegate to a State or National Convention, such member may be seated in the convention to which he has been elected, if it, upon investigation, so decides.

SEC. 16. No member of the National Executive Committee, nor any other national officer, nor any of their subalterns or appointees

shall have power to raise any loan or loans or otherwise incur any liability in the name of the Socialist Labor Party.

SEC. 17. No Party institution shall extend credit to organizations of the Party sending for supplies.

SEC. 18. All former provisions conflicting with this Constitution are rescinded.



ADOPTED AT THE ELEVENTH NATIONAL CONVENTION
OF THE SOCIALIST LABOR PARTY, IN THE
CITY OF NEW YORK, JULY 1904.

PLATFORM.

The Socialist Labor Party of America, in convention assembled, reasserts the inalienable right of man to life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness.

We hold that the purpose of government is to secure to every citizen the enjoyment of this right; but taught by experience we hold furthermore that such right is illusory to the majority of the people, to wit, the working class, under the present system of economic inequality that is essentially destructive of THEIR life, THEIR liberty and THEIR happiness.

We hold that the true theory of politics is that the machinery of government must be controlled by the whole people; but again taught by experience we hold furthermore that the true theory of economics is that the means of production must likewise be owned, operated and controlled by the people in common. Man cannot exercise his right of life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness without the ownership of the land on and the tool with which to work. Deprived of these, his life, his liberty and his fate fall into the hands of the class that owns those essentials for work and production.

We hold that the existing contradiction be-

tween the theory of democratic government and the fact of a despotic economic system—the private ownership of the natural and social opportunities—divides the people into two classes: the Capitalist Class and the Working Class; throws society into the convulsions of the Class Struggle; and perverts government to the exclusive benefit of the Capitalist Class.

Thus labor is robbed of the wealth which it alone produces, is denied the means of self-employment, and, by compulsory idleness in wage slavery, is even deprived of the necessities of life.

Against such a system the Socialist Labor Party raises the banner of revolt, and demands the unconditional surrender of the Capitalist Class.

The time is fast coming when in the natural course of social evolution, this system, through the destructive action of its failures and crises, on the one hand, and the constructive tendencies of its trusts and other capitalist combinations, on the other hand, will have worked out its own downfall.

We, therefore, call upon the wage workers of America to organize under the banner of the Socialist Labor Party into a class conscious body, aware of its rights and determined to conquer them.

And we also call upon all other intelligent citizens to place themselves squarely upon the ground of Working Class interests, and join us in this mighty and noble work of human emancipation, so that we may put summary end to the existing barbarous class conflict by placing the land and all the means of production, transportation and distribution into the hands of the people as a collective body, and substituting the Co-operative Commonwealth for the present state of planless production, industrial war and social disorder—a commonwealth in which every worker shall have the free exercise and full benefit of his faculties, multiplied by all the modern factors of civilization.

RECORD OF TRANSFERS.

Every transfer, from a Section, entered below certifies to the fact that the member so transferred was in good standing at the time of such transfer and that the Section transferring him has no claims against him.

Transferred from Section.....

Date190

Signed,, Fin. Sec'y.

Received by Section.....

Date190

Signed,, Fin. Sec'y.

Transferred from Section.....

Date190

Signed,, Fin. Sec'y.

Received by Section.....

Date190

Signed,, Fin. Sec'y.

Transferred from Section.....

Date190

Signed,, Fin. Sec'y.

Received by Section.....

Date190

Signed,, Fin. Sec'y.

AMENDMENTS.

By a referendum vote, this constitution has been amended as follows:

1. Article II, Section 7, subdivision "a", has been repealed and the following has been substituted:

Article II, Section 7a, as substituted and now in force: "Every economic or labor organization that does not recognize the class struggle and that is not organized on class lines, having for its purpose the overthrow of the capitalist system, is defined to be a pure and simple trade or labor organization."

2. Article V, Section 14, subdivision "j", has been repealed.

3. Article VII, Section 6, has been repealed.

4. Article XI, Section 9, has been repealed and the following has been substituted:

Article XI, Section 9, as substituted and now in force: "All General Organizers, employed by the National Executive Committee, shall propagate the principles of the Industrial Workers of the World in conjunction with those of the Socialist Labor Party, and, if eligible, shall be members of the Industrial Workers of the World."

The following additional provision has been embodied in the constitution: "Resolved, That we hold it to be the duty of every class conscious Socialist to support the Industrial Workers of the World to the best of his ability."

A true copy.

Henry Kuhn, National Secretary.