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Address all orders to Arnold Petersen, 45 Rose St., New York, N. Y.

Constitution

OF THE

Socialist

Labor Party

OF THE

United States
 of America



ADOPTED AT THE

Eleventh National Convention

NEW YORK, JULY, 1904

AMENDED AT THE

National Conventions

New York,

1908, '12, '16, '20, '24, '28.

S. L. P. ORGANS.

English.

WEEKLY PEOPLE, 45 Rose St.,
New York, N. Y., per year\$2.00

Members of the Party are referred to Art.
II, Sect. 20, Party constitution.

Foreign Language.

A MUNKAS, Hungarian Weekly, 419
E. 83rd St., New York, N. Y., per
year2.00

RABOTNICHESKA PROSVETA,
Bulgarian Weekly, P. O. Box 368,
Granite City, Ill., per year1.50

RADNICKA BORBA, South Slavo-
nian Weekly, 3359 St. Clair Ave.,
Cleveland, O., per year2.00

The foreign language press of the S.L.P. performs a very special and necessary function. Its chief object is to reach the foreign wage workers in the language they speak and understand. Members and sympathizers should direct the attention of their foreign fellow workers or friends, to one of the above papers. Have all subscriptions sent to the address given.

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 National and State Executive Committees their organization as a Section with the names and addresses of the members.

b. Each Section shall send to the National and State Executive Committees a report of its numerical and financial condition and the names and addresses of mem-

bers in good standing and otherwise on December 31 of each year.

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

Section 3. The order of business of the Section 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. Roll call and standing of members.
10. New business.

Section 4. 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 Committees, and shall send an official report to each of the said committees on December 31st of each year; the Organizer shall send at least thirty-five cents of the monthly dues of each member to the S. E. C., or in the absence of such, to the N. E. C.; the Organizer shall conduct the local organization and agitation.

Sec. 5. 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. 6. Sections shall have jurisdiction over their own members.

Sec. 7. 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. 8. All charges must be made in writing, signed by the individual members preferring same, and charges against members shall not be debated until the Grievance Committee has thoroughly investigated them and reported to the Section. 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 findings with the recommendations of the Committee shall be submitted to one of the next business meetings of the Section. The findings and recommendations to be voted on separately. The accused party shall be notified in due time by the Secretary of the Committee to appear at such meeting. The Section shall then decide the matter in executive session and its decision be entered on the minutes. The minutes and all papers concerning the investigation shall be delivered to the Organizer for safekeeping. The Organizer shall inform the accused in writing of such decision.

Sec. 9. A member under charges is technically under arrest and deprived of all membership rights pending decision on the charges, and no such member shall hold any office, or serve in any capacity whatever in the Party, until all charges are disposed of, except in the case of a National Secretary or Editor who shall continue to function in their respective capaci-

ties until dealt with in accordance with Article VII Section 3, and Article X Section 3.

Sec. 10. A majority of the members, voting upon this question, at any business meeting, shall be sufficient to expel any member or to suspend him for a definite period. Expulsion and suspension shall be reported at once to the State and National Executive Committees, giving cause for action.

Sec. 11. All decisions of the Section in connection with charges 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. No expelled or suspended member shall be accorded the privileges of a member of the Party unless properly reinstated by the Section or Language Federation Branch that expelled or suspended him, or, if either shall have ceased to exist, by the State Executive Committee or Language Federation, or, in the absence of such, by the National Executive Committee.

A Section may, if it chooses, refuse a suspended member admittance at its business meeting.

An expelled member may be readmitted to membership if his application for reinstatement is endorsed, first by the Sec-

tion having expelled him, and, second, by the National Executive Committee.

In case the expelling Section is or has been located in a State having a State Executive Committee, the N. E. C., in the event of its endorsement of such application, shall forward the same to such S. E. C. for submission to a general vote of the membership in such State for final action; but if the Section having expelled the applicant is or has been located in a State not having a State Executive Committee, it shall be the duty of the National Executive Committee finally to dispose of such application. The same procedure and differentiation as between organized and unorganized States shall be adhered to in the case of expelled members-at-large applying for readmission.

Sec. 13. 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.

Sec. 14. Sick or unemployed members will be excused from payment of dues, but the fact must be noted each month upon their cards by means of exemption stamps.

Sec. 15. Each Section shall hold a regular business meeting at least once a month.

Sec. 16. The result of every election

within the Section must be communicated at once to the National and the State Executive Committees.

Sec. 17. In case of the dissolution 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. 18. 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. 19. Members-at-large residing in states that have no State Executive Committee, but where one or two Sections exist, shall be attached to such Section or Sections as out-of-town members. Applicants for membership-at-large shall be admitted by the N. E. C. Sub-Committee and then transferred to whatever Section the Sub-Committee may decide.

Sec. 20. 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. 21. 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, if necessary, for the benefit of the unemployed.

Sec. 22. 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 of the Party and to stimulate their careful study by the members either individually or jointly.

Sec. 23. When a member transfers his membership to another Section, the organizer of the receiving Section shall notify the organizer of the transferring Section of such transfer. The transfer shall not be considered complete until officially confirmed by the receiving Section or other subdivision of the Party and such member shall be under the jurisdiction of the Section, Language Branch, S. E. C. or N. E. C., as the case may be, issuing the transfer pending its completion.

ARTICLE III.

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 Committees shall be carried on by such Committee through the Organizer. When the gen-

eral local government embraces a locality greater or smaller than a town or city the same rule shall apply.

In the case of such Branch (or Branches) being a foreign language group (other than a Federation Branch) the Section may forego the formation of a general committee, but in such cases each foreign language group shall attend Section meetings either in a body, or by a representation of at least three of its members. The members of such foreign language groups shall at all times be under the complete jurisdiction of the Section, which shall keep a record of their standing, and see to it that dues stamps are purchased as in the case of all other members.

Sec. 2. Such General 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.

Sec. 4. In cities, towns or other localities where there exists a Section of the Socialist Labor Party and a Branch or Branches of any S. L. P. Language Federation there shall be formed a Propaganda Committee composed of delegates from said Sections and Branches, whose function it shall be to cooperate for the purpose of furthering the agitation of the S. L. P. in such localities, in addition to such agitation which may be carried on by the respective Sections and Branches separately.

ARTICLE IV.

State Organization.

Section 1. When in any state there are three Sections in three different towns or cities, the National Office shall initiate a move for effecting the formation of a State Organization to be known as the State Executive Committee by appointing one who is a member of one of the three Sections to call for nominations for State Secretary which nominations shall be submitted to the N. E. C. for approval. When the State Secretary is elected, he shall proceed to conduct the nominations and election of a State Executive Committee. It shall be the duty of such committee to conduct systematic agitational work within its jurisdiction, form new Sections, and maintain close contact with all Sections and members-at-large in the state.

Whenever temporarily a state lacks the required number of Sections to maintain a State Executive Committee the National Executive Committee may in its discretion permit the continuance of such State Executive Committee pending the reorganization of the temporarily lapsed Sections.

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

Sec. 3. The Committee shall send regular annual reports to the N. E. C., giving the state of the organization and also a financial report for the twelve months ending December 31.

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.

Sec. 5. No State Executive Committee shall have the power to expel, or suspend and reorganize any Section guilty of disloyalty.

ARTICLE V.

National Executive Committee.

Section 1. For the purpose of providing a basis for National Executive Committee

representation, the country shall be divided into nine regions as follows: REGION No. 1 to comprise the following states: Maine, New Hampshire, Vermont, Massachusetts, Connecticut, Rhode Island. REGION No. 2: New York. REGION No. 3: New Jersey, Pennsylvania, Delaware, Maryland, District of Columbia, Virginia, West Virginia. REGION No. 4: Ohio, Kentucky, Indiana, Michigan. REGION No. 5: Minnesota, Wisconsin, Iowa, Illinois, Missouri. REGION No. 6: North Dakota, South Dakota, Nebraska, Kansas, Montana, Wyoming, Colorado, Utah. REGION No. 7: Idaho, Nevada, Oregon, Washington, California. REGION No. 8: Arizona, New Mexico, Texas, Oklahoma. REGION No. 9: Arkansas, Louisiana, Mississippi, Alabama, Tennessee, North Carolina, South Carolina, Georgia, Florida.

Sec. 2. The National Executive Committee shall consist of one member from each Region having at least three Sections in good standing.

(Note: For representation on the N.E.C. of Language Federations see Article XIII Sec. 2.)

Sec. 3. The members of the National Executive Committee shall be elected by a general vote of the members of the Party in their respective Regions.

All members of the N. E. C. must be citizens of the United States, but a Region or Language Federation unable to comply with this provision may dispense with the same as far as may be necessary, subject to the approval of the N. E. C.

Sec. 4. 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. 5. The term of office of the members of the National Executive Committee shall be one year, commencing May First.

Sec. 6. Any member of the National Executive Committee shall be removable at will, either: (a) Upon the application of three Sections within the Region he represents, or (b) Upon the application of five Sections within at least two Regions.

In either alternative the initiating Section must submit its application to the National Office for the necessary seconds, all seconds to be made within six weeks from the date the call is issued by the National Office. If sufficient seconds are received the question is then submitted to the entire membership for a referendum vote.

Sec. 7. The N. E. C. shall meet once a year in regular session, on the first Saturday in May, or in special session upon the written call of at least a majority of its members pledging themselves to attend; said call to be sent to the National Secretary and published in the national organ twice in succession.

Sec. 8. Five members shall constitute a quorum for the regular sessions of the National Executive Committee. A majority of the members shall constitute a quorum for a special session.

Sec. 9. The sessions, regular and special, of the National Executive Committee shall

convene at the national headquarters of the Party.

Sec. 10. No member of the National Executive Committee shall at the same time be a member of the State Executive Committee, or hold any other national office.

Sec. 11. 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. 12. 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. 13. 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. 14. The Sub-Committee shall be composed of eleven members.

Sec. 15. 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 decisions in all appeals made to it where no State organization exists.

d. To expel 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 annually, and to issue annually to the membership a report of the Party's finances.

h. To submit propositions to a general vote. A proposition sent from any Section, if endorsed within six weeks 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 ten per cent of all the Sections in good standing shall subsequently re-endorse it. The voting to close within nine weeks from the time the proposition was submitted to a general vote.

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

k. To issue membership cards, and also to provide transfer cards to members.

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

Sec. 16. The Committee may make its own order of business, and may compensate its officers from the Party treasury, according to the labors performed.

Sec. 17. No editor of a Party publication, and no permanent, salaried employe of the Committee, except its own officers, shall be a member of the National Executive Committee.

ARTICLE VI.

Mileage.

The expenses of the members of the N. E. C. representing the various territorial Regions and Federations shall be borne by the respective Regions and Federations sending them, excepting, however, their railroad fare coming and going which shall be defrayed from a joint convention-N. E. C. Mileage Fund to be collected by the National Executive Committee by means of a special annual assessment of fifty cents per member and for which a stamp shall be issued. The National Executive Committee shall bank the funds so collected in a savings bank, the same to be drawn against only immediately prior to the holding of the N. E. C. sessions and National Convention.

ARTICLE VII.

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 VIII.

National Convention.

Section 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 de-

cide 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 and one additional delegate for a major fraction thereof; but the apportionment shall be made on the average membership for the last twelve months of the year next preceding. 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 five months prior to the date of same, and the State Executive Committee, in transmitting the call to the Sections, shall call for nominations for delegates, such 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.

In the absence of a State Executive Committee the National Secretary shall call for nomination and election of delegates. In the case of Language Federations such call shall be issued by the National Secretary of each respective Federation.

Delegates must be members in the State electing them.

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 these provisions 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 and Federations with exception of their railroad fare coming and going which latter shall be defrayed as per Article VI.

Sec. 6. 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. 7. All acts of the National Convention shall be submitted to the Sections for approval by a general vote.

ARTICLE IX.

Dues.

Section 1. The Sections shall levy upon each of their members a monthly tax of at least thirty-five cents, to be paid 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 Committee at the rate of at least twenty-five cents each, and, in the absence of such, to the Sections at the rate of thirty-five cents each.

Sec. 3. Every newly organized Section shall receive a free quota of stamps, to be measured by the size of the membership. All stamps received subsequently must be paid for in cash, and the National Secre-

tary, as well as Secretaries of State Executive Committees, shall not send out any stamps other than in compliance with this rule.

ARTICLE X.

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 or Language Federation 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 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 XI.

Official Party Organs.

Section 1. The Weekly People (and such daily paper as the Party may at any time publish) shall be the official organ of the Party.

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 XII.

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 re-

ported 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 explaining 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. 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. 5. No person shall participate in hearing or deciding an appeal who is a party to the proceedings.

Sec. 6. No person who has not been a member 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, except in the case of a new Section and only with the specific approval of the State Executive Committee or, in the absence of such, by the National Executive Committee.

Sec. 7. At all elections and in all voting, unless otherwise provided, a plurality vote is sufficient to decide.

Sec. 8. Sections and local and State or-

ganizations 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. 9. Robert's Rules of Order shall govern the organization in so far as special rules are not provided.

Sec. 10. 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. 11. It is the duty of every State Secretary and Section 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. 12. 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. 13. 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, without first securing the express approval

of the membership of the Party by general vote.

Sec. 14. No Party institution shall extend credit to organizations of the Party sending for supplies.

Sec. 15. All former provisions conflicting with this Constitution are rescinded.

ARTICLE XIII.

Language Federations.

Non-English speaking Language Federations nationally organized shall be affiliated with the S. L. P. in the following manner:

Section 1. Each Federation shall pay a per capita tax of eight cents per member per month into the national treasury.

Sec. 2. Each Federation to be represented on the N. E. C. by one member.

Sec. 3. Each Federation shall be represented in the National Convention of the S. L. P. by one delegate for every 50 members or major fraction thereof, as provided in Art. VIII Section 2.

Sec. 4. Branches of Federations shall be represented in the State Conventions and State Executive Committees of the Party with vote and voice upon all matters pertaining to the conduct of political campaigns, but they shall not participate in decisions pertaining to internal Party matters, as to do so would mean the exercise of dual membership functions.

Sec. 5. The S. L. P. shall have full jurisdiction over all properties of the Federations, as with all other subdivisions of the Party, without responsibility for any indebtedness incurred by the Federations.

Sec. 6. No member of a Federation Language Branch shall at the same time be a member of a Section of the Party.

Sec. 7. The constitution and by-laws of the national bodies of Language Federations shall be subject to approval by the N. E. C. of the Party, and shall contain all fundamental provisions of the National Party Constitution.

Sec. 8. The units of organization shall be known as Branches. Branches shall have jurisdiction over their own members in conformity with Art. II, Sections 7 to 11, inclusive.

Socialist Labor Party Platform

(Adopted at the National Convention,
May 1928.)

The Socialist Labor Party of the United States of America in National Convention assembled in New York on May 13, 1928, reaffirming its previous platform pronouncements, and in accord with international Socialist principles, declares:

Social conditions, as illustrated by events crowded into the last few years, have ripened so fast that the principles, hitherto proclaimed by the Socialist Labor Party, as well as the methods that the Socialist Labor Party has hitherto advocated, stand conspicuously demonstrated.

The Capitalist Social System has wrought its own destruction. Its leading exponents, even when seemingly at war on principles, cannot conceal the identity of their political views. The absence of

dividing lines between the two leading political clearing houses of capitalism—the Republican and the Democratic parties; the supineness, almost exultant readiness with which the leading politicians—aspirants for the presidency and other important posts in the Political State—yield themselves to the needs of ultra-capitalism, to the exclusion of the needs of the producing masses, proclaim the inner conviction of the foremost men of the Ruling Class that the Republic of Capital is at the end of its tether.

True to economic laws, from which Socialism proceeds, dominant wealth has to such an extent concentrated into the hands of a select few, the modern industrial autocracy, that the lower layers of the capitalist class feel driven to the ragged edge, while the large majority of the people, the working class, are being submerged.

True to sociologic laws, by the light of which Socialism reads its forecasts, the industrial autocracy is breaking through its republican-democratic shell and is stretching out its hands toward absolutism in government; the property-holding layers below it are turning at bay; the proletariat is awakening to its consciousness of class, and thereby to the perception of its historic mission.

In the midst of this hurly-burly, and the resulting confusion of thought, all the colors of the rainbow are being projected upon the social mists.

From the lower layers of the capitalist class issue demands for reforms designed to check the logical tendencies of capital-

ism, demands covering the entire range of social visionariness. Overwhelmed by gigantic combinations in industry and finance, the middle and lower sections of the capitalist class clamor for a return of the age of competition. But even if such a return were possible it should not be effected; even if it should it cannot. To the thinker it is self-evident that the system neither can nor will return to what the Industrial Revolution has been gradually sloughing off during a century of progress.

The law of social progress pushes toward a system of production that shall crown the efforts of man—a system which without arduous toil, with an abundance of the necessities for material existence, will allow leisure for mental and spiritual expansion. The gigantic machine of modern production is a mechanical contrivance which is solving the problem of material needs which has confronted mankind from its infancy. To smash this contrivance and to reintroduce the days of small-fry competition would set back the hands of the dial of time. The mere thought is foolhardy. He who undertakes the feat might as well brace himself against the cascade of Niagara. The cascade of Social Evolution would overwhelm him.

From the lowest layers of the property-holding class—layers that have sniffed the breath of Socialism and imagine themselves Socialists—comes the iridescent theory of capturing the machinery of production for the people by the ballot only, with a vague idea of government ownership and operation as the aim. But the

“capture of the machinery of production for the people” implies the Social Revolution. To imply the Social Revolution with the ballot, without the means of enforcing the fiat of the ballot, in case the Reaction attempts to override it, is to fire blank cartridges at a foe. It is worse. It is to threaten his existence without the means to carry out the threat, which can result only in one of two things—either the leaders are bought out, or the revolutionary class, to which they appeal and which they succeed in drawing along, are led like cattle to the shambles.

An equally iridescent hue of the rainbow is projected from a layer that lies almost wholly within the submerged class—the theory of capturing the machinery of production for the working class with physical force only and through underground conspiracies. The capture of the machinery of production for the people implies something strikingly different from all previous revolutions. It implies revolution carried on by the masses. For sociologic reasons mass-revolutionary conspiracy is, today, an impossibility, even an absurdity. The trust-holding autocracy may successfully put through a conspiracy of physical force. The smallness of its numbers makes conspiracy possible. The hugeness of the numbers, requisite for a revolution against the trust-holding autocracy, excludes conspiracy from the arsenal of the Revolution, and just as that autocracy at one point of the social circle boldly aims for absolutism and dictatorship in government, so this all but submerged layer at the

merging point proclaims its aim to be dictatorship, thus closing the circle.

All these groups have one thing in common: they plant themselves upon the presumption of a continuation of the Political State—a presumption that is at war with logic and social evolution.

Only two programs—the program of Industrial Top-Capitalism and the program of the Socialist Labor Party—grasp the situation.

The Political State, the instrument of class rule and oppression, is worn out in this, the leading capitalist nation of the world. The Socialist or Industrial Government is throbbing for birth. The Political State, being a class state, is government separate and apart from the productive energies of the people; it is government mainly for holding the ruled class in subjection. The Socialist or Industrial Government, being the denial of the class state, is government that is an integral part of the productive energies of the people.

As their functions differ, so are the structures of the two "States" different.

The structure of the Political State is based on territorial representation; the structure of the Industrial Government demands representations by industries and useful occupations.

The economic or industrial evolution has reached that point where the Political State no longer can maintain itself under the forms of democracy. While the Industrial Autocracy has relatively shrunk, the enemies it is raising against itself are

becoming numerous. Moreover, obedient to the law of its existence, the Political State not only multiplies its enemies; it has been forced to recruit and group the bulk of these enemies, and the revolutionary bulk at that.

The working class of the land, the historically revolutionary element, is grouped by occupations, agricultural as well as industrial, in such manner that—while the "autonomous craft union," at one time the palladium of the workers, has become a harmless scare-crow upon which the capitalist birds roost at ease—the Revolutionary Industrial Unions will spring logically from the modern organization of industry itself and, casting ahead of them the constituencies of the government of the future, point to the Industrial Governmental Organization.

Nor is this all. Not only has the Political State raised its own enemies; not only has it multiplied them; not only has it recruited and drilled them; not only has it grouped them into shape and form to succeed it; it is, furthermore, driven by its inherent necessities to prodding on the revolutionary class by digging ever more fiercely into its flanks the harpoon of exploitation.

With the purchasing power of wages sinking to ever lower depths; with certainty of work hanging on ever slenderer threads; with an ever more gigantically swelling army of the unemployed; with the need of profits pressing the Industrial Autocracy harder and harder to squander recklessly the workers' limbs and lives;

what with all this and the parallel process of merging the workers of all industries into one interdependent solid mass, the final break-up is rendered inevitable.

No wild schemes and no rainbow-chasing will stand in the approaching emergency. The Industrial Autocracy knows this—and so does the Socialist Labor Party—and logical is the program of each.

The program of the Industrial Autocracy is Industrial Feudalism. Where a Social Revolution is pending and for whatever reason is not accomplished, REACTION is the alternative.

The program of the Socialist Labor Party is REVOLUTION—the Industrial or Socialist Republic, the social order where the Political State is overthrown; where the “Congress” of the land, the legislative and executive central directing authority, consists of the representatives of the useful occupations; where, accordingly, the government will be an essential factor in production; where the gigantic machines are freed from the trammels of the private ownership that now turn into a curse the blessings which these machines are instinct with; where, accordingly, abundance can be the patrimony of all who work; where the shackles of wage slavery are no more.

In keeping with the goals of the different programs are the means of their execution.

The means in contemplation by REACTION is forcible repression. To this end REACTION is seeking, by means of industrial spies and other agencies, to lash

the proletariat into acts of violence that may give color to a resort to physical force. By its maneuvers, it is egging the working class on to deeds of fury. The capitalist press echoes the policy, while the pure and simple reformers, pure and simple trade unionists, and “revolutionary” visionaries generally, are snared into the trap.

To the contrary, the means firmly adhered to by the Socialist Labor Party is the constitutional method of political action, backed by the industrially and class-consciously organized proletariat, to the exclusion of anarchy, underground conspiracies, and all that thereby hangs.

At such a critical period in the nation's existence the Socialist Labor Party calls upon the working class of America, more deliberately serious than ever before, to rally at the polls under the Party's banner. And the Party also calls upon all 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 for the present state of planless production, industrial war and social disorder, the Socialist or Industrial Commonwealth—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.

Resolution on the Economic Organization of Labor.

*Adopted by the National Convention of the
Socialist Labor Party, 1908, and
Reaffirmed as Amended by
the National Conventions
of 1924 and 1928.*

The Seventeenth National Convention of the Socialist Labor Party of America, in session in the City of New York, May, 1928, reaffirms the position taken on the question of the economic organization of labor at the Party's Twelfth National Convention, and reaffirmed at the Thirteenth National Convention, 1912, as follows:

Whereas, The integrally organized industrial organization of the working class forms the necessary frame-work of the Commonwealth of Labor, or Socialist Republic, and constitutes the organic form of that Commonwealth, as well as of its administrative powers; and

Whereas, Craft unionism, wherever capitalism has reached untrammelled development, has ever shown itself to be what the plutocratic "Wall Street Journal" has designated it, when hailing the craft-divided American Federation of Labor as the "bulwark of capitalist society"—an organization which because of its inherent character has bred the officialdom which a once notorious capitalist politician recognized as his "Labor Lieutenantship"; therefore, be it

Resolved, That the bona fide or revolutionary Socialist Movement, needs the po-

litical as well as the economic organization of Labor, the former for propaganda and to conduct the struggle for the conquest of the capitalist-controlled Political State upon the civilized plane of the ballot; the latter as the only conceivable force with which to back up the ballot, without which force all balloting is moonshine, and which force is essential for the ultimate lockout of the capitalist class; and be it further

Resolved, That without the political organization, the Labor or Socialist Movement could not attain the hour of its triumph; and without the economic organization, the day of its triumph would be the day of its defeat. Without the economic organization, the movement would attract and breed the pure and simple politician, who would debauch and sell out the working class; and without the political organization, the movement would attract and breed the agent provocateur, who would assassinate the movement; therefore, in order to maintain the uncompromising policies and tactics of the Socialist Labor Party of America, based upon the foregoing postulates, be it

Resolved, That we condemn all efforts to blur the lines of the class struggle, by whomsoever attempted, efforts that aim at misleading the working class on the political field into middle class movements and confounding it with middle class issues; and on the economic field would seek to confine all efforts at working class organization to a "boring from within" collaboration with the capitalist-controlled labor lieutenants of the pure and simple craft unions.