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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, '32, '36

Amended 1938

S. L. P. ORGANS.

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(Printed in the United States of America.)

Constitution of the Socialist Labor Party.

ARTICLE I.

Management.

Section 1. The affairs of the Socialist Labor Party shall be conducted by the National Executive Committee, the National Secretary, the state organization, the local organizations, the Sections, the National Conventions, and the general vote.

ARTICLE II.

Sections.

Section 1. Seven or more persons may form a Section of the Socialist Labor Party, provided they acknowledge the Platform, Constitution and Resolutions of the Party, and belong to no other political party.

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

Section 3. All applications to form a Section shall be submitted to the National Executive Committee through the State Executive Committee, which shall make the necessary recommendation to the National Executive Committee, but shall have no power to reject applications. Suitable charter application forms shall be supplied by the National Executive Committee. Each individual shall be required

to sign the charter application, and shall also be required to sign the individual application blank, giving full name and address, age, occupation, previous political affiliation (if any), etc. Where no State Executive Committee exists, applications shall be forwarded direct to the National Executive Committee.

Section 4. 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.

Section 5. If a Section momentarily falls below the required membership minimum, it may, at the discretion of the National Executive Committee, continue to function as a Section pending its being brought up to the minimum membership requirements.

Section 6. Each Section shall hold a regular business meeting at least once a month.

Section 7. 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 8. The Section 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.

Section 9. Each Section through its organizer shall send to the National and State Executive Committees, as soon as possible after the close of each calendar year, a report of its numerical and financial condition and the names and addresses of members in good standing and otherwise as of December 31 of each year.

Section 10. Every Section shall elect from its members an Organizer, and such additional officers and committees as are needed to carry on the Party's business, in keeping with other provisions of this Constitution and decisions of the National Executive Committee.

Section 11. Only those who have been members in good standing at least a year shall be eligible to hold office within the Section,* or on a state committee, except with the specific approval of the National Executive Committee. This, however, shall

*By ruling of the N.E.C., in session May, 1938, this constitutional clause applies to the offices of Organizer, Financial Secretary, Recording Secretary, and members of Grievance Committee and Membership Committee.

not apply to newly organized Sections. At least two years' membership shall be required to qualify a member to hold any national office in the Party.

Section 12. The Organizer shall conduct the local organization and agitation, subject at all times to the decisions of the membership, arrived at by majority vote (unless otherwise provided), at Section meetings.

Section 13. The Organizer shall conduct the correspondence with the National and State Executive Committees.

Section 14. The result of every election within the Section must be communicated at once to the National and State Executive Committees.

Section 15. All officers and committees of a Section, or of state and local organizations, shall be subject to removal at the will of their constituents.

Section 16. All applications for membership must be submitted to a regular business meeting of the Section having jurisdiction over the territory in which the applicant resides. The applicant shall be required to fill out the regular application form, and also to answer all the questions in the affirmative. The application must be endorsed by a member in good standing. The application shall be referred to a Membership Committee composed of three members. It shall be the duty of this Committee to interview the applicant with respect to his knowledge, understanding, and complete acceptance, without reser-

vations, of the Party's principles, policies, and discipline. The Committee shall be required to report to the next regular business meeting of the Section, unless its investigation convinces it that it is necessary to delay its final report until a subsequent meeting, in which case it shall so report to the next business meeting, explaining briefly the reasons for the delay. The report of the Committee shall be considered while the Section is in executive session.

Section 17. An applicant for membership must be at least eighteen years of age.

Section 18. Applicants may be admitted to membership by a majority vote of those present at a regular Section meeting, but 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.

Section 19. No applicant shall be admitted to membership without the presiding officer explaining to him the significance of the class struggle, 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.

Section 20. Members of the Party must belong to the Section which has jurisdiction over the territory in which they reside.

Section 21. Sections shall have juris-

diction over their own members, except in the cases of members who are national officers and national organizers, who shall be dealt with as provided under Article V, Section 9; Article VI, Sections 4 and 5; Article VII, Section 7; Article XI, Section 6; and Article XIII, Section 9.

Section 22. 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.

Section 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, or N.E.C., as the case may be, issuing the transfer pending its completion.

Section 24. 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. Until the name of such member has been, by formal action of the Section, stricken from the membership roll, he or she shall be considered to be under the disciplinary control of the Section.

Section 25. A member who by December 31 of any year has failed to pay assessments levied in the same year, or to receive exemption for the same, shall be immediately notified in writing by the Financial Secretary, and if the member further neglects the matter he shall be considered as one delinquent in his dues, and action shall be taken against him as provided in Article II, Section 24.

Section 26. Sick or unemployed members, unable to pay dues, shall be granted exemption stamps upon request for same being made by such members to the subdivision having jurisdiction over them. A record of such exemption must be made in the minutes of the subdivision, and exemption stamps must be inserted in the card of the member exempted.

Section 27. Members who have been dropped for non-payment of dues cannot be readmitted except as provided in Sections 16 and 18 of this Article.

Section 28. Every Section shall elect a standing Grievance Committee of three members, which shall investigate all charges referred to it, and report to the Section.

Section 29. All charges must be made

in writing, signed by the individual member or members preferring same, and must be submitted first to the Section having jurisdiction over the member in question. The charges must state briefly the nature of the offense alleged, but they shall contain no arguments nor statements that properly may be construed as discussion of the charges. They shall be accompanied with specifications, which, however, shall not be read before the Section meeting at the time the charges are filed. Charges 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 and specifications to the accused and shall proceed to investigate the case without unreasonable delay, hearing the witnesses of both sides. Testimony by non-members shall not be permitted. A detailed report of the investigation and the findings with the recommendations of the Committee shall be submitted to the Section, which shall vote on the findings and recommendations separately. The accused party shall be notified in due time by the Secretary of the Committee to appear at such meeting.

Section 30. After the Grievance Committee has rendered its report with its findings and recommendations, the accused shall be permitted to make a statement in his or her defense not to exceed fifteen minutes. The accused shall then be required to leave the room, whereupon the

Section shall decide the matter in executive session, its decision to be entered on the minutes. The minutes and all papers concerning the investigation shall be delivered to the Organizer, who thereupon shall forward them to the National Office, where they shall be kept in a special file. The Organizer shall inform the accused in writing of such decision.

Section 31. 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.

Section 32. All suspensions and expulsions shall be published in the official organ of the Party, unless the National Executive Committee finds it contrary to the best interests of the Party to do so.

Section 33. 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 officer, national organizer, and national and state convention delegates, who shall be dealt with as provided in Article IV, Section 10; Article V, Section 9; Article VI, Sections 4 and 5; Article VII, Section 7; Article XI, Section 6; Article XIII, Section 9.

Section 34. Any member under charges who is cited to appear before the Grievance Committee, and who either refuses to appear for trial, or fails to do so for reasons not made known, or not deemed valid, shall be declared guilty in default, and shall be expelled forthwith from the Organization. For the same reasons such a member shall have forfeited his right to appeal the decision of the Section.

Section 35. Suspended members shall be required to pay dues (or request exemption stamps if sick or unemployed) during the period of their suspension, and shall in all other respects remain under the complete jurisdiction of their respective Sections. If at any time during the period of suspension there is evidence of such suspended member having committed breaches of Party principles or discipline, charges may then be filed against said suspended member, and, if in the judgment of the Section the facts warrant it, such suspended member may be summarily expelled, without awaiting the expiration of the original term of suspension.

Section 36. A suspended member, upon expiration of the term of suspension, shall be required to present himself at the Section business meeting next following the date of expiration of the suspension period, and shall thereupon be automatically reinstated, the fact of reinstatement to be recorded in the minutes of the session at which he is reinstated. If he fails thus to present himself, he shall be notified imme-

diately by registered mail, and if he fails to present himself at a regular Section meeting within one month after date of notification (barring illness or other causes beyond his control), he shall then be dropped from the rolls without further action, provided there are no charges pending, or to be filed against him. In the event of such charges, these shall be handled in accordance with Article II, Sections 29, 30, 31, 32, 33, 34, 37, 38, of this Constitution.

Section 37. All decisions of the Section in connection with charges may be appealed from within one month to the National Executive Committee, whose decisions shall be final.

Section 38. No person shall participate in hearing or deciding an appeal who is a party to the proceedings.

Section 39. No expelled or suspended member shall be accorded the privileges of a member of the Party unless properly reinstated. A Section may, if it chooses, refuse a suspended member admittance at its business meeting.

Section 40. Anyone expelled from the Socialist Labor Party may be readmitted upon application properly made to the Section which expelled him or her. A majority vote of the members present at a Section meeting shall be required to decide the question, but if an objection is raised, a two-thirds majority shall then be required. If and when the necessary approval of the expelling Section is secured,

the application shall be submitted to the National Executive Committee, whose decision shall be final.

Section 41. 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.

Section 42. 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 then only with the specific approval of the State Executive Committee or, in the absence of such, of the National Executive Committee.

Section 43. 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.

Section 44. It shall be the duty of every Party member to support the Party publications by donations and securing of subscriptions to the best of his or her ability. No member, committee, or Sec-

tion of the Party shall support any other political publications, or publications endorsed by or identified with another political party, or fraction thereof; nor may any member donate money or services to, nor procure subscriptions for, such publications.

Section 45. Acquaintance with the current affairs of the Party being essential for 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. The Section shall order the paper at its own expense, if necessary, for the benefit of the unemployed members.

Section 46. It shall be the duty of each Section to acquire as soon as possible an assortment of the Party literature dealing with the fundamental principles of the Party and to stimulate their careful study by the members either individually or jointly.

Section 47. (a) Wherever possible Sections shall organize study classes. These are to be under the direct supervision and control of the Section.

(b) The Section shall select the instructor of the study class and such instructor shall have full authority to conduct the class.

(c) The study class instructor shall at all times be subject to the authority of

the Section and may, at any time, be recalled by the Section.

(d) Any criticism of the conduct of the class or instructor shall be voiced on the floor of the Section meetings, and there only.

(e) Party members shall not enjoy any more privileges than non-Party members in the study class.

(f) All persons wishing to join a study class shall be required to fill out an enrolment blank furnished by the Section.

(g) No member may attend any so-called study class conducted by another organization or by a person or persons not connected with the Party. Nor shall members attend courses in economics offered by schools or "institutions of public education" of collegiate, preparatory or secondary-school rank, except in cases where such courses are prescribed and required toward the attainment of a professional or academic degree or diploma. Nor shall a member of the Party be permitted to function as director or teacher of any so-called labor college or study class which is not under the control of the Party.

(h) Applicants to Socialist Labor Party study classes shall be advised that only Socialist Labor Party principles and program are taught at study class sessions, and it shall be the duty of the instructor of the study class to remind all study class students of this provision. Any person who advocates, or attempts to advo-

cate, the principles and program of any other political party or group while attending a Socialist Labor Party study class, shall thereafter be excluded from the study class.

ARTICLE III.

Local Organization.

Section 1. (a) 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 general local government embraces a locality greater or smaller than a town or city, the same rule shall apply.

(b) 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.

Section 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.

Section 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.

Section 4. In cities, towns, or other localities where there exist 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. In cases, however, where this form of committee is impractical, this provision may, with the specific approval of the National Executive Committee, be modified to suit local conditions.

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.

Section 2. The State Secretary shall not be a member of the State Executive Committee. He shall have a voice, but no vote, in its proceedings.

Section 3. It shall be the duty of such Committee to conduct systematic agita-

tional work within its jurisdiction, form new Sections [See Article II, Section 3], and maintain close contact with all Sections and members-at-large in the state.

Section 4. 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.

Section 5. Every Section connected with such Committee must also be connected with the National Executive Committee.

Section 6. No State Executive Committee shall have the power to expel and reorganize, nor to suspend, any Section.

Section 7. Whenever temporarily a state lacks the required number of Sections to maintain a State Executive Committee, the National Executive Committee may at its discretion permit the continuance of such State Executive Committee pending the reorganization of the temporarily lapsed Sections.

Section 8. 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.

Section 9. State Executive Committees shall issue a call for a state convention to be held at least once every two years. State Conventions may be mass conventions, where every member in good standing shall be considered an accredited delegate, with voice and vote. If the State Executive Committee decides that it is impractical to hold a mass convention, delegates shall be elected from the Sections, on the basis of one delegate for every seven members or major fraction thereof, each Section in good standing to be entitled to at least one delegate.

Section 10. No Section shall entertain charges against a member who has been elected by a Section to represent it as a delegate to a state convention, but the convention shall investigate these charges, and, if it decides that they are groundless or frivolous, the delegate may then be seated. This provision shall not apply to mass conventions.

Section 11. 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. [For removal of officers and committees of state organizations, see Article II, Section 15.]

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.

Section 2. The National Executive Committee shall consist of one member from each Region having at least three Sections in good standing, and of one member from each Language Federation.

Section 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 and Federations.

Section 4. All members of the N.E.C. shall be members in good standing not less than two years, and must be citizens of the United States, but a Region or Language Federation unable to comply with these provisions may dispense with the same as far as may be necessary, subject to the approval of the N.E.C.

Section 5. 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. Nor shall a member of the National Executive Committee function as permanent national organizer, but he may be toured for specific purposes, and for definite periods.

Section 6. No editor of a Party publication, and no permanent, salaried employee of the Committee, except its own officers, shall be a member of the National Executive Committee.

Section 7. Every candidate, nominated for the N.E.C., 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.

Section 8. The term of office of the members of the National Executive Committee shall be one year, commencing May 1.

Section 9. 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 shall then be submitted to the entire membership for a referendum vote.

Section 10. 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 official organ twice in succession.

Section 11. 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.

Section 12. The sessions, regular and special, of the National Executive Committee shall convene in the city where is located the national headquarters of the Party.

Section 13. The National Executive

Committee shall have the following duties:

(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 by members disciplined by a Section.

(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 shall close within nine weeks from the time the proposition is 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.

Section 14. The Committee may make its own order of business, and may compensate its officers from the Party treasury, according to the labors performed.

Section 15. The expense of the N.E.C. members while attending sessions shall be covered through a special assessment of 50 cents to be imposed once every year, using one stamp in conjunction with the Mileage Assessment, the total assessment thus to be levied once a year to be one dollar. [See also Article X.]

Section 16. 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 sub-

ject 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.

Section 17. The Sub-Committee shall be composed of eleven members.

Section 18. 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.

Section 19. 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.

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.

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

Section 3. The National Secretary shall be the Financial Secretary of the Party and shall act as Secretary for For-

eign Affairs. He shall not be a member of the National Executive Committee, but shall have an advisory voice in all its proceedings.

Section 4. No charges filed against the National Secretary by the subdivision of which he is a member shall be considered until or unless the provisions of Article VI, Section 5, have been carried out, and then only if he is removed from office.

Section 5. The National Secretary may be removed upon application of at least five Sections located within at least two Regions, the initiating Section to submit its application to the National Office for the necessary seconds. If sufficient seconds are received within six weeks after the call for seconds has been issued by the National Office, the question shall then be submitted to the entire membership for a referendum vote.

Section 6. 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.

ARTICLE VII.

National Convention.

Section 1. The National Convention of the Party shall be held every fourth or

Presidential election year; but, if ten Sections in three different regions so demand, a general vote shall be taken as to holding a special convention. The city and date of the convention shall be determined by the National Executive Committee.

Section 2. Each State and each Language Federation shall be entitled to one delegate for every fifty members and one additional delegate for a major fraction thereof, the apportionment to be made on the average membership for the twelve months of the preceding year. Any State having less than fifty members, but with one Section in good standing, shall be entitled to one delegate; a territory to be treated as a State.

Section 3. The State Executive Committee shall call for nominations for delegates and alternates, such nominations to be submitted to a general vote of the Sections with instructions as to the number of candidates and alternates, for which each member has a right to vote. The delegates and alternates shall be voted upon separately.

Section 4. In the absence of a State Executive Committee the National Secretary shall call for nomination and election of delegates and alternates. In the case of Language Federations such call shall be issued by the National Secretary of each Federation.

Section 5. Delegates and alternates

must be members in the state electing them.

Section 6. Delegates shall be members in good standing of the Party not less than two years 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.

Section 7. No charges shall be entertained by any subdivision against a member who has been elected a National Convention delegate, but the Convention shall investigate these charges, and if it decides that they are groundless or frivolous, the delegate may then be seated.

Section 8. The expenses of the delegates shall be borne by the States and Federations, with the exception of their fare coming and going, which latter shall be defrayed as per Article X.

Section 9. Each delegate shall have but one vote.

Section 10. 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 submitted to the Convention. A majority vote shall be necessary in selecting the seat of the National Executive Committee.

Section 11. All acts of the National Convention shall be submitted to the

membership for approval by a general vote, and shall not be effective until so approved, except in the case of Presidential nominations, Platform and Resolutions.

ARTICLE VIII.

Members-at-Large.

Section 1. Members residing in states where there are no Sections may become attached to the Organization as national members-at-large, paying their dues direct to the National Office, and are to be subject to the jurisdiction of the N.E.C.

Section 2. All decisions rendered by the N.E.C. in disputes involving national members-at-large shall be final, but where a decision has been rendered by the N.E.C. Sub-Committee, acting in behalf of the N.E.C., the latter may review the case, if it so chooses, as in the case of all other acts by the N.E.C. Sub-Committee.

Section 3. Members residing in states where one or more Sections exist shall be attached to the nearest Section as Section members-at-large. Applicants for such membership-at-large shall be admitted by the N.E.C. and then transferred to whatever Section the N.E.C. may decide.

Section 4. It shall be the duty of members-at-large to cooperate fully with the Section of which they are members, and make an earnest effort to attend the meetings of the Section.

Section 5. In states where there are State Executive Committees, members-at-large shall place themselves at the disposal of the said State Executive Committees in all matters pertaining to the conduct of the agitation in the state, with particular reference to agitation that may be carried on in the locality where reside such members-at-large. To this end State Executive Committees shall be supplied with a list of the names and addresses (and other relevant information) of such members-at-large. Where from two to six members reside in one locality, it is their duty to constitute themselves a propaganda committee to work under the immediate direction of the State Executive Committee.

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.

Section 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.

Section 3. Every newly organized Section shall receive a free quota of stamps,

one for each of its members. 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 X.

Mileage.

Section 1. The fare of the N.E.C. members and National Convention delegates 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 in conjunction with N. E. C. Session Expense Assessment. [See Article V, Section 15.]

ARTICLE XI.

The Party Press.

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

Section 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.

Section 3. The National Executive Committee shall have control of the contents of all Party organs, and shall act on grievances connected with the same.

Section 4. The Editor of the official Party organ shall be elected by the National Convention, the election to be specifically approved by a general vote of the whole Party.

Section 5. In case of vacancy in the office of Editor of the Party's official organ, the National Executive Committee shall temporarily fill the said office pending election of new Editor by the Party membership.

Section 6. The procedure in removing the Editor of an official Party organ, and in case of a vacancy in the office, 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.

Section 7. The election of editors of other publications recognized as Party organs 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 take charge of such publication and appoint an editor, pending election of a new editor

by the membership of the Language Federation, or group publishing such paper.

Section 8. 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 XII.

Language Federations.

Non-English-speaking Language Federations nationally organized shall be attached to the S.L.P. on the following basis:

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

Section 2. Each Federation shall be represented on the N.E.C. by one member.

Section 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 Article VII, Section 2.

Section 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.

Section 5. All equipments, including machinery, office equipment, real estate, and all other things of value, which are held in custody by the Language Federations, shall be the property of the National Executive Committee of the Socialist Labor Party, which at all times shall have full jurisdiction over such properties, as with all other subdivisions of the Party, without responsibility for any indebtedness incurred by the Federations and other subdivisions.

Section 6. The units of organization shall be known as Branches. Branches shall have jurisdiction over their own members in conformity with provisions in Article II.

Section 7. No member of a Federation Language Branch shall at the same time be a member of a Section of the Party.

Section 8. 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.

ARTICLE XIII.

Miscellaneous.

Section 1. (a) 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 is issued.

(b) The National Secretary shall at the earliest possible moment transmit to the Sections a tabulated statement of the vote cast by each Section.

Section 2. At all elections and in all voting, unless otherwise provided, a plurality vote is sufficient to decide.

Section 3. All voting on Party matters requiring a ballot shall be duly signed by those voting.

Section 4. Sections and local and state organizations may make rules for their action, providing these do 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.

Section 5. Robert's Rules of Order shall govern the organization in so far as special rules are not provided.

Section 6. 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.

Section 7. 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.

Section 8. No Party institution shall extend credit to organizations of the Party sending for supplies.

Section 9. All organizers employed by the National Organization shall be under the complete control and jurisdiction of the National Executive Committee. No charges shall be entertained against a national organizer unless, or until, he has been previously removed by the N.E.C.

Section 10. All former provisions conflicting with this Constitution are rescinded.

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Platform of the Socialist Labor Party.

(Adopted at the 19th National Convention,
April 27, 1936.)

The capitalist system has outlived its usefulness. If progress is to be the order of society in the future as in the past, this outworn system **MUST** give way to a new social order. Social development points in but one direction—to an Industrial Union Government, an administration of things in place of a political rule over men.

The avowed purpose of governments is to insure life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness to the useful members of society. Whenever a given social system, and its corresponding government, fails in or becomes destructive of these ends, it has outlived its usefulness, rendering it imperative for the exploited and oppressed class to organize its forces to put an end to the outworn economic and political system. This historic duty and necessity now confront the working class of America.

Social systems and their corresponding forms of government come into being as results of social and economic forces. The history of mankind has been the history of class struggles, with Progress ever as the aim. Ancient autocracies fell before ancient republics, the slave labor systems gave way to feudalism, feudalism broke down before the onslaught of capitalism. Capitalism, with its concomitant—wage slavery—is the world system which has been the vanguard of progress through the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. In the United States of America capitalism has reached the highest point of develop-

ment; here also may be traced the most rapid decay.

When a ruling class can no longer live and exploit as previously, and the exploited class can no longer be fed and cared for while rendering useful social service, *the hour of Social Revolution has struck.*

At this crucial period, accordingly, the Socialist Labor Party, in National Convention assembled, April 27, 1936, reaffirms its former platform pronouncements and, in accord with international Socialist principles, declares:

For close to a decade now, millions of the working class have had to be fed by the exploiting masters, instead of, as heretofore, feeding and keeping the masters in luxury. The richest country in the world, with the highest degree of productivity in the world, has been turned into a gigantic poorhouse, with vast numbers of its useful and able workers turned into mendicants, suppliants for a hand-out to keep body and soul together. History's pages record no greater disgrace than this.

A decaying system creates nothing so surely as its own grave-diggers. The germs of destruction are active within American capitalism. Competition is the very life of capitalism; markets constitute the indispensable condition for its continued existence.

The early termination of capitalism was clearly indicated when the fact was revealed that a few giant corporations virtually control the entire production and distribution machinery of the nation. "Rugged individualism" has gone by the board. There is no possibility for the "average man" to become a capitalist. The small farmer, the small manufacturer, and the business man with small capital who still hangs on, are perpetually on the verge of bankruptcy. In most cases the farmer is but a tenant farmer or a "sharecropper" working for some banking house; the small business man is but a repair man or an agent of some large corporation.

The markets, foreign and domestic, are becoming extinct. A social system will flourish only while there is room within it for expansion. The possibilities for expansion in the United States of America seemed unlimited during its first 150 years. Ships, canals, railroads, bridges, roads, farms, machinery of all sorts were the crying need of expanding and progressing capitalism. This called for millions of workers, skilled and unskilled, in mines, mills, factories, on railroads, on the land, in shops, stores, offices and the technical trades. This, in turn, opened a tremendous market for other commodities—houses, furniture, clothing, food, and the so-called public service industries. "Prosperity" ruled; capitalism was in its full flower.

With the beginning of the twentieth century reaction had already set in. The frontier had gone; internal improvements were approaching a limit and commenced to slacken; American capitalism for a decade had been on a sharp lookout for foreign markets. The era of imperialism was at hand.

In the world market America encountered Great Britain, a formidable rival, the erstwhile "workshop of the world." Germany, France, Japan were stepping up, with Italy and Russia in the offing. The World War brought the rivals together with a clash. World expansion turned into a battle of "survival of the fittest," with every one struggling with the view of destruction of all rivals. The *progress* of capitalism had stopped; decay and degeneration had definitely set in.

There was one avenue, however, where progress under capitalism DID NOT STOP, for that avenue and that alone leads to the future, viz., the invention and perfection of machinery. The World War gave this a tremendous impetus which has not relaxed since. As a result, production is keyed up tremendously. The increased productive capacity of the system demands more markets, and when no markets are forthcoming,

the abundance of products results in social degeneration and decay.

To bolster up market prices by creating artificial scarcity, millions of dollars' worth of products have been destroyed—plowed under, or allowed to rot, or burnt or dumped in the ocean—and this was done while millions of workers were poorly housed, underfed and insufficiently clothed. Decay and degeneration of a social system cannot go further than that.

Ever more and better machinery is the demand of capitalism. As the machines go into a factory, the workers go out. Millions of those who are unemployed today will never again under capitalism have regular, useful employment.

The Socialist Revolutionary hour in America is at hand. For forty-five years the Socialist Labor Party has been moving upward to this historic opportunity. The working class of America cannot afford to, must not, at the peril of its own existence, and that of future generations, allow to slip by this moment of opportunity to free the world from wage slavery.

Where a social revolution is pending and, for whatever reason, is not accomplished, reaction is the alternative. Every reform granted by capitalism is a concealed measure of reaction, exemplified by the NRA, AAA, TVA, CCC, WPA, etc. He who says reform says preservation, and he who says that reforms under capitalism are possible and worth while thereby declares that a continuation of capitalism is possible and worth while. But capitalism has grown into an all-destroying and all-devouring monster that must itself be destroyed if humanity is to live. Fascism, Nazism, Absolutism in government—in short, Industrial Feudalism—are but means in the attempts to preserve capitalism.

American capitalism, along with capitalism in the rest of the world today, is trembling in the balance between decay or progress, reaction or revolution. **THIS IS THE HISTORIC HOUR OF THE AMERICAN WORKING CLASS.**

The class struggle, which rages today, is destined to be the last. There is no exploited or enslaved class below that of the exploited working class. When the workers take possession of the government and the social means of production, they are bound to do so in the name of society as a whole. That means the abolition of all classes, the abolition of private property, and the inauguration of a Socialist Industrial Republic, where the means of production will be the collective property of society, operated by all able workers, for the benefit of all. Social or collective ownership—administered by an Industrial Union Government of, by and for the workers—of the already socially operated means of production will be the fulfilment of the promise implicit in social evolution throughout the ages!

At this crucial moment in history, the Socialist Labor Party of America, earnestly and deliberately, calls upon the working class of America to rally at the polls under the banner of the Socialist Labor Party, the only Party with a program that meets the needs of the hour, i.e., a progressive and revolutionary program.

The Socialist Labor Party also calls upon all other intelligent citizens to place themselves squarely upon the ground of working class interests, and join in this mighty and noble work of human emancipation, so that we may put summary end to the existing barbarous class conflict and insane contradictions between unlimited wealth and wealth production, and the poverty and wretchedness suffered by those whose labor created all this wealth.

We, therefore, call upon the workers of America to organize into Socialist Revolutionary Industrial Unions in shop, mine, mill and factory, and on the land, to provide a lever to place the land and the means of production and distribution in the hands of the useful producers as a body organized into a national Industrial Union Administration to take the place of the present outworn political or territorial government.

So shall come into being the Socialist Industrial Commonwealth of Emancipated Labor—a commonwealth in which every worker shall have the free exercise and full benefit of his faculties, multiplied by all the factors of modern civilization.