



CONSTITUTION

OF THE

Socialist

Labor . . .



Party . . .

OF THE

United States of America.

ADOPTED AT THE
TENTH NATIONAL CONVENTION,

Held in New York City,

June 2 to 8, 1900.



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. Ten persons may form a Section, provided they acknowledge the Platform, Constitution and Resolutions of the Party and belong to no other political party; but not more than one charter shall be granted in any city or town.

a. They shall report their organization as a Section, with a list of the members and the dues for the current month, to the State Executive Committee.

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

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

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

SEC. 4. 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 the State Executive Committee, and shall send an official report once every six months to each of the said Committees; he shall send twelve cents of the monthly dues of each member to the State Executive Committee, or, in the absence of such, to the National Executive Committee; he shall conduct the local organization and agitation.

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

SEC. 7. Sections shall have jurisdiction over their own members.

SEC. 8. Every Section shall elect a Grievance Committee of three members, which shall investigate all charges and difficulties in the Section, and report its decision.

SEC. 9. Charges against members shall not be debated until the Grievance Committee has thoroughly investigated the case and reported to the Section. All charges must be made in writing, whereupon the committee shall investigate the case and hear the witnesses of both parties. A detailed report of the investigation shall be drawn and laid before one of the next business meetings of the Section. The Section shall then decide the matter, and its deci-

sion be entered on the minutes. The minutes and all papers concerning the investigation shall be delivered to the Secretary for safe keeping. The Secretary shall inform the accused in writing of such decision.

SEC. 10. All decisions of the Section may be appealed from within three months to the State Executive Committee. Decisions of the State Executive Committee may be appealed from within one month to a general vote of the Sections in the State, or to a State Convention, and the decision then reached, and all decisions of the National Executive Committee in individual grievances, where no State Executive Committee exists, shall be final.

SEC. 11. A majority of two thirds of the members present at any business meeting shall be sufficient to expel any member; a simple majority shall be sufficient to suspend for a definite period. Expulsions and suspensions shall be reported at once to the National Executive Committee.

SEC. 12. No expelled or suspended member shall be accorded the privileges of a member of the Party unless properly reinstated.

SEC. 13. Each Section shall hold a regular business meeting at least once a month.

SEC. 14. Members who have withheld payment of their dues for more than three months shall be and are thereby suspended from all rights until they have fulfilled their obligations.

SEC. 15. Sick or unemployed members will be excused from payment of dues, but

the fact must be noted each month upon their cards.

SEC. 16. The result of every election within the Section must be communicated at once to the National and the State Executive Committee.

SEC. 17. In case of the dissolution, suspension or expulsion of any Section all property of the same must be delivered to the State 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.

SEC. 19. Members-at-large shall be subject to the supervision of the State Executive Committee in the same manner as a member to a Section.

SEC. 20. No member, committee, or Section of the Party shall support any political publication other than Party organs by donations of money or procuring subscribers for the same.

ARTICLE III.

STATE ORGANIZATION.

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

provide the blanks required for the resignation of candidates for public office.

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

SEC. 3. The Committee shall send regular semi-annual reports to the National Executive Committee, and submit to it monthly a financial report showing receipts and expenditures.

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

ARTICLE IV.

LOCAL ORGANIZATION.

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

SEC. 2. Such Committee shall alone exercise the powers delegated to Sections under

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

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

ARTICLE V.

NATIONAL EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE.

SECTION 1. The National Executive Committee shall consist of seven members, the seat of the Committee to nominate from its members fourteen candidates within four weeks after the general vote on the acts of the National Convention. The National Executive Committee shall submit the nominations to a general vote of the whole Party, arranging them in numerical order beginning with the candidate receiving the highest number of votes upon nomination

and stating opposite each name the number of votes so received. The seven candidates receiving the highest number of votes shall organize as the Committee within two weeks after the announcement of the result of the general vote and shall hold office until the next National Convention or until their successors may be chosen.

SEC. 2. Vacancies in the Committee shall be filled as follows: The seat of the Committee shall nominate twice as many candidates as there are vacancies, the election to be by a general vote of the whole Party in the manner provided under the preceding Section.

SEC. 3. Every candidate, before his name is submitted to a general vote of the whole Party, shall sign a pledge to support the Party, its principles, declared resolutions and tactics, such pledge to be filed with the National Secretary.

SEC. 4. The Committee, or any member thereof, may be removed by a general vote of the whole Party on the motion of five State Executive Committees, the movers to accompany their motion with written charges to be inserted in the call for the general vote together with the answer of the Committee or the member so charged. The seat of the Committee shall designate a State Executive Committee, not a party to the proceedings, to receive the general vote and canvass and announce the result.

SEC. 5. In the case of the resignation of the whole or a majority of the Committee the seat of the Committee shall fill the vacancies temporarily through their General Committee and at once proceed to

fill the vacancies permanently as provided under Section 2 of this article.

SEC. 6. The Committee shall elect from its members a Recording Secretary and a Treasurer.

SEC. 7. The National Executive Committee has for its duty:

- a. To carry out the resolutions of the National Convention and those adopted by general vote.
- b. To supervise the agitation throughout the country.
- c. To render final decision in all appeals made to it where no State Organization exists.
- d. To expel, or suspend and reorganize, any State Executive Committee or Section guilty of disloyalty.
- e. To establish proper relations and communication with the Socialist parties of other countries.
- f. To make all necessary preparations for the National Convention, and make a full report to such convention on all party matters.
- g. To issue semi-annually, and in sufficient number, copies of a report of the Party's finances.
- h. To submit propositions to a general vote. A proposition sent from any Section if endorsed by at least five others located in at least three different States, shall be submitted to a general vote; but if in the opinion of the Committee the proposition is not in the interest of the Party, it shall not be submitted to a general vote unless five per cent of

all the Sections in good standing shall subsequently re-endorse it.

- i. To be represented at the National Convention by the National Secretary, who shall have no vote, but merely an advisory voice, and shall bear no other credentials.
- k. To annually and in due time call upon the Sections to make nominations for not more than three delegates to represent the Party in the annual convention of the Socialist Trade & Labor Alliance, the delegates to be elected from the nominees by a general vote.
- l. To issue application cards bearing a plain exposition of the principles of the Party and the duties required from the applicant.
- m. To publish in the Official Party organ all expulsions and suspensions reported and all its decisions on appeals.

SEC. 8. The Committee may make its own order of business, and may compensate its officers from the Party treasury according to the labors performed.

SEC. 9. No editor of a Party publication, and no permanent, salaried employee of the Committee, excepting its own officers, shall be a member of the National Executive Committee.

ARTICLE VI.

NATIONAL SECRETARY.

SECTION 1. The National Secretary shall be elected by the National Convention, the

election to be specifically approved by a general vote of the whole Party.

SEC. 2. His term of office shall be the same as that of the National Executive Committee, 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 and in case of a vacancy in his position shall be the same as that provided for the National Executive Committee under Article V, Sections 4 and 5.

SEC. 4. He shall be the Financial Secretary of the Party, and shall act as Secretary for Foreign Affairs. He shall not be a member of the National Executive Committee, but shall have an advisory voice in all its proceedings.

ARTICLE VII.

NATIONAL CONVENTION.

SECTION 1. A National Convention of the Party shall be held every fourth or presidential year; but if five Sections in three different States so demand, a general vote shall be taken as to holding a special convention. A general vote shall decide as to the place, but the date of a 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 one thousand S. L. P. votes cast at the State election preceding the National Convention and to one additional delegate for a major fraction thereof. Any State having one or

more Sections and polling less than one thousand votes, or polling no votes at all, shall be entitled to one delegate; a territory to be treated as a State.

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

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

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

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

SEC. 7. The National Convention shall

frame the National Platform, decide the form of organization, select the seat of the National Executive Committee, and investigate and decide all difficulties within the Party. A majority vote shall be necessary in selecting the seat of the National Executive Committee.

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

ARTICLE VIII.

DUES.

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

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

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

ARTICLE IX.

THE PARTY PRESS.

SECTION 1. The National Executive Committee shall have control of the contents

of all Party organs, and shall act on grievances connected with the same.

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

SEC. 3. The procedure in removing the editor of an Official Party Organ and in case of a vacancy in his position shall be the same as that provided for the National Executive Committee under Article V., Sections 4 and 5, but any such editor who may prove incompetent or disloyal shall be at once suspended by the National Executive Committee.

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

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

ARTICLE X.

OFFICIAL PARTY ORGANS.

SECTION 1. The DAILY PEOPLE, and the WEEKLY PEOPLE shall be Official Party Organs.

SEC. 2. The management of Official Party Organs shall be administered by a Board of Trustees consisting of three Party members, who 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 or suspending the Board or any member thereof, and in case of a vacancy in the Board in whole or in part, shall be the same as that provided for the editor of an Official Party Organ under Article IX., Section 3.

SEC. 4. The Board shall hold the property of the Official Party Organs in trust subject to the Constitution and Resolutions of the Party affecting their management.

ARTICLE XI.

MISCELLANEOUS.

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

result of the vote must be reported to the National Executive Committee within ten weeks after the first call was issued.

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

SEC. 9. At all elections and in all voting, unless otherwise provided, a plurality vote is sufficient to decide.

SEC. 10. The seat of the National Executive Committee shall elect an Auditing Committee which may at any time inspect and audit the books of the committees, officers and agencies of the Party and its National Organization.

SEC. 11. Sections and Local and State Organizations may make rules for their action, but such must not conflict with any rules duly provided for their formation State or National Organization, all rules of the Sections and Local Organizations to be approved by their respective State Executive Committees; and all rules of State Organizations to be approved by the National Executive Committee.

SEC. 12. 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. 13. All former provisions conflicting with this Constitution are rescinded.