

# WORKMEN'S ADVOCATE.

Fifth Year, No. 43.

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REPORT

## THE CONVENTION.

COMPLETE REPORT OF ITS PROCEEDINGS.

**Twenty-seven Sections Represented. Long Sessions, Short Speeches, and Practical Work—The Grand Mass Meeting at Vorwärts Turn Hall—Thousands of Sympathizers and Twenty-five Sore-Heads in Chicago—Platform and Resolutions.**

SATURDAY, Oct. 12.—At 3 p.m. the convention was called to order by Comrade A. Negendank, of Philadelphia, in the name of the Board of Supervision. After a few remarks by him in German and by Phil. Rappaport, of Indianapolis, in English, the delegates proceeded to the election of a chairman *pro tem.*, and Comrade Foth, of New York, was elected.

On motion of Comrade Shevitch it was resolved that English be the official language of the convention, but that the minutes be kept in English and German, and that every delegate might speak any language he pleased, provided the sense of his remarks be translated into English at the request of any other delegate. In order to carry out this resolution, Rappaport was elected English secretary and Fellermann, of Hartford, German secretary.

A Committee on Credentials, composed of Otto Reimer, of New York; Lothar, of Pittsburg; and Mrs. Greie, of New York, was then elected, and a short recess taken, at the end of which the committee reported the following Sections to be represented:

New York (German Section), by Otto Reimer, S.E. Shevitch, Johanna Greie, Hy. Foth and Reinh. Meyer.

New York (American Section), by Lucien Sanial.

Brooklyn, N.Y., by Fr. Seubert and Pattberg.

Newtown, N.Y., by Hy. Neuske.

College Point, N.Y., Union Hill, N.J., and Jersey City by Ufert.  
Hartford and New Haven, Conn., by Fellermann.  
Milwaukee, Wis., by H. Zweck.  
Pittsburg, Pa., by Lothar.  
Indianapolis, Ind., by Phil. Rappaport.  
Chicago, Ill., by J. Christensen, its delegate, and Paul Grotkau, as alternate.  
Boston, Mass., by A. Guwang.  
Philadelphia, Pa., by A. Zwiebler.  
Providence, R.I., by H. Hincke.  
Long Island City, N.Y., by A. Glicker.  
Yonkers, N.Y., by J. Vahlteich.  
St. Paul, Minn., by B. Freise.  
Hoboken, N.J., by H. Haack.  
Dayton, Ohio, by a blank proxy to be filled by Chicago.  
New York Jewish Section, by a blank proxy to be filled by Chicago.

Total, 22 Sections, 15 of which were represented by 18 delegates and 7 by proxies. Later arrivals, as will be seen hereafter, increased the representation to 27 Sections.

The Board of Supervision was represented by its secretary, A. Negendank.

The report of the Committee on Credentials was accepted, and on Shevitch's motion it was resolved that the meetings of the convention be public, except when it sits as Committee of the Whole.

The organization was then perfected by the re-election of Rappaport and Fellermann as English and German secretaries, respectively, and by the election of B. Freise as English and O. Reimer as German assistant secretaries. H. Foth was also elected chairman for this meeting.

The following Committee on Rules and Order of Business was elected: Shevitch, Seubert, Sanial and Zwiebler. After a short recess this committee reported as follows:

1. Chairman and vice-chairman to be elected for the day.
2. Two sessions shall be held daily, viz.: a day session from 9 a.m. to 1 p.m., and an evening session from 8 p.m. to midnight, when adjournment must take place.

The committees will meet from 1 p.m. to 8 p.m.

3. No delegate shall be allowed to speak longer than ten minutes in general, or five minutes in special, debates.

4. No delegate can speak on any question more than twice, except by consent of the body.

5. The order of business shall be the same as proposed by the Board of Supervision.

6. These committees shall be elected:

(a) On Platform.

(b) On Constitution.

(c) On Resolutions

To the latter committee all resolutions shall be referred, after being read before the convention.

7. Motions made by delegates need not be seconded, except such as regard the order of business.

The report of the Committee on Rules was adopted and the following committees were accordingly elected:

On Platform: Sanial, Shevitch, Grotkau, Rappaport and Seubert.

On Contitution: Zwiebler, Reimer, Christensen and Pattberg.

On Resolutions: Negendank, Lothar, Mrs. Greie, Ufert and Foth.

Telegrams were read, sent by Sections of the party, trades unions, singing societies, and individual sympathizers from various parts of the country, cheering the convention, and expressing the hope that its labors, conducted with the highest regard for the interests of socialism, would prove the means of strengthening the party and advancing its principles.

The announcement was also made that a grand mass meeting, arranged by the reorganized German Section of Chicago, would be held in the afternoon of the following day (Sunday, Oct. 13) at Vorwært's Turn Hall. Shevitch, Rappaport and Mrs. Greie were to be the speakers, and reports of the interest manifested by the working people in the coming event tended to show that this would be an imposing demonstration.

At 7 p.m. the convention adjourned to the following morning, and after an

exchange of hearty congratulations with the numerous comrades of Chicago who had come from all parts of the city to greet them, the tired delegates of distant Sections withdrew to their respective quarters.

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AT THE MASS MEETING.

The mass-meeting called by the Chicago Section on Sunday afternoon was the grandest demonstration Chicago has witnessed since 1886. The large hall of the Vorwärts Turn Hall was filled by over 2,000 men and women.

Before the meeting had been called to order, and while those who had charge of the arrangements were unfolding the stars and stripes on the platform, a few hisses were heard in the rear of the hall. No attention was then paid to this incident, which the capitalist press and the Rosenberg clique, with their characteristic dishonesty, seized upon so eagerly to misrepresent the object and spirit of the great meeting.

The first speaker was S.E. Shevitch. He dwelt upon the fact that, notwithstanding all appearances to the contrary, the cause of socialism during the latter three years had not only not lost anything, but had gained a great deal in the minds of the American people. The development of capitalism, as illustrated by the concentration of industry in trusts and combinations, had mainly brought about this result, showing how the nationalization of production was inevitably bound to be the necessary, logical consequence of its concentration in a few hands. The essentially American movement known under the name of "Nationalism," which is in reality nothing else but socialism pure and simple, is the outgrowth of our economic development.

The judicial murder committed on the 11th of November, 1887, which the speaker characterized as the foulest crime of the century, contributed also a great deal towards opening the eyes of all honest friends of liberty to the process of deterioration our once free institutions are undergoing.

Under the influence of such powerful lessons of history, the socialist movement, though perhaps less noisy and conspicuous, has become deeper and more conscious of its own strength. A mighty revival of the socialist idea will take place before long,

and the socialists must be prepared for it. They must organize with renewed energy and drop once for all sectional strife and secondary differences of opinion.

Chicago, the "Paris of America," is bound to take the lead in this work of reorganization, and it certainly is able to do so, if all the revolutionary elements sink their petty differences and work together for a common cause—the abolition of wage-slavery.

Ph. Rappaport, of Indianapolis, followed with an able address, in which he reviewed all the stages of the economic development of mankind from ancient times to the present day, and showed that socialism wanted but to restore to the laborer what had originally been his property—the instruments of labor.

Mrs. Greie, of New York, and Frank Seubert, of Brooklyn, also made short addresses.

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AT THE AMERICAN SECTION.

At 3 p.m., while Shevitch, Rappaport and Mrs. Greie were addressing a vast and enthusiastic assembly of workingmen at Vorwärts Turn Hall, Delegate Sanial entered the small room where the American Section of Chicago has long been accustomed to hold its Sunday agitation meetings. T.J. Morgan was then delivering an eloquent lecture on socialism to less than fifty persons, one-half of whom were members of the Section. In the debate that followed considerable ability was displayed by the speakers; and to anyone sufficiently experienced in organization the thought would naturally have occurred that there must be some singular defect in the policy, tactics, or management of the party when, in a city like Chicago and with the excellent material at its command, the American Section could only muster a little band of select people, professional men for the most part. Surely, such speeches as Delegate Sanial heard then and there, if delivered in the right place and to the right people, would soon put a new face on the social movement in the Western Babylon, where capitalistic oppression is heavier, and the lines between classes are more sharply defined, than in any other city on this continent. Why was the light of truth thus confined within the walls of a dingy room in the business quarter of Chicago? Why were apostles of socialism preaching to each other where

no one else could hear them, instead of boldly addressing the grimy mechanic and the ragged laborer on some public square, if need be, within easy reach of their hovels? Or were they, perchance, no apostles at all, but cautious persons who feared that by preaching pure socialism where Anarchy—precisely because of their inaction—was making converts, they also might be branded as anarchists, and lose the respect of the “better class?” These and other questions of a like purport Delegate Sanial asked himself, wonderingly, while the debate lasted. The riddle was solved for him before he left the room.

After a short interview with Comrade T.J. Morgan and Mrs. Sherlie Woodman, in the course of which it was made quite plain by these two leaders of the American Section that they would bitterly oppose conciliation, Delegate Sanial was introduced to the Section in business meeting and invited to state the object of his visit, which he did in a few words. Comrade Morgan asked how many Sections were represented in the convention, who they were, and the names of their respective delegates or proxies. All this information was freely and accurately given. Comrade Morgan then spoke at some length, contending that the persons named as representing the German Section of Chicago and several others who acted as proxies for other Sections were not entitled to do so. The same reasons which he gave for disputing their qualifications applied, he said, to Delegate Sanial himself, who claimed to represent the American Section of New York. He then dwelt upon the conflict that had led to the present state of affairs, blamed the New York Section for its “high-handed proceedings,” the Board of Supervision for its tergiversations, and to a certain extent the Rosenberg party for the unproved charges they had brought in their convention against men who were not there to defend themselves. With a view to harmony he had personally moved in that convention an adjournment to the 12th of October, but his proposition had been unanimously rejected, and he did not see how the American Section of Chicago could send a delegate to the body now in session.

In reply Delegate Sanial observed that it was neither his desire nor his mission to discuss the legal aspect of the conflict. He did not believe that the existence of the party and the progress of socialism could be made to depend upon technicalities. He appealed, as well as he could, to the good sense, cool judgment and brotherly feeling

of the members of the Chicago American Section. The Rosenberg party had held a side show in which this Section was represented. The very effort which Comrade Morgan had then made to obtain an adjournment and his remarkable failure in this respect showed plainly that the so-called convention of September 28 was a one-sided affair, artfully prepared by men who were afraid to meet their adversaries face to face, and that the Section could not logically refuse to send a delegate to the present convention. Sections who had been misled into sending representatives to the Rosenberg meeting, whether friendly or hostile, were welcome to a representation in this convention, where they could discuss the legal aspect of the case to their heart's content, if they pleased. Rosenberg himself would be admitted. Nay, under the circumstances, it was the duty of this Section to be represented. By refusing to do so it would, like the New York American Section and the Chicago German Section, place itself outside of the party and compel an immediate reorganization of it, so that the faithful members who happened to be in the minority might not be disfranchised. It was as the delegate of the reorganized American Section of New York that he sat in the convention, and it was as the representatives of the reorganized German Section of Chicago that Comrades Christensen and Grotkau were there also. In both cases, he was glad to say, reorganization meant increased numbers and a better spirit. Many socialists who for a long time had taken no interest in the party because of the imbecility of its managers were now returning, full of activity, of zeal, and of self-sacrificing spirit.

In reply to questions by Comrade Hamilton, who observed that the New York Section had taken the property and newspapers of the party and now invited them to sanction the deed, Delegate Sanial said that the property of the party and its newspapers were safe enough, but had been for it time greatly imperilled by the act of Rosenberg and Co. in withdrawing the money they had on hand and using it for disrupting purposes. The New York Section had taxed itself heavily during the last few weeks, and it was owing to the self-sacrificing spirit of its members that the party organs were alive.

Comrade Morgan again took the floor. He said that the party organs had reversed the tactics of the party, and that the present policy of the WORKMEN'S ADVOCATE, as shown by its two last issues, was "a violent departure from the



principles of socialism.” This same policy was apparent in the well known spirit of the men who assumed to represent the Chicago German Section.

Delegate Sanial replied that after a thirty years' unbroken record of devotion to socialism, he had to come to Chicago, among comparatively new converts, to be told that under his management the ADVOCATE did not preach sound doctrine. He asked in what respect it could be said that he was failing.

“Why,” replied Comrade Morgan, exhibiting a copy of the ADVOCATE and pointing to the weekly reports of the Central Labor Federation and Central Labor Union, “look at this. Is it a socialist or a trade union paper?”

Delegate Sanial was nearly dumb with astonishment. “Do you mean,” said he, “that a Socialist paper should give no news of the economic movement, should take no notice whatever of the daily conflict between Labor and Capital?”

Comrade Morgan insisted that such reports should have no place in an organ of the party, or should not, at least, appear on its first page. This declaration, made with great vehemence, was received with vigorous applause by all the members present.

“Gentlemen,” said Comrade Sanial, “my mission is ended. You are right in thinking that your views and ours are so wide apart that we cannot request you to participate in our convention. I shall make my report to that body. I shall not misquote you, Mr. Morgan. I shall state your own words, from which it appears that you are no friend to Organized Labor.”

He then withdrew, but had not reached the door when a motion was made to appoint a committee to wait upon the convention and make a statement in relation to the position of the Chicago American Section toward Organized Labor.

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SUNDAY, OCT. 13.

Promptly at 9 a.m. the convention was called to order, and C.H. Lothar, of Pittsburg, was elected chairman for the day. The Committee on Credentials reported that the St. Louis Section had sent Adolph Hepner as delegate, and that Detroit requested representation by proxy; also, that two sections in Ohio had appointed H. Henkel as proxy. Comrades Hepner and Henkel were duly admitted,



and instructions given to have the Detroit Section represented by one of the proxies elected by the Chicago Section.

Communications were received from Cleveland and New Bedford, refusing to participate in any convention until the impending troubles were settled. A communication was also received from six persons claiming to belong to a section of the S.L.P. in Olympia, and demanding representation by proxy. As there is no section in Olympia, and as the proxy appointed by the persons in question was a partisan delegate to the Rosenberg side-show of Sept. 28, this transparent piece of trickery provoked considerable mirth, and the would-be proxy was, as a matter of course, denied admittance.

The Chicago American Section not being as yet represented, Comrade Sanial was delegated by the convention to attend the Sunday afternoon weekly meeting of that Section and ascertain its intentions.

The regular order of business was then resumed, and Comrade Negendank presented the report of the Board of Supervision.

The report was divided into four parts, relating respectively to the Wischnevetsky matter, the Garside incident, the Paris Congress, and the party difficulties between the New York Section and the four members of the old executive committee. It was a mere relation of facts, without any expression of opinion or any comments calculated to influence the judgment of the convention. The report having been received, it was decided to take up immediately the three subjects first named in the order above given, and to reserve for the last the pending party difficulties. This discussion consumed all the time of the morning session. In the Wischnevetsky matter the action of the New York Section was sustained against the Board of Supervision. As to the Garside incident and the Paris Congress, they were pure matters of record, and the convention received the statements of the Board, amplified by such explanations as those members of the executive committee who were present as delegates were called upon to give.

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EVENING SESSION.

At 8 p.m. of the same day, when the convention met in Greif's Hall, every

delegate and proxy was in his seat. A committee of the Chicago American Section had notified the chairman of its presence, and the few benches in the rear of that hall were chiefly occupied by members of that Section, whose profound interest in the coming proceedings was evinced by marked attention and unusual stillness.

The roll having been called and the minutes read, Delegate Sanial made his report, which was very brief, and gave in substance the facts above related. He laid considerable emphasis upon the hostility to Organized Labor which the declaration of Comrade Morgan betrayed, but in conclusion observed that a Committee of the Section, headed by Morgan himself, was in attendance, and he sincerely hoped that this committee might make here a statement calculated to dispel or greatly modify the impression inevitably conveyed—by words hastily spoken, perhaps—in relation to the Chicago Section towards the economic organizations of labor.

Upon motion the report was received and the Committee of the Chicago Section was then invited to address the convention. Comrade Morgan said in substance.

“I deeply regret that this report was received, and therefore made a part of the record of this convention before I had an opportunity of correcting it, for it is a violent misrepresentation. We are not opposed to Organized Labor, and I have here a written declaration which I will read and leave with you, stating our exact position:

*“To the Socialist Convention, Greeting:*

“In answer to your kind invitation to send a representative to your convention, we present the following reply:

“1. We feel committed by our participation in the convention of the 28th until the party by referendum has passed upon its action.

“2. We do not believe it is proper to accept your invitation, for the reason that persons, not members of the party, who have been and are opposed to the principles and tactics of the party as laid down in the official programme, are already admitted as members of your convention.

“3. Because the admission of representatives of alleged reorganized Sections is in violation of the fundamental principles of social and political organization.

“4. Because the change in the policy of the party, as illustrated by the last two

issues of the WORKMEN'S ADVOCATE, issued under the management of the Board of Supervision, is a violation of the party tactics and a departure from the position of the party that can only be properly made by a party congress or majority vote of the party.

"In conclusion, and for the purpose of being properly understood, we present the following in reference to the party and trade unions:

"We recognize trade unions as a natural effort of the workers to protect themselves from the encroachments of the capitalist, and that it is to the interest of all workers to be members of those organizations, but that, while the Socialist party aids and encourages the trade unions, it shall never be made subordinate to them, or its policy dictated solely in consideration for such organizations, because they are but a small minority of the 65 millions of people who require our attention in the United States.

"T.J. MORGAN,  
"G.A. HOEHN."

In his verbal amplifications of this statement Comrade Morgan became very bitter and personal against some of the delegates and proxies who reside in Chicago, Grotkau and Frese in particular bearing the brunt of his invective. He said that the pending troubles had been caused and fostered by business interests and personal considerations, and when requested to be specific in his denunciations, he asserted that the policy of the party was subordinated to the business interests of the N.Y. *Volkszeitung*, the Chicago *Arbeiter Zeitung* and their respective employees. He did not believe that men who, like Shevitch, Sanial, Christensen and Rappaport, on one side, or Rosenberg and Busch, on the other side, who earned their living by writing for labor papers, should be given a voice in the councils of the party, and thus be allowed to dictate its policy. He had nothing to say against Shevitch and Sanial personally, and in the Rosenberg convention he had opposed, as improperly made, the charges brought against these two comrades. Morgan was here interrupted by Shevitch, who asked him if he had introduced a resolution denouncing this method of making charges, so that his protest might be published as widely as the charges were. He replied that he was sorry he had not; this effective method of proceeding

had not suggested itself to his mind. In conclusion, he reiterated the announcement that the Chicago American Section would take no further part in the dispute, and that its future position would be determined by future developments.

Delegate Sanial made a brief reply. Comrade Morgan, he said, however peaceful he might be, was strongly addicted to the use of the term "violent." In speaking of the Advocate at the meeting of the Section he had denounced its policy as a "violent departure from Socialism." Now he denounced the report of his own language as a "violent misrepresentation." The report was on record, and so was the carefully prepared statement in writing delivered by Comrade Morgan. Both agreed substantially, and the cautious statement was a practical confirmation of the "violent" report.

Delegate Shevitch followed with one of his characteristic speeches. In the course of his remarks he said it was high time to brand as they deserved the demagogical insinuations of would-be leaders against the "salaried" editors of labor papers. There were two ways of contributing pecuniary means to the labor cause. One was to pay ten cents a month; the other was to sacrifice position, relations and friendships, and to contribute work at one-half or one-quarter of the price that would be paid for equivalent efforts in the service of the capitalistic press. The books of the N.Y. *Volkszeitung* were open to the inspection of Comrade Morgan. He might see there that far from having received any pecuniary support from the party, that paper had frequently been called upon to pull the party out of the mire. He ridiculed the lofty declaration in Morgan's written statement that the Chicago American Section deemed the labor organizations, with their hundreds of thousands of wage workers, of little importance as compared to the sixty-five million people that require the attention of the thirty-five persons who compose that Section. And why was that Section so small in numbers? Could any reason be given for this lamentable fact, other than that people nowadays do not like to be ruled by a pope? Was not Comrade Morgan somewhat responsible for this state of affairs? The principles of socialism are in no danger of being perverted by this convention, but it was high time, indeed, that the narrow-minded policy and suicidal tactics of those who had been too long tolerated as leaders of the party were done away with and intelligent action substituted.

Comrade G.A. Hoehn, of the Committee, addressed the convention in German, and after a reply to Shevitch by Morgan, in which the indecision of the Board of Supervision was commented upon and given as an additional reason for the situation in Chicago the committee withdrew, followed by the members of the American Section.

The convention resumed the discussion of the report of the Board of Supervision

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MONDAY, OCT. 14.

At the opening of the morning session the Committee on Credentials reported that Comrade B. Berlyn claimed admittance as delegate of the reorganized American Section of Chicago. Satisfied that no understanding could be arrived at between the convention and the old section, so long as the latter was under the control of the Rosenberg clique, the faithful members of the minority had followed the example of the Chicago German and New York American Sections. They had issued an appeal and were fully reorganized; but, before presenting his credentials, the delegate had patiently waited for the foreseen result of the conferences between the convention and the old section. Comrade Berlyn was unanimously admitted. The debate upon, the conflict in New "York was then resumed, and with the various incidents to which it gave rise, consumed the evening session of the 14th and the morning one of the 15th. The practical result of this long debate is embodied in some of the resolutions printed at the end of this report.

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TUESDAY, OCT. 15.

At the evening session of the 15th the Committee on Platform presented its report. The committee, said Shevitch, recommended various amendments to the social and political demands, the adoption of the preamble of the old platform, and the issue of an address to the people, which he proceeded to read. Plattberg, Seubert and Rappaport moved to substitute the address for the former preamble. Shevitch objected that while the address was a well-written and sound document, it was best

in the present state of affairs to make no change. Sanial explained that the committee had considered the advisability of improving the preamble of the old platform, which had been originally written in German and badly translated into English. The result of the effort had been the production of the document that had just been read; but although the task of writing it had been imposed upon him by his colleagues after an exchange of views with them, he not only agreed with Shevitch that under the circumstances the old preamble should be retained, but thought that it was more perfect and more appropriate than the document under discussion. All it needed was a good translation. Reimer moved to accept the report of the committee as to the preamble. A long discussion followed, and Seubert's original motion to substitute the new for the old preamble was carried by a vote of 15 to 7, Sanial, Shevitch, Zweibler, Fellermann, Christensen, Schleyer, and Mrs. Greie voting in the negative. All the amendments proposed by the committee were then adopted successively after discussion.

The platform as adopted is here published again, because of two short but important omissions in the WORKMEN'S ADVOCATE of last week.

#### THE PLATFORM.

The Socialist Labor Party of the United States, in convention assembled, reasserts the inalienable right of all men to life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness.

With the founders of the American republic, we hold that the purpose of government is to secure every citizen in the enjoyment of this right; but in the light of our social conditions we hold, furthermore, that no such right can be exercised under a system of economic inequality, essentially destructive of life, of liberty, and of happiness.

With the founders of this republic we hold, that the true theory of politics is that the machinery of government must be owned and controlled by the whole people; but in the light of our industrial development we hold, furthermore, that the true theory of economics is that the machinery of production must likewise belong to the people in common.

To the obvious fact that our despotic system of economics is the direct opposite

of our democratic system of politics, can plainly be traced the existence of a privileged class, the corruption of government by that class, the alienation of public property, public franchises and public functions to that class, and the abject dependence of the mightiest of nations upon that class.

Again, through the perversion of democracy to the ends of plutocracy, labor is robbed of the wealth which it alone produces, is denied the means of self-employment, and, by compulsory idleness in wage-slavery, is even deprived of the necessaries of life.

Human power and natural forces are thus wasted, that the plutocracy may rule.

Ignorance and misery with all their concomitant evils are perpetuated, that the people may be kept in bondage.

Science and invention are diverted from their humane purpose to the enslavement of women and children.

Against such a system the S.L.P. once more enters its protest. Once more it reiterates its fundamental declaration that private property in the natural sources of production and in the instruments of labor is the obvious cause of all economic servitude and political dependence; and

*Whereas*, the time is fast coming when, in the natural course of social evolution, this system, through the destructive action of its failures and crises on the one hand, and the constructive tendencies of its trusts and other capitalistic combinations on the other hand, shall have worked out its own downfall, therefore, be it

*Resolved*, that we call upon the people to organize with a view to the substitution of the co-operative commonwealth for the present state of planless production, industrial war and commercial disorder; a commonwealth in which every worker shall have the free exercise and full benefit of his faculties, multiplied by all the modern factors of civilization.

We call upon them to unite with us in a mighty effort to gain by all practicable means the political power.

In the meantime, and with a view to immediate improvement in the condition of Labor, we present the following "Demands":



SOCIAL DEMANDS.

1. Reduction of the hours of labor in proportion to the progress of production.
2. The United States shall obtain possession of the railroads, canals, telegraphs, telephones, and all other means of public transportation and communication.
3. The municipalities to obtain possession of the local railroads, ferries, water works, gas works, electric plants, and of all industries requiring municipal franchises.
4. The public lands to be declared inalienable. Revocation of all land grants to corporations or individuals, the conditions of which have not been complied with.
5. legal incorporation by the States of local Trade Unions which have no national organization.
6. Furthering the workmen's co-operative productive associations by public credit; such associations to be preferred in the placing of contracts for public works.
7. The United States to have the exclusive right to issue money.
8. Congressional legislation providing for the scientific management of forests and waterways, and prohibiting the waste of the natural resources of the country.
9. Inventions to be free to all; the inventors to be remunerated by the nation.
10. Progressive income tax and tax on inheritances; the smaller incomes to be exempt.
11. School education of all children under 14 years of age to be compulsory, gratuitous, and accessible to all by public assistance in meals, clothing, books, etc., where necessary.
12. Repeal of all pauper, tramp, conspiracy, and sumptuary laws. Unabridged right of combination.
13. Official statistics concerning the condition of labor. Prohibition of the employment of children of school age and of the employment of female labor in occupations detrimental to health or morality. Abolition of the convict labor contract system.
14. All wages to be paid in lawful money of the United States. Equalization of women's wages with those of men where equal service is performed.
15. Laws for the protection of life and limb in all occupations, and an efficient employers' liability law.

## POLITICAL DEMANDS.

1. The people to have the right to propose laws and to vote upon all measures of importance, according to the Referendum principle.

2. Abolition of the Presidency, Vice-Presidency and Senate of the United States. An Executive Board to be established, whose members are to be elected, and may at any time be recalled, by the House of Representatives as the only legislative body. The States and Municipalities to adopt corresponding amendments to their constitutions and statutes.

3. Municipal self-government.

4. Direct vote and secret ballots in all elections. Universal and equal right of suffrage without regard to color, creed or sex. Election days to be legal holidays. The principle of minority representation to be introduced.

5. All public officers to be subject to recall by their respective constituencies.

6. Uniform civil and criminal law throughout the United States. Administration of justice to be free of charge. Abolition of capital punishment.

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WEDNESDAY AND THURSDAY, OCT 16–17.

The Constitution was then taken up. Several important amendments were adopted, which the lack of space does not permit us to give in this issue. A report of this part of the proceedings will appear in our next.

The following appeal in aid of the party organs was unanimously adopted and ordered to be printed and issued immediately:

“CHICAGO, Oct. 16, 1889.

*“To the Members of the Party.*

“The National Convention of the Socialist Labor Party, assembled at Vorwärts Turn Hall, Chicago, Ill., sends you greeting.

To you, comrades, everywhere, the Convention appeals and urges you to take immediate and energetic action towards the support of the party journals, the WORKMEN'S ADVOCATE and *Der Sozialist*.

“You know that Rosenberg and his colleagues, upon their suspension by the

Board of Supervision, refused to turn over the party funds in their hands, and expended these moneys, amounting to nearly \$600, for factional purposes.

“The German Section of New York has done its very utmost to secure the continuance of the party journals. During the last four weeks the members of this Section have raised about \$1,000 for that purpose; but their means are now exhausted, and the convention feels called upon to appeal to your spirit of sacrifice. You are urgently requested to at once transmit all arrears of subscriptions and dues, and also, as far as possible, to send voluntary contributions, in order to secure the continuance of the party journals.

“We trust this appeal will be promptly responded to. Whatever you intend doing, do it without delay. All remittances should be directed to B.J. Gretsch, 25 East Fourth street, New York City. With fraternal greeting,

“THE CONVENTION, S.L.P.”

The following resolutions were adopted by the Convention in the course of its proceedings:

#### THE ROSENBERG CONFLICT.

“*Resolved*, That in the judgment of the convention the management of the party by the former executive was inefficient and highly injurious to the interests of the party and of the cause; that the majority of the executive often acted arbitrarily and in disregard of the minority; that the editorial management of the party journals was prejudicial to the party, and the whole conduct of the executive and of the journals was such as to compromise the part in New York and vicinity and estrange from it the most progressive element of Organized Labor.

“The convention is further of the opinion that the Board of Supervision was guilty of a lamentable neglect in not interfering before and putting a stop to this injurious management, whereby the present troubles might have been avoided.

“The convention is further of the opinion that the language of the constitution of the party is not sufficiently precise to give no room for differing opinions as to the theoretical right or wrong of the German Section, but that energetic action was imperatively demanded in the interest of the party; that when the Board of

Supervision remained inactive, the New York Section should have called upon it to intervene, but that the action of the New York Section is excusable, because they believed the majority of the Board to be under the influence of the executive committee. Though the correctness of this view is disputed by the Board of Supervision, this opinion was entertained and had its effect.

“We also find that the New York Section might well believe that the executive was endeavoring to pack the convention called for Sept. 28, but how far this apprehension was borne out by the facts we are unable to decide; but we are of the opinion that after the Board of Supervision had suspended both executive committees and itself taken charge of the management of the party, the Board was the only legal party authority; that the action of the Board of Supervision in postponing the convention was justified, and Rosenberg, Gerecke, Hintze and Sauter, as well as the Chicago Section, placed themselves outside of the party.”

#### PARIS CONGRESS.

“*Resolved*, 1. That the former Secretary of the National Executive Committee deserves censure for failing to report to the Board of Supervision the result of the general vote. 2. That the insinuations circulated against some of the nominees were unfounded and unjustifiable, and the comrades are cautioned to be more careful in the future in respect to such slanders.”

#### SLANDEROUS CHARGES AND INSINUATIONS.

“*Whereas*, Rosenberg and his partisans have published unfounded charges and insinuations against several active comrades which, if proven, would disqualify them for any active participation in the labor movement and bring discredit upon their names,

“The Convention declares that these charges form a part of those persistent insinuations which Rosenberg and his allies were always ready to throw out against the persons whom they looked upon as their opponents, and are in no respect based on fact;

“And the Convention further declares that there can be no excuse for the proceeding of those slanderers, as it clearly would have been their duty, if they

believed in the truth of their insinuations, to prefer charges before the Sections of which the accused were members, and there prove their allegations, thus affording to the accused at the same time an opportunity of disproving the charges by a proper investigation.”

#### POLITICAL ACTION.

“*Resolved*, To recommend to the members wherever one or more labor parties are in the field, to support that party which is the most progressive; that is, the platform and principles which come nearest to ours, and at least recognizes the conflict between capital and labor; but members shall not be permitted to participate in the founding of new parties when there is no well-founded reason to believe the same shall fully recognize our principles.

“With regard to the practical application of these tactics, be it provided, that if a decision has been made by the local section or district organization in the premises, it shall be binding upon the members; and no member shall take part in such political movement if the section or district has decided against it.

“Members are in duty bound to assist in the endeavors of the various economic organizations of wage-workers, by entering the ranks of such organizations, or to found such organizations as will prevent the economic degradation of the workers and improve their conditions.

“Members are in duty bound to foster our democratic principles in any trades union or K. of L. Assembly in which they may hold membership, in order to enable the members of those organizations to administer their own affairs, to recognize the solidarity of all wage-workers, acknowledge the irreconcilable conflict between exploiters and their victims, making these postulates the basis of their economic movement.”

#### CAPITALISTIC PARTIES AND CANDIDATES.

“*Resolved*, That under no circumstances shall members of the party be permitted to use the party organization or the socialistic press for the support of any capitalistic parties or their candidates.

## THE EIGHT-HOUR WORKING DAY.

*“Whereas, The normal work-day, i.e., the reduction of the hours of labor in proportion to the progress of production, affords in a measure protection against the increasing intensiveness of exploitation, and is therefore desirable; and*

*“Whereas, The normal work-day, through the most radical reform possible under the present industrial system, is still only a palliative; and*

*“Whereas, The realization of this demand cannot afford a lasting safeguard against the pauperization of the masses, in consequence of the perfected division of labor, the progress of invention and the use of machinery, the emancipation of the working people being impossible without a fundamental change of the social system, be it*

*“Resolved, That we urge all members of the party everywhere, and at all times, to take an active part in the eight-hour movement of the trades unions, always keeping in view the above consideration.*

## INTERNATIONAL FEDERATION.

*“Whereas, The interests of the exploited in their struggle against their industrial enslavement are identical throughout all countries; and*

*“Whereas, The time has come when this solidarity should find expression in an international organization, be it*

*“Resolved, That we fully endorse the resolutions of the Paris International Congress as far as the same are applicable in this country, and we instruct the coming executive to enter into communication with the socialist parties and organizations of other countries with a view to forming an international federation.”*

## THE FLAG INCIDENT.

*“Resolved, That we deeply regret the publication of a report to the effect that at a public meeting of Socialists at Vorwært’s Turner Hall last Sunday the American flag was hissed. Although we did not arrange the meeting, and, as strangers in this city, surely cannot be held responsible for the conduct of the audience, yet we declare that none of us has heard any hissing, and that if there was any it must have been an exceedingly insignificant affair, brought on by a few indiscreet*

persons. However we call positively say that the American flag when hoisted was greeted by the clapping of hands, and we think the mere fact that the hoisting of the stars and stripes was done should be sufficient proof that there was no intent whatever to insult or even to show disrespect to the flag.”

Brooklyn was elected as the seat of the next National Executive Committee. Sanial was recommended for the editorship of the WORKMEN'S ADVOCATE. For the editorship of *Der Sozialist* three comrades were recommended, Christensen, Negendank and Hugo Vogt.

Some other matters of interest, including a true report of Shevitch's interview with the Mayor of Chicago after the “flag-hissing” incident, are crowded out of this issue. They will appear in our next, together with the amendments to the constitution.



## CONSTITUTION.

### I.—MANAGEMENT.

The affairs of the Party are conducted by the National Executive Committee, the National Board of Grievances, the local Sections, the National Conventions, and by the General Vote.

### II.—CONVENTIONS—THE NATIONAL CONVENTION.

1. National Conventions of the Party shall take place according to the needs of the times. The National Executive Committee is obliged to have a general vote taken every year before April 15, in order to ascertain whether and when and where a National Convention is to take place; but the convention shall not be called to convene before at least four weeks have expired from the publication of the result of such general vote.

2. Every Section belonging to the Party for three months prior to the National Convention, and which has fulfilled all its obligations, is entitled to representation therein at the rate of one delegate for each hundred members or fraction thereof. Each delegate shall have only one vote. Proxy delegates must receive their credentials from the Sections they represent directly. A proxy shall have a vote only on matters on which he has received instructions from the Section for which he sits; in all other matters he shall have a mere advisory voice.

3. The expenses of the delegates, as well as of the convention, shall be defrayed from the Party treasury. Sections having less than fifty members shall combine with neighboring Sections to send a joint delegate. Sections which have no opportunity to do so and desire to be represented by a delegate of their own, may send one at their own expense. They shall, however, be reimbursed out of the Party treasury so much per member as is the proportionate share of each party member in the expenses defrayed for the representation of the entire membership of the Party.

4. The National Convention frames the National Platform, decides the form of organization, selects the place where the next National Executive Committee and Board of Grievances will be located, and investigates and decides all difficulties within the Party.

5. All acts of the convention shall be submitted to the Sections for general vote.

### III.—NATIONAL EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE.

1. The National Executive Committee is composed of seven members to be elected by the Section or Sections of the place selected as the seat of the committee. The committee shall elect from its members a Financial Secretary, a Recording Secretary and a Treasurer.

The same Section or Sections shall also elect the National Secretary, who shall also act as secretary for foreign affair. He shall be a member of the Executive Committee, but with an advisory voice only.

It is the right and duty of the said Section or Sections to suspend any member of the National Executive Committee, including the National Secretary, who may be guilty of any neglect of duty, to elect a temporary successor in place of such suspended member, and to submit such action with the reasons therefor to a general vote.

2. The members of the National Executive Committee shall be elected for the term of one year, but may be re-elected at the expiration thereof.

3. The National Executive 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 establish proper relations and communication with the Socialist Parties of other countries.

*d.* To make all necessary preparations for the National Convention, and make a full report to the same on all Party matters.

*e.* To issue semi-annually and in a sufficient number of copies a report to the Party, stating definitely the condition of every Section and of the Party's finances. The local Sections selected as the seat of the committee shall elect an auditing

Committee, which shall have power at any time to inspect and audit the books and the funds on hand.

4. It is also the duty of the National Executive Committee:

*a.* To receive any propositions which may be presented for general vote by any Section; they shall become binding if endorsed by a general vote of the Party within two months after the issue of the call.

*b.* To be represented in the National Convention by one of its members, who shall have no vote, but a mere advisory voice in the proceedings, and shall bear no other credentials.

*c.* The National Executive Committee makes its own order of business.

*d.* The Executive Committee may compensate its officers, according to the labors performed by them, from the treasury of the Party.

#### IV.—THE PARTY PRESS.

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

2. The editors are appointed by the National Executive Committee from such comrades as shall be recommended for appointment by the convention. They cannot be members of the committee.

3. The National Executive Committee shall give notice of discharge at least two weeks before the same is to take effect; the editors shall also be bound to give two week's notice of their intentions to leave their positions.

4. Any of the editors who may prove incompetent or violate the platform or constitution of the party may be forthwith suspended by the National Executive Committee.

Any editor who has been discharged by the committee shall have a right of appeal to the Board of Grievances.

5. The control and administration of the party property, consisting of the printery and the party organs, belongs to the local Section or Sections of the town where the printery is situated and the organs are published.

## V.—BOARD OF GRIEVANCES.

1. The Board of Grievances shall be composed of seven members.
2. The duties of this Board shall be:
  - a. To settle all difficulties in the party within four weeks after receiving the necessary evidence, the decisions to be at once communicated to the National Executive Committee; and to decide appeals in cases of expulsion.
  - b. From all decisions of the Board of Grievances, appeal may be taken to the general vote. The Sections must report the result of their vote to the National Executive Committee within six weeks; within two additional weeks the National Executive Committee must publish the result.
  - c. The secretary of the Board of Grievances shall render a full report of the transactions of that Board during its term of office to the National Convention.
  - d. The Board shall declare vacant the seat of any of its members for absence from three consecutive meetings without sufficient cause, and is authorized to order the Section of its locality to fill the vacancy by election.

## VI.—SECTIONS.

1. A number of persons may form a Section, providing they acknowledge the Platform, Constitution and Resolutions of the Party and belong to no other political party.
  - a. They shall report their organization as a Section to the National Executive Committee, and send a list of members and the dues for the current month.
  - b. Such new Section shall be deemed admitted to the Party unless within four weeks after the organization of any new Section has been reported to the National Executive Committee valid objections are urged against its admission by other Sections. The validity or groundlessness of any objection made to the admission of any new Section shall be determined by the National Executive Committee.
  - c. Each Section shall send every three months a report of its numerical and financial condition, also its progress and prospects, to the National Executive Committee.
2. Where it may be deemed desirable, several sections may be formed in one city or town: but when more than one Section exists in any town, the several

Sections shall be bound by any resolutions adopted by a majority vote of the whole local membership regarding political action or questions of principle.

3. It shall be the duty of the several Sections existing in any one town to provide rules governing their joint action in matters to be acted on by the whole local membership.

4. Sections shall have jurisdiction over their own members.

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

6. A majority of two-thirds of the members present at any business meeting shall be sufficient to expel any member.

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

8. The names of all persons applying for admission to the party must be voted upon in a regular business meeting of the Section or branch.

#### VII.—LOCAL ORGANIZATION.

In any Section which is divided into two or more branches, all local business of the Section and dealings with the party authorities may be carried on by a Central Committee.

#### VIII.—DUES.

1. The Sections levy upon each of their members a monthly tax of ten cents, to be paid monthly to the National Executive Committee. For local purposes the Sections may levy an additional tax according to their needs.

2. The dues shall be receipted for by stamps, which shall be furnished by the National Executive Committee to the Sections, and shall be given only as receipts for monthly dues by the Sections to their members.

#### IX.—SECTION REGULATIONS.

1. Every Section elects from among its members an Organizer and such additional officers as it deems proper. The Organizer shall conduct the correspondence with the Executive, and he shall send an official report once every

three months to the National Executive Committee; he shall send five cents of the monthly dues of each member to the Executive; he conducts the local organization.

2. Every Section shall elect a Grievance Committee of three members, which shall investigate all charges and difficulties in the Section, and report to it its decision. Sections which have a Central Committee may refer said investigations to said committee.

3. Charges against members shall not be debated until the Grievance Committee has thoroughly investigated the case and reported to the Section. All charges shall be made in writing, whereupon the committee has to 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 decision be entered on the minutes. The minutes and all papers concerning the investigation shall be delivered to the secretary for safe keeping. The secretary shall inform the accused in writing of such decision.

4. At every meeting a new chairman shall be elected who shall observe the usual parliamentary rules of order.

5. Members who have withheld payment of their dues for more than three months shall be suspended from all rights until restored to good standing.

6. Sick or unemployed members will be excused from payment of dues.

7. The result of every election within the Section must be communicated at once to the National Executive Committee.

8. Upon dissolution of any Section, all its property shall be turned over to the National Executive Committee.

#### X.—STATE ORGANIZATION.

Where the conditions are favorable, the formation of State organizations comprising all the Sections of each State, is recommended. It shall be the duty of such State organizations to construct a systematic agitation within their jurisdiction and form new Sections. Where in any State the formation of a State organization is resolved by a majority of the Sections in such State, all the other Sections shall join such State organization.

## MISCELLANEOUS REGULATIONS.

1. This constitution may be amended by the national convention or by a vote. A general vote may be called for by three Sections. Any proposition in the interest of the party submitted by any Section shall be laid before the party by the National Executive Committee for a general vote. Within four weeks after the issuance of a call for a general vote, amendments may be proposed by any Section to any proposition so laid before the party, and such amendments shall then be submitted to the vote, together with the original proposition. The result of the vote must be reported to the National Executive Committee within eight weeks after the call was first issued.

2. No person shall be nominated as a candidate for any public office unless he has been a member of the party at least one year, and has identified himself with the party by active participation in its work. But this provision shall not operate against persons who have been publicly known as Socialists for five years, and are considered as such by members of the party.

3. All officers, boards or committees of the party shall be subject to removal by their constituents (see Art. 3, ¶1, as to the National Executive Committee).

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

5. The National Executive Committee is directed (in order to bring about a uniform system of transacting business) to have proper financial books made to be furnished to the Sections at cost price.

6. The National Executive Committee shall, immediately after the expulsion of any member, publish the name of the expelled in the party organ, and in its semi-annual report give a list of the names so published.

7. All former resolutions conflicting with this constitution are rescinded.

Transcribed and edited by Robert Bills for the official Web site of the Socialist Labor Party of America.

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