

Fourteenth  
**National Convention**  
Socialist Labor Party

**April 29–May 2, 1916**

Minutes, Reports, Resolutions, Etc.



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*Proceedings of the  
14th National Convention  
Socialist Labor Party*

April 29–May 2, 1916

World Building, Room 506, New York City

**MORNING SESSION, SATURDAY, APRIL 29**

National Secretary Arnold Petersen opened the convention at 10 A.M.

Temporary Organization

Arthur E. Reimer of Massachusetts was elected temporary chairman; Albert Schnabel of Wisconsin was elected temporary secretary; Donald Munro of Virginia was elected temporary vice-chairman.

Chairman Reimer requested the delegates to rise in honor of our beloved Comrade De Leon, which request was cheerfully complied with.

The Reception Committee of Section New York welcomed the delegates in the name of the Section.

Credentials Committee

The following Committee on Credentials was elected: Richard Koepfel of Ohio, Charles H. Seaholm of Scandinavian Federation of S.L.P., and William Cox of Missouri.

A recess of 10 minutes was taken to await the report of the Credentials Committee.

The Credentials Committee reported and recommended that the following delegates be seated:

*California:* 1. Ernest Pfister; 2. Robert Roadhouse.<sup>1</sup>

*Illinois:* Frank Zermann.

*Indiana:* John J. Burkhardt.

*Maryland:* Worden H. Mills.

*Massachusetts:* 1. Oscar Kinsalas; 2. Arthur Reimer.

*Michigan:* Herman Richter.

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<sup>1</sup> The names of the California delegates were stricken because they did not attend the convention.—*Secretary.*

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- Minnesota:* Gerald J. Sherwood.<sup>1</sup>  
*Missouri:* William H. Cox.  
*New Jersey:* 1. H.O. Smith;<sup>2</sup> 2. Rudolph Katz.  
*New York:* 1. Edmund Seidel; 2. August Gillhaus; 3. Boris Reinstein.<sup>3</sup>  
*Ohio:* Richard Koeppel.<sup>4</sup>  
*Pennsylvania:* 1. George H. Ohls; 2. Robert McLure.  
*Rhode Island:* Peter McDermott.  
*Virginia:* Donald L. Munro.  
*Washington:* Thomas Reagan.<sup>5</sup>  
*Wisconsin:* Albert Schnabel.  
*Hungarian Federation:* 1. Louis Basky; 2. Andrew Wiest;  
3. John Havascy; 4. John Flack; 5. Vencel Mazanck.  
*Scandinavian Federation:* 1. John D. Carlson; 2. Charles H. Seaholm; 3. Axel Peterson; 4. A.H. Lyzell; 5. F. Hanson;  
6. A. Furstenberg; 7. N. Malmberg.  
*Lettish Federation:* 1. Waldemar Extine; 2. Jacob Procum;  
3. John Saleneck.  
*South Slavonian Federation:* Miladin Udovicki.

### AGENDA

#### TEMPORARY ORGANIZATION

- 1—Election of Chairman, Vice-Chairman and Secretary.
- 2—Reception Committee of Section New York.
- 3—Election of Committee on Credentials.
- 4—Election of Committee on Rules.
- 5—Recess of 30 minutes.
- 6—Report of Committee on Credentials; Seating of Delegates.
- 7—Report of Committee on Rules.

#### PERMANENT ORGANIZATION

- 1—Organization.

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<sup>1</sup> Sherwood's name was stricken because he did not attend the convention.—*Secretary.*

<sup>2</sup> Smith was seated as alternate for Miss Anna Spann, who arrived and was seated on May 1.—*Secretary.*

<sup>3</sup> The fourth delegate for New York, P.E. De Lee, was seated April 30.—*Secretary.*

<sup>4</sup> The second delegate for Ohio, F.E. Waitz, was seated Sun., April 30.—*Secretary.*

<sup>5</sup> Reagan's name was stricken because he did not attend the convention.—*Secretary.*

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- a—Election of Chairman, Vice-Chairman and Secretary.
- b—Election of permanent Sergeant-at-Arms and a Messenger.
- 2—Report of the National Executive Committee.
- 3—Report of the Editor of the *Weekly People*.
- 4—Election of Committee on Constitution and Resolutions pertaining to the same.
- 5—Election of Committee on Platform and Resolutions on same.
- 6—Election of Committee on Attitude of the Party toward Economic Organization and Resolutions pertaining thereto.
- 7—Election of Auditing Committee.
- 8—Unity Conference Proposal from Socialist Party. Election of Committee to consider same.
- 9—International Socialist Movement.
- 10—Election of Committee on Party Press and Literature.
- 11—Roll Call of Delegates for the Introduction of Resolutions for Reference to Committee.
- 12—National Campaign.

The committee further recommends that the following order of business be used for each day after the first day:

1. Roll Call of Delegates.
  2. Reading of the Minutes.
  3. Election of Chairman.
  4. Communications.
  5. Reports of Committees and Action Thereon.
  6. Unfinished Business.
  7. New Business.
  8. The last half hour of each afternoon session is to be devoted to the receiving of resolutions to be read and referred to the appropriate committees.
  9. Morning sessions from 9 A.M. to 12 P.M.; afternoon sessions from 2 P.M. to 6 P.M. Evening sessions if possible and if necessary.
- If possible, nomination of candidates for United States President and Vice-President should take place on the second day of the convention.
- Election of National Secretary of the Party, Editor of the *Weekly People*, and Representative to the International Socialist Bureau on the last day of the convention.

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### PERMANENT ORGANIZATION

The temporary organization was now made permanent. Joseph Brandon of Section New York was elected as Sergeant-at-Arms.

Martin Aul was appointed Messenger during the convention.

The National Executive Committee submitted its report through National Secretary Petersen. The report is as follows:

### Report of the National Executive Committee of the Socialist Labor Party to the Fourteenth National Convention

New York, N.Y., April 29, 1916

#### GREETING:

In rendering its report to this the Fourteenth National Convention of the Socialist Labor Party your National Executive Committee is conscious of the great importance of this—for the first time in sixteen years—the only socialist convention in {the} United States. Being held at a time when the capitalist social system is being shaken to its very foundation; at a time when, unhappily, the proletarians of various countries are slaughtering each other, misled by the ruling classes of the various national groups; at a time, in short, when problems are confronting the revolutionary labor movement such as that movement has never before been confronted with; at such a time it is well that the representatives of the most advanced revolutionary political organization of the working class assemble together, to take counsel with each other, so that still greater clearness on these weighty problems may be arrived at to the end that the revolutionary movement may grow in magnitude as well as in understanding and clarity of principles, methods and tactics.

#### EVENTS SINCE THE THIRTEENTH NATIONAL CONVENTION

Since the last convention of the Party held in this city in 1912 great events have, indeed, taken place, not only upon the international field, but also within our own Party.

The events that have taken place within the Party are not all of the kind that we may rejoice over. Indeed, two of these events are of the kind that brought sadness into the hearts of every true S.L.P. man and woman. We refer to the death of our matchless comrade and

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teacher Daniel De Leon, and to the suspension of our daily paper, the *Daily People*. Of these two events, we need hardly add that the former is by far the saddest, and the one that most seriously has affected, not only our Party, but the cause of international proletarian emancipation as well.

We need not go into details. You are all only too well familiar with the sad circumstances surrounding the death of this valiant and noble proletarian fighter. All of us, as we commence our labors at this convention, will keenly miss his guiding hand, his wise counsel and thought-inspiring remarks. The best we can do is to keep before us the noble precepts of our dead comrade, to try to apply the principles for which he fought so unselfishly and fearlessly these many years to the problems before us. Doing this we feel that the work of our Party will be advanced even though he no longer be with us.

The prognostications of this wonderful man have been fulfilled almost to a letter. Time and again, he told us that he who builds with temporary success as the end in view, and neglects the larger and far more important work, that of *organizing* the working class for its historic mission, builds a house of cards. How true this has proven to be may be seen by the awful drama now being played out in Europe, and by the bankruptcy and impotency of the Socialist Party in this country. Let us then render full homage to that masterly mind whose sole aim was the welfare of the exploited proletariat, and who died so untimely a death.

The National Secretary whom the last convention elected<sup>1</sup> resigned his office for personal reasons, and the present incumbent, having been in office but a little over two years, asks your kind indulgence if he does not cover fully the four years between the two conventions. He will endeavor to relate such matters that have taken place during the last two years. Only a brief résumé is given as you undoubtedly all are familiar with the details.

Upon entering office in February 1914, the present National Secretary found a most deplorable condition prevailing at the Party plant. This condition has by some been blamed upon mismanagement on the part of those who in the past had charge of the National Headquarters, but it would be most unfair to these men to so attribute it,

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<sup>1</sup> [Paul Augustine. The National Executive Committee elected Augustine as National Secretary in 1908 to fill a vacancy created by the removal of Frank Bohn from office. Augustine was elected to four-year terms by the National Conventions of 1908 and 1912, but resigned late in 1913. The NEC elected Arnold Petersen to fill the vacancy in February 1914.—R.B.]

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though we, who can now look back upon the events of that time, might feel that if certain things had been done, and other things left undone, things might not have gone to such extremes as they did, so extreme, indeed, as to threaten the existence of the Party itself.

The condition referred to was the result of a growth, the causes for which may be sought in the conditions of the entire labor movement of the land. The men in charge during that period (1913–1914) were confronted with the cumulative result of years of battle, which battles had sapped the strength of the organization and nearly exhausted the Party's sources of revenue. Incidentally, no doubt, mistakes were made—mistakes that in the nature of things were more or less inevitable to the Socialist Labor Party, always leading a precarious existence notwithstanding its correct principles, its virility and soundness, the combined effect of these things—the onslaughts made on the Party, the incidental mistakes made, the depletion of the Party's resources—proved so many blows directed at the vitals of the Party. The men in charge of National Headquarters, as already pointed out, had to face the cumulative effect of these blows and finally a crisis was reached.

In the fall of 1913, a new plant manager had been appointed. He possessed all the necessary qualifications, but due to conditions over which neither he nor any one else had any control, he found himself unable to cope with the situation. Things went from bad to worse; the Sub-Committee of your National Executive Committee was left to cope with what presently appeared to be a desperate situation. In order to save the situation it was finally, and after much discussion, vain hopes and anxiety, decided to suspend the Party's daily organ, the *Daily People*. The paper was suspended on February 22nd, 1914.

For a while, things went better, but it was not very long before the same condition confronted us, only more intensified. Finally the present National Secretary assumed full charge of the whole plant, reorganized it completely, and for a time at least the storm was weathered. In May 1914 a special meeting of your National Executive Committee was held, the situation was thoroughly gone into, and the recommendations made by the NEC Sub-Committee were adopted with the result that since then the Party's plant has not been threatened by any sudden cataclysm, though we have been far from having had smooth sailing. Just now, the financial condition of the *Weekly People* is deplorable, though the sound financial condition of the Party itself has saved us from wreck. However, this matter is well worthy your most serious attention and should be discussed thoroughly and

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plans formulated to make the condition of our indispensable fighting organ, the *Weekly People*, less precarious.

### INTERNATIONAL SITUATION

In August 1914, the National Executive Committee was preparing to send the Party's two elected delegates, Comrades Reimer and Katz, to the International Socialist Congress, which was to have been held at Vienna, August 22nd, 1914. The report of the Party was prepared and printed in two languages and shipped to Vienna, when, as you know, the congress was called off owing to the outbreak of the war.

The European war, as already stated, has furnished the most concrete, though most awful, illustration of the correctness of the Party's principles. Earnest and honest as the majority of the European Socialists undoubtedly were, and much as their politically (and to some extent economically) backward condition may serve as an excuse for their errors, it cannot be denied that the European movement as a whole was not the sound, socialist movement so many otherwise intelligent Socialists believed it to be. Had it been such the present chaos and confusion reigning over there among the Socialists would be inexplicable. And, as the Socialist Labor Party holds, to a very great extent this can only be attributed to the fact that the leading Socialists, though claiming to be Marxists, failed to recognize this essential principle of Marxism, that not only must the political state of government of persons yield to the industrial administration of things, but the political movement itself must carry on the agitation for that economic working class organization, which *now* and *here* must form the skeleton, the embryo of the future Socialist Republic—the *Industrial Class Union*.

Seeing the way things went in Europe, and desiring at least to try to aid the European comrades in regaining their balance and to help rebuild the International on newer and better lines than the old ones, the National Executive Committee issued an address to all the affiliated parties throughout the world. This was done in January 1915.

In this address it was emphasized how utterly impossible it is for the political state to conduct the processes of production. The cardinal principle of *industrial* representative administration was somewhat elaborately discussed, for the reason that a great number of Socialists in Europe undoubtedly look upon the state as a permanent feature or at least as a fixture that will last into the Socialist Republic, and in a way act as the administrative and directing force in the socialist pro-



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ductive process.

During the past twenty months the Party has also vigorously and in the face of a growing feeling of manufactured "patriotism" maintained the proposition that the interests of the proletariat are not local, but *international*; that nationalism was the immediate reef upon which the parties in Europe were wrecked. The Party has pointed out that at this late stage of over-developed capitalism there can be nothing more harmful, more baneful to the cause of social progress than the capitalist system itself. In taking this position the Party is but making the same logical application of Marxism that has marked its career in the past.

All in all, the international situation deserves our most serious attention. At home, international events have had a most marked effect upon the question of militarism. The Party must oppose this insidious campaign for militarism, not by any means in a mere negative manner, but by pointing out that the proletariat stands to lose even its nominal freedom if this tendency toward industrial autocracy is permitted to go on unchecked.

Several attempts have been made on the part of European Socialists to hold conferences of Socialists from neutral countries. One conference was held at Copenhagen in January 1915 and another later in the year at Zimmerwald, Switzerland. This latter is by far the most important because of its clear stand on the causes of the war and its uncompromising Internationalism. The National Executive Committee replied to its manifesto, which reply was published in the bulletin published by the Swiss socialist minority. The Party, however, has taken no steps toward joining the body, which was born of this conference (the International Socialist Commission). It might not be amiss to take this matter under consideration.

During the latter part of the year 1914, the Party experienced some difficulties with a small coterie of disrupters in Texas. The work of these disrupters resulted in the expulsion of the state organization by the National Executive Committee at its January session 1916. More detailed information will be given under the head of "Organization."

### UNFINISHED BUSINESS

The question of a permanent Party platform is left from last convention as Unfinished Business. Only three states submitted drafts—California, Oregon (Section Portland) and Texas. These drafts are herewith submitted in copy as the secretary has been unable to

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locate the originals.

### UNITY PROPOSAL

The Socialist Party recently passed a referendum providing for a unity conference with the Socialist Labor Party. The National Secretary of the Socialist Labor Party was officially notified of this action, and realizing the importance of the matter the N.E.C. Sub-Committee made a series of recommendations to the National Executive Committee, the National Executive Committee in turn to make these recommendations {as} its own to this convention. The matter was submitted to the National Executive Committee but as at this writing the full vote of the National Executive Committee is not at hand, the recommendations are embodied in this report. The Unity referendum as passed by the Socialist Party, correspondence from the National Office of the Socialist Party and from the National Office of the Socialist Labor Party, and above-mentioned recommendations follow in the order named:

#### “REFERENDUM PASSED BY THE SOCIALIST PARTY

“That the Socialist Labor Party of the United States be invited to elect a committee composed of five of their members to meet in joint conference with a committee of five members to be elected by the National Committee of the Socialist Party.

“Said joint conference shall meet within two months from the time of their election and work out a basis and agreement that provides for the amalgamation of the Socialist Party and the Socialist Labor Party in one organization.

“Such agreement to be submitted to the two national organizations not later than June 1, 1916, and then immediately by said national organizations be submitted to a referendum vote in the respective organizations for ratification or rejection.”

#### COPIES OF LETTERS PASSED BETWEEN THE NATIONAL OFFICES OF THE SOCIALIST PARTY AND SOCIALIST LABOR PARTY

Socialist Party, Chicago, Ill.

March 8th, 1916

Arnold Petersen, 45 Rose St.,  
New York City, N.Y.

Dear Comrade:—

I wish to inform you that the membership of the Socialist Party, by referendum, has voted for a Unity Conference between your organization and ours, in order to bring about unity. June

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4th has been suggested as a tentative date for such a meeting.

I will ask that you kindly take this matter up with your executive and let me know their wishes. Our committee is composed of five members, and I suggest you select an equal number; also that the meeting be held in Chicago and that the total expense of the two committees be divided equally between the two parties.

If any of these suggestions are not agreeable to you, of course, we stand ready to do anything to bring about this meeting.

I should like very much to have an answer to this communication on or before Monday, March 13th as our Executive Committee will then be in session;

I am sending you herewith a copy of the referendum ballot for your information.

Yours fraternally,  
(Signed) Walter Lanfersiek,  
Executive Secretary

WL:EL.

\* \* \* \* \*

New York, March 10th, 1916

Mr. Walter Lanfersiek,  
Sec'y Socialist Party, Chicago, Ill.

Dear Comrade:—

Your favor of March 8th came to hand. As this matter will have to be submitted to our Executive Committee, I regret to say that I cannot give you an answer in time for your Executive Committee meeting on March 13th. As soon as our committee has taken action on the matter, I shall communicate with you again.

I am returning your letter for your signature. No doubt this was left out inadvertently. Please return to me again.

Fraternally yours,  
(Signed) Arnold Petersen  
National Secretary.

AP/EH

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Socialist Party, Chicago, Ill.  
March 14, 1916

Arnold Peterson,  
P.O. Box 1576, New York City, N.Y.

Dear Comrade:—

In addition to the suggestions in my former letter, I would say that we pay delegates to our conventions and national committee meetings \$2.50 per day and railroad fare including sleeper where necessary. I think this allowance ought to be made to delegates from both sides. This allowance begins when the dele-

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gate leaves his home and continues until his arrival home. It will just about pay his actual expenses.

I am now suggesting a later date for the meeting. Our Executive will meet June 17th, and I think it would be advisable to meet June 14th, instead of June 4th, if this date is agreeable to your committee. This would give us three days for deliberation before the meeting of our Executive. This suggestion is made because Comrade Goebel, who is on both committees, will cost only one railroad fare by having the two meetings together, and will mean that much saving to us,

Yours fraternally,  
(Signed) Walter Lanfersiek,  
Executive Secretary

WL:EL.

\* \* \* \* \*

In a subsequent letter, we informed the Executive Secretary of the S.P. that this matter would be referred to this convention.

ON UNITY CONFERENCE BETWEEN S.P. AND S.L.P.:  
RECOMMENDATIONS MADE BY THE N.E.C. SUB-COMMITTEE  
TO THE NATIONAL EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

*Recommendation No. 1—*

Moved by Walters, seconded by Zimmerman, "That the Unity Memorial, issued by the National Executive Committee, Socialist Labor Party, in 1911, be withdrawn."—In favor: Zimmerman, Walters, Machauer, Kowarsky, Seaholm, Hall, Malmberg, Schwartz, Kihn, Renke, Lightbourn, Gillhaus; 12. None against.

*Recommendation No. 2—*

That the Sub-Committee recommend to the N.E.C. that the latter recommend to the National Convention that in the event such a conference take(s) place our delegates be instructed to insist upon the following as conditions necessary for unity between the two parties:

A.—The unqualified acceptance and advocacy of pro-political action industrial unionism by the proposed united party.—In favor: Walters, Seaholm, Kowarsky, Hall, Kihn, Levin, Machauer, Zimmerman, Schwartz, Renke, Gillhaus, Lightbourn; 12. Against: Malmberg; 1.

B.—The acceptance of the international principle that so-called national defense at this late day of international capitalism is an

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anachronism, and that the proposed united party go on record as being utterly opposed to this theory of national defense, placing itself squarely on the ground of the class struggle, recognizing that the proletariat of the world has no country which it can call its own—consequently it has no country to *defend*, but a country and world to *gain* from the capitalist classes of this country and the world.—In favor: Walters, Seaholm, Kowarsky, Hall, Kihn, Malmberg, Machauer, Zimmerman, Levin, Renke, Schwartz, Gillhaus, Lightbourn; 13. None against.

### *Recommendation No. 3—*

That the Sub-Committee recommend to the N.E.C. that the latter recommend to the National Convention that in the event of unity the form of such unity be on a federative basis as outlined in the Unity Memorial of 1911. This plan to guarantee complete autonomy to the S.L.P., leaving it to have full control and ownership of its publications in all languages including all Labor News literature, copyrighted or otherwise. That the Party retain its own Secretary on the International Bureau and its own delegation to International Congresses, as likewise outlined in the Unity Memorial of 1911. That the S.L.P. surrender its right to nominate separate candidates for public offices, and its Sections and members cooperate in the conduct of electoral campaigns with the rest of the membership in the united party, thus presenting a united front against the capitalist class.—In favor, Walters, Seaholm, Kowarsky, Hall, Schwartz, Kihn, Levin, Malmberg, Machauer, Zimmerman, Renke, Lightbourn, Gillhaus; 13. None against.

### *Recommendation No. 4—*

That the N.E.C. be requested to recommend to the National Convention that in the event of unity the proposed united party be named “The United Socialist Party of America.”—In favor: Walters, Seaholm, Kowarsky, Hall, Schwartz, Kihn, Malmberg, Zimmerman, Machauer, Levin, Renke, Gillhaus, Lightbourn; 13. None against.

### *Recommendation No. 5—*

That the N.E.C. be requested to recommend to the National Convention that if the convention decides to confer with the S.P. that we notify the S.P. that we cannot accept their proposition of sharing *all* expenses equally. That we will pay our delegates' expenses

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just as the S.P. will pay the expenses of its own delegates, and that we agree to pay one half of all other expenses after they have been properly audited.—In favor: Walters, Seaholm, Kowarsky, Hall, Schwartz, Kihn, Malmberg, Zimmerman, Machauer, Levin, Renke, Gillhaus, Lightbourn; 13. None against.

### *Recommendation No. 6—*

That the N.E.C. be requested to recommend to the National Convention that in the event the conference take(s) place that the proceedings be taken down stenographically and published, the two parties to share the expense equally.—In favor: Walters, Seaholm, Hall, Kowarsky, Levin, Schwartz, Kihn, Malmberg, Machauer, Zimmerman, Renke, Gillhaus, Lightbourn; 13. None against.

These recommendations are by no means all that may be made. Various others have been suggested such as the postponing of the conference until after election; that all papers that have not the official endorsement of the proposed united party be not recognized as socialist papers, that the conference be held in New York instead of in Chicago, etc., etc.

### PROPOSED AMENDMENTS TO S.L.P. CONSTITUTION.

The following constitutional amendments are proposed. In each case the paragraph which it is suggested to change is given as it reads now, and the proposed change in brackets:

1—*Article II. Section 1. Par. a*—They shall report to their State Executive Committee, or, in the absence of such, to the National Executive Committee, their organization as a Section, with the names and addresses of the members and the dues for the current month.

Article II. Section 1. Par. a—Amended to read:—[They shall report to their National and State Executive Committees their organization as a Section with the names and addresses of the members.]

Comment—It is thought proper that the National Office as well as the State Executive Committee of the given state should be furnished with a list of names and addresses of the Section's members.

2—*Article II. Section 1. Par. b*—Each Section shall send every six months to the State and National Executive Committees a report of its numerical and financial condition, and shall report to the State

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Executive Committee, or in the absence of such, to the National Executive Committee at least once a year the names and addresses of members in good standing and otherwise.

Article II. Section 1. Par. b—Amended to read: [Each Section shall send to the National and State Executive Committees a report of its numerical and financial conditions and the names and addresses of members in good standing and otherwise on Dec. 31st of each year.]

Comment—Necessitated if Article 5 Section 6 is amended as proposed.

3—*Article II. Section 3.*—At every meeting a new Chairman shall be elected, who shall observe the usual parliamentary rules.

Article II. Section 3.—[Eliminate Section.]

Comment—Proceeding upon the assumption that a chairman of a meeting is as important an officer as any other within the Section, and since continued experience is needed to develop a man for any office, it seems desirable to elect a chairman for the same period that other officers are elected. By striking out the paragraph, it leaves it optional with the Section whether a chairman shall be elected at every meeting or for the usual term of office.

4—*Article II. Section 5.*—Every Section shall elect from its members, an Organizer, and such additional officers as it deems proper. The Organizer shall conduct the correspondence with the National and State Executive Committees, 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.

Article II. Section 5.—Amend as follows:—[Every Section shall elect from its members an Organizer, and such additional officers as it deems proper. The Organizer shall conduct the correspondence with the National and State Executive Committees, and shall send an official report to each of the said committees on December 31st of each year; the Organizer shall send at least seventeen cents of the monthly dues of each member to the S.E.C., or, in the absence of such, to the N.E.C.; the Organizer shall conduct the local organization and agitation.]

Comment—Necessitated if Article 5 Section 6 is amended as proposed.

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5—*Article III. 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.

Article III. Section 1.—Amend by adding:—After sentence ending with “by such Committee,” the words, [“through the Organizer.”]

Comment—To avoid any possibility of conflict as to who is to conduct the Section's business{,} etc.

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

Article IV. Section 3.—Amend as follows:—[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 Dec. 31st.]

Comment—Necessitated if Article 5 Section 6 is amended as proposed.

7—*Article V. Section 2.*—The members of the National Executive Committee shall be elected by a general vote of the members of the Party in their respective states.

Article V. Section 2.—Amend by inserting a new paragraph to read as follows:—[All members of the N.E.C. must be citizens of the United States, but a state or federation unable to comply with this provision may dispense with the same as far as may be necessary, subject to the approval of the N.E.C.]

Comment—For reasons that seem obvious it is thought desirable that all members of the N.E.C. should be citizens of the United States. The N.E.C. is the highest body in the Party next to the National Convention and it is important that its members be thoroughly conversant with the customs, etc., of the country, and while non-citizens may be and often are familiar with these, it is also true that in many instances those who do not take the trouble to become citizens fail to do so for reasons that would not be a credit to the Party. It should be born in mind that our Language Federations are growing steadily, and it is barely possible that under special circumstances they may acquire a majority at our N.E.C. meetings. The proposed



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amendment will tend to guard against any dangers resulting from an unwise selection of N.E.C. members from these Federations.

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

Article V, Section 6.—Amend as follows:—[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 one-third of its members pledging themselves to attend; said call to be sent to the National Secretary and published in the National Organ twice in succession.]

Comment—This amendment is proposed in order to save considerable time and money at Headquarters as well as in the states sending N.E.C. members to regular sessions, and also because it is thought unnecessary to hold two N.E.C. meetings a year.

A great deal of time is expended by the National and business offices preparing reports, etc., to the N.E.C. sessions. Also, an amount of \$50.00 is expended every six months to audit the books of the plant and the National Office. The amount spent by the various states and Federations in sending N.E.C. men to sessions twice a year must be considerable in the aggregate.

Aside from this there seems to be no necessity for holding more than one annual meeting. Frequently the N.E.C. merely hears the various reports, endorses various actions of the National Secretary, etc. With our present organization—and even if we were stronger numerically than we are—we can attend to all the matters requiring attention of the N.E.C. Should circumstances arise that make a special session of the N.E.C. necessary such a session can be called together very readily, and the constitution already now provides adequate means for calling such a session.

9—*Article V. Section 14. Par. g*—To audit the books of the National Secretary and all other books of the Party, every six months, and to issue semi-annually, and in sufficient number, copies of a report of the Party's finances.

Article V. Section 14. Par. g—Amend as follows: [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

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Party's finances.]

Comment—Necessitated if Article 5, Section 6 is amended as proposed.

10—*Article V. Section 14. Par. 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.

Article V. Section 14. Par. h—Amend by inserting after the words “A proposition sent from any Section if endorsed,” [“within six weeks,”] and add to the end of the paragraph the following:— [The voting to close within nine weeks from the time the proposition was submitted to a general vote.]

Comment—There is now no provision in the constitution fixing {the} time necessary for proposing and voting on referenda.

11—*Article VIII. Section 1*.—The Sections shall levy upon each of their members a monthly tax of twelve cents, to be paid monthly to the State Executive Committee.

*Article VIII. 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 seven cents each, and in the absence of such to the Sections at the rate of twelve cents each.

Article VIII. Section 1—Amend as follows:—Change “twelve” cents to [“at least seventeen”] cents.

Article VIII. Section 2—Amend as follows:—Change “seven” cents to [“at least twelve”] cents. Last line, change “twelve” cents to [“at least seventeen”] cents.

Comment—These two Sections should be changed to conform to an existing fact. It seems that it is due to an oversight that they were not changed when the Leaflet Fund was established. The Sections now pay at least 17¢, and the states 12¢ per capita.

12—*Article X. Section 1*—The *Daily People* and the *Weekly People* shall be official Party organs.

Article X. Section 1—Amend to read:—[The *Weekly People* (and such daily paper as the Party may at any time publish) shall be the official organ of the Party.]

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Comment—Since we are no longer publishing the *Daily People* this clause should be changed to conform to this fact.

13—*Article XI. Section 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.

Article XI. Section 7—Amend to read:—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[, nor shall any such person be eligible to any office within the Party except in the case of a new Section and with] the specific approval of the State Executive Committee.

Comment—This amendment is proposed in order to prevent new and inexperienced members from getting control of the important offices within the Section. The Party may sooner or later expect a large influx of such inexperienced members and adequate provisions should be made to safeguard the interests of the Party.

14—*Article XI. Section 18*—The N.E.C. shall set aside 5 cents of the money received for every due stamp sold, to be used as a propaganda leaflet fund. Propaganda leaflets in different languages shall be issued by the N.E.C. to S.L.P. organizations free upon demand. S.L.P. organizations shall be required to render monthly reports to the N.E.C. specifying how many propaganda leaflets were received, how many disposed of, and the manner in which they were disposed of.

Article XI. Section 18—Amend as follows:—The N.E.C. shall set aside 5 cents of the money received for every due stamp sold [not including stamps sold to Language Federations] to be used as a propaganda leaflet fund. Propaganda leaflets [covering various subjects shall be issued by the N.E.C. in the English language and furnished to the English speaking Sections according to the amount paid by each state or Section into the leaflet fund. The N.E.C. may also issue leaflets in foreign languages at its own discretion.]

Comment—This amendment is proposed because as a rule it is quite impossible for the N.E.C. to issue leaflets in foreign languages. The fact has been recognized by permitting the Federations to attend to this feature, giving them a rebate from dues paid. As the clause will read if adopted, it will leave it optional with the N.E.C. whether it

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will publish any leaflets in foreign languages.

15—*Article XII. Section 1*—The Federation shall pay the same per capita tax to the National Executive Committee as the State Executive Committees: seven cents per member per month.

Article XII. Section 1—Amend to read:—[Each Federation shall pay a per capita tax of four cents per member per month into the National Treasury.]

Comment—Inasmuch as the Federations are now only paying 4 cents per capita the clause should be so changed as to conform to this fact.

Copy of letter is also submitted from the State Secretary of the Washington S.L.P., J.E. Riordan, containing suggestions for constitutional changes.<sup>1</sup>

### STATE OF ORGANIZATION

ARIZONA: We have no Section in this state now. Section Phoenix was very small and due perhaps in part to internal troubles, and in part to the period of hard times, unemployment, etc., which fell on the country during the latter part of 1913 and the beginning of 1914, the Section went to pieces. We hope to be able to again raise the S.L.P. banner during the coming campaign.

CALIFORNIA: We have five Sections in this state, all of them doing very good work. These Sections are located at Oakland, Los Angeles, San Diego, San Jose and San Francisco. For reasons that are not altogether clear, it has not had a state ticket in the field. The N.E.C. has urged the comrades there to do their utmost toward getting a ticket in the field during the coming campaign.

COLORADO: We have still two Sections in this state: Denver and Colorado Springs, but neither Section seems to accomplish much work. No doubt, the industrial war, which has raged out there, has had something to do with checking the growth of the Party, but it seems that more could be done. We are urging the state to do all in its power to put up a state ticket, or at least to nominate presidential electors. The National Office is prepared to help the comrades in

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<sup>1</sup> [See page 62.—*R.B.*]

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Colorado and through proper co-operation, it seems reasonable to suppose that the state can be made an S.L.P. stronghold.

CONNECTICUT: In Connecticut we have five Sections located at Bridgeport, Hartford, New Haven, New London and Rockville. Most of the Sections are doing good active work and this is particularly true of Section Hartford. Of course, in this state as well as elsewhere there is plenty of room for improvement. The state will have its ticket in the field as usual and on a whole Connecticut may be counted upon to do its share of the work during the coming campaign.

GEORGIA: The Party has succeeded in breaking into this semi-feudal state. We have a very promising Section at Thomasville containing excellent material. Comrade Haselgrove, the Organizer, is carrying on the Party's work incessantly aided by the Section members. The Section started with seven members last August and the end of the year saw its membership doubled. A ticket has been put in the field in Thomasville, and no doubt we shall hear more from that state.

ILLINOIS: In Illinois we have three Sections—Chicago (Cook Co.), Du Quoin and Peoria. Of these Section Cook County, of course, is the largest and is doing excellent work at present. Through its energetic and capable Organizer, Comrade Zermann, it is continually extending and building up its membership. At its present rate of progress, it bids fair to become the largest Section in the country. It is planned to put Comrade Francis in the field within the near future and it is hoped that it will result in more general activity throughout the state and in the organizing of more Sections in the mining districts. In 1912, 4066 votes were cast for the Party's Presidential candidate and in 1914, 3078 votes.

INDIANA: In this state we still have only one Section, Indianapolis. This state, as well as many others, needs the attention of organizers badly. Judging from correspondence received by the National Office there is plenty of sentiment scattered throughout the state and we must endeavor to gather this sentiment and crystallize it into organization. It is the intention to raise the Party's banner in this state during the coming campaign. In 1912, 3130 votes were cast for the Party's Presidential candidate. In 1914, 2884 votes were cast. We must endeavor to double this vote, and it certainly should not go below that of 1912.

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**KENTUCKY:** In Kentucky we still have only one Section, which is located at Louisville. For various reasons it has not been very active during the last couple of years, but Comrade Arnold, who is the active spirit in the Section, promises that the Section will be on the firing line during the coming campaign. The state cast 956 votes for the Party's Presidential candidate in 1912. The National Office is prepared to assist the comrades in Kentucky to the fullest extent in order to insure the Party's banner being raised in that state.

**MARYLAND:** Maryland has only the one Section in Baltimore but it is doing very good work. The Section promises to put a full state ticket in the field and judging from its activity in the past the Section will be found to do more than its share of the Party's work during the coming campaign.

**MASSACHUSETTS:** This state has Sections at Boston, Lawrence, Lynn, New Bedford, Pittsfield and Worcester. Sections New Bedford and Worcester, however, are not very active; due to the fact that the Organizer of Section Worcester, Comrade A. Whitehead, and a few other members left the city the English Section is practically lapsed. We also have a number of members-at-large throughout the state, and with some effort it should be possible to re-organize some of the lapsed Sections and organize new ones. In 1912, 1270 votes were cast for the Party's Presidential candidate; in 1914, 2205 votes were cast. We should be able to more than double this last figure in this highly industrial state.

**MICHIGAN:** This state has two Sections, one at Detroit and one at Grand Rapids. Owing to the fact that several members left the city of Grand Rapids this Section has ceased to be active and if new life is not soon infused into the Section it will no doubt go out of existence. Most of the work is being done in the city of Detroit and the work throughout the state is being practically neglected. However, here too we hope to be able to stir up sentiment for the S.L.P. and to organize a few Sections. In 1912, 1252 votes were cast for the Party's Presidential candidate. It seems that a better showing could be made for the Party if all the members in the state would exert their energies to the fullest extent.

**MINNESOTA:** In Minnesota we have practically only two Sections though Section Minneapolis nominally is still in existence. The other

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Sections are at St. Paul and at Alborn. In the latter place, the Section participated in the town election held on March 14th and the Party's candidate was elected, by a vote of 18 out of 22 cast. Minnesota offers an excellent field for the Socialist Labor Party, and we have some very willing and excellent workers in that state. The National Office will endeavor to co-operate with the State Committee so that the Party's banner may be raised in this state also. In 1912, 2212 votes were cast for the Party's Presidential candidate. In 1914, 3861 votes were cast in the state for the Party. Due to election laws in this state, the Party here is known as the Industrial Labor Party.

MISSOURI: In Missouri we have two Sections, St. Louis and Kansas City. We did have a Section in St. Charles and Joplin. The former Section disbanded about a year ago for lack of active membership, and the latter Section seem(s) to have died a peaceful death recently. We have an energetic State Committee in this state and it is hoped that the Party will be able to enter new fields during the coming campaign and to increase the membership of the Party. In 1912, 1778 votes were cast for the Party's Presidential candidate. In 1914, 1251 votes were cast.

NEBRASKA: We here have only one Section, Omaha, which while not doing much active work still continues to support the Party financially and in other ways. If possible, the N.E.C. will tour an organizer through this state and steps have been taken to endeavor to raise the Party's banner in that state during the coming campaign.

NEW HAMPSHIRE: In this state we have a very small Section at Manchester, which owing to its small membership is able to do very little work. The members there, however, send in subscriptions and occasionally donations and attend to such other matters as are within their capacity.

NEW JERSEY: This state has Sections in the following places: Bergen County, Elizabeth, Newark, Jersey City, Trenton, Paterson and Plainfield. Good work is being done throughout the state, particularly in and around the city of Paterson. We had a promising Section at Newark three or four years ago but owing to internal squabbles the Section has dwindled down to seven or eight members. Investigations as to the cause of the trouble have disclosed the fact that an individual, one Jules Magnette, felt dissatisfied with certain action taken by

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the Section and withdrew together with several other members thereby depriving the Section of good working material and temporarily hampering activities. However, several meetings have been held during the last winter and there is all reason to believe that within a short time we shall have a strong Section in this city. In this state, 1322 votes were cast for the Party's Presidential candidate in 1912.

NEW YORK: This, the leading state of the nation, has the following Sections: Albany, Chautauqua County, Buffalo, Brooklyn, Rochester, New York City, Syracuse, Troy, Schenectady, Utica, and Westchester County. In addition, the state has about 18 or 20 members-at-large throughout the state. For its size, this state is not contributing much to the Socialist Labor Party. Most of the Sections seem to be asleep "at the switch" though they purchase due stamps regularly and attend to the other routine work of the Party. Section New York in particular is far from doing its share, though its energetic Organizer, Comrade Orange, is doing his utmost to build up the Section. Section Buffalo has been doing excellent work during the last campaign and will no doubt be measuring up to the task during the coming campaign. On the whole, the outlook is the best for the S.L.P. in this state if the comrades would only stir themselves a little and help the officers of the Sections and the State Committee to do the work. The state is fortunate in having the services of a very systematic and conscientious Secretary in the person of Comrade E. Moonelis. In 1912, 4251 votes were cast for the Party's Presidential candidate. While this was the highest vote cast in any state in 1912, the state has since become #4 in the list of S.L.P. states so far as the vote is concerned. In 1914, the vote cast for the Party's candidate was only 2350, whereas the states of Minnesota, Illinois, and Indiana cast a higher vote than the Empire State. By a systematic distribution of leaflets and persistent agitation, there is no reason why we should not have double the membership than we have in this state and a correspondingly higher vote. The state should make it its slogan to secure at least 10,000 votes and to double its membership. This state (as well as the states of Minnesota and Pennsylvania) is hampered through the election law and has been compelled to adopt another name on the ballot. In New York State, the Party goes on the ballot under the name of the Social Labor Party.

OHIO: This state has the following Sections: Cincinnati, Cleveland, Columbus, Toledo, Dayton and Youngstown. Most of these Sections



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are quite active with the exception of the last mentioned. Recently Section Dayton has been doing some very good work and has added some active and energetic members to its roll. The field in Ohio seems to be ripe for the S.L.P. and with more persistent effort, more Sections should and could be organized, In 1912, 2623 votes were cast for the Party's Presidential candidate. This seems entirely out of all proportion to the number of Sections and membership which we have in that state. In the neighboring state of Indiana, which has a much smaller membership, 3130 votes were cast for the Party—more than 500 votes more than the vote cast in Ohio. The comrades in Ohio should take the hint and see to it that they secure the right place in the list of S.L.P. states, which their strength makes it incumbent upon them to take.

OREGON: In Oregon we have only one Section, namely at Portland. For a long time this Section was rather inactive but lately it has added new and fresh blood to its membership and has been doing some excellent work. The Section promises to do its full share of the Party's work during the coming campaign. There is considerable sentiment for the Party in other parts of the state notably in and around Astoria and there is a great possibility of organizing a Section there before long. With proper attention, Oregon should become a strong S.L.P. state. It is hoped that at least a ticket of Presidential electors will be put up in this state so that the Party's members and sympathizers will have an opportunity of voting for the Party's principles. The National Office is prepared to help the comrades in Oregon as much as its means will permit.

PENNSYLVANIA: This state has suffered considerably during the last couple of years, chiefly due to the big strikes, which took place in and around Pittsburgh. Section Allegheny County (Pittsburgh) which was one of the largest Sections in the country, has suffered a great loss of members owing to their activities in the last great Westinghouse strike a couple of years ago. Comrade Harrison who was the active spirit in that Section and the State Secretary of the organization in Pennsylvania, was compelled to leave the state in search of a livelihood. It is said that a great number of the members of the Party have been blacklisted through their revolutionary activities. The new State Secretary, Comrade McLure is going about the work of building up the state in a systematic manner and we hope to see Pennsylvania back as the first or second state in point of membership and vote. The

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state now has Sections as follows: Pittsburgh, Altoona, Columbia, Erie, Philadelphia, Reading and York. All of these Sections, however much their efforts may be hampered, are in the field to stay, and it is only a question of time when other Sections will be organized and lapsed Sections re-organized. In 1912, 704 votes were cast for the Party's Presidential candidate. This state too is confronted with an unfavorable election law, which compels it to adopt the name of The Industrial Party. The vote in 1914 was 533.

**RHODE ISLAND:** Rhode Island still has the one Section at Providence and is attending to the Party's work in a quiet but persistent manner. This state has always been found in the election columns of the S.L.P. In 1912, 236 votes were cast for the Party's Presidential candidate. With some help from the National Office, it may be possible to do even better. The vote of 1914 was, 276.

**SOUTH DAKOTA:** This is the second new state into which the S.L.P. recently has made inroads. We have an excellent Section at Sioux Falls, which is doing splendid work. If means permit, the state will be toured by organizers during the coming campaign and an effort will be made to extend the Party's activities throughout the entire state. An effort will also be made to have the Presidential electors on the field so that the Party's members and friends may have an opportunity of voting for the Party's principles.

**TEXAS:** As already mentioned in the beginning of this report, the Party has had considerable trouble with the Organization in this state, troubles which resulted in the suspension of the entire state Organization. The cause of the trouble is more or less well known and we shall only here give a brief résumé. It will be recalled that at the last National Convention a resolution was adopted to issue a call for a permanent platform. Among other states, Texas proposed a permanent platform, which for a long time was the subject of much discussion in the Party press. A referendum was introduced by Section Houston in 1914 to amend the convention resolution so that action could be taken on the permanent platform matter at once instead of waiting until 1916. The referendum was eventually defeated, which defeat was interpreted by the leading trouble-makers—Messrs. Choate and Robert Strach—as being a rejection of the proposed platform of the state of Texas. Notwithstanding the decision of the Party membership to leave the original resolution stand as formed by the Na-

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tional Convention of 1912, the State Committee embodied the essential feature of the Texas proposed platform in the state platform of 1914. Although instructed by the N.E.C. to withdraw this platform the Texas disrupters took no action on the matter. On or about the same time an endorsement was tendered the Party's gubernatorial candidate, K.E. Choate, by the Houston Typographical Union, which endorsement contained the following: "We commend Hon. K.E. Choate to the generous consideration, of *all the people* of Texas as one who would, if elected, administer the affairs of the state to the benefit of *the whole people* and with credit to himself and his party." It was pointed out to the Texas disrupters that the unqualified acceptance of such an endorsement was a violation of the principles of the Class Struggle and that it should have been rejected and the reasons for such rejection stated as publicly as the endorsement was given. It was even admitted by the then State Secretary, Robert Strach, that the statement was a violation of the Class Struggle and therefore violation of the Party's principles although this same Robert Strach later on fully endorsed the position of Choate. The third violation of the Party's policies and principles was made when K.E. Choate accepted the organizer-ship for an organization known as the "Industrial Amendment League"—an organization, which, if it ever existed other than on paper, was formed by K.E. Choate himself. This "organization" adopted a preamble, in which the pledge is made to support "that political party or parties which unreservedly endorses the Eighteenth Amendment, etc." It has not been possible, it seems, to convince the Texas disrupters that such a pledge is a decided violation of the pledge which every S.L.P. member has given the Party, not to support any other political party or fraction thereof, etc. The State Committee besides failure to take action on the platform matter also failed to censure or reprimand the Party's gubernatorial candidate for this endorsement matter and up to the time of suspension of the organization, Section Houston failed to take any action on the charges preferred by the National Secretary against K.E. Choate for his violation of Party principles.

In view of all these violations of Party principles and breach of Party discipline, the N.E.C. of January session 1915 decided to suspend and re-organize the state. Owing to lack of funds, it has not been possible to send anybody down to Texas, and for that reason no Section has been re-organized. However, there are several members-at-large and if we can succeed in sending an organizer through the state during the coming campaign there is no doubt we can build a

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new state organization on the proper lines and with the proper material. The Texas affair has only proved once more that the S.L.P. will tolerate no violation of Party principles or discipline, and though the Party has one state less, it is the stronger because of its having adhered strictly to its principles. To be sure, the entire state of Texas had hardly more than 25 members but it at least kept a ticket in the field. In 1912, 430 votes were cast for the Party's Presidential candidate. For further information on the Texas trouble, various letters and other documents are submitted.

UTAH: The Party has one Section in this state, Salt Lake City. The Section is not doing a great deal of work but still it continues to keep the Party organization intact. We have the promise that a ticket will be put in the field this coming campaign, and with some aid from the National Office we should be able to do considerable agitation in that state.

VIRGINIA: Virginia has 4 Sections in the state: Newport News, Portsmouth, Richmond and Roanoke. The state has suffered a set back since last convention chiefly due to the fact that not enough agitation work was carried on throughout the state. The state will have a ticket in the field during the coming campaign. Only 50 votes were cast in this state in 1912. It should be possible to raise this figure considerably.

WASHINGTON: Washington has Sections at Seattle, Spokane and Tacoma. The economic depression, which has prevailed on the coast for the last couple of years, has worked havoc with the Party organization in that state. A great number of the members in the various Sections have been compelled to leave the Sections in search of work elsewhere with the result that only a few members were left to do the work. At the present time, the State Committee has Comrade W.J. Kerns of San Francisco in the field and the State Secretary reports that good results are accruing from his meetings. It is exceedingly difficult for the Party to get a ticket in the field in this state owing to the arbitrary and one might say, impossible election laws. A deposit of 1% of the salary of each office to be filled is demanded paid and is forfeited in the event the candidate is not elected. However, the National Office is trying to get the comrades to have our Presidential electors on the ballot so that the members and sympathizers will have an opportunity of voting for the Party's principles. The state needs

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agitation. If properly attended to there is no doubt that we can here have one of the strongest states. The Socialist Party is torn into warring factions, and though their antics have disgusted a number of people with socialism, in general it still seems reasonable to suppose that the S.L.P. will be able to assert itself more fully with that party practically out of the field.

WISCONSIN: In this state we have two Sections, Milwaukee and Sheboygan. The latter Section is composed chiefly of German Party members. From this distance, it would seem as though the state could do more work if the agitation was properly attended to. However, we are informed that Section Milwaukee is at all times on the job and with some co-operation from the National Office it should be possible to build up the state. In 1912, 3252 votes were cast for the Party's Presidential candidate. This was the third highest vote cast in any state in 1912 and we hope that the Wisconsin comrades will at least maintain that standard and if possible at least double it.

This concludes the report on condition of the organization in the various states.

Before taking up the Federations we wish to say that it is the intention of the N.E.C. to endeavor to have the Party's banner raised in at least as many and possibly more states than in 1912. With the proper co-operation on the field, it should not at all be considered impossible to have a Presidential ticket in the field in at least 25 states. The N.E.C. is also preparing to issue a great number of leaflets, believing that this is one of the most effective means of agitation. If we can flood the country with from 1 to 2 million leaflets during the coming campaign, we would be sure to make an impression regardless of what the immediate results, whether in votes or membership, may be.

The Party has affiliated to it six Language Federations, to wit: Hungarian, Jewish, Lettish, Scandinavian, South Slavonian and Ukrainian. Of these, the latter has only recently been organized, and while it contains good material, it will no doubt take some time before it will be able to assert itself. Efforts are being made in this Federation to start an S.L.P. paper in the Ukrainian language and with this accomplished there is no doubt but that we will have a good strong Ukrainian Federation.

The Scandinavian and the Hungarian Federations are the strongest and those doing the best and most effective work. The Lettish

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Federation, though smaller in number, is also conducting a persistent agitation. Besides a German Party organ issued under the direction of Section Cleveland, the various Language Federations publish their respective organs:

A *Munkas* (The Worker) published semi-monthly by Hungarian S.L.F.

*Proletareets* (Proletariat) published weekly by Lettish S.L.F.

*Arbetaren* (The Worker) published weekly by Scandinavian S.L.F.

*Radnicka Borba* (The Workingman's Struggle) published weekly by the South Slavonian S.L.F.

The Jewish Federation is not publishing any organ regularly though on certain occasions whenever funds permit, it issues a copy of their magazine, the *Neu Zeit* (New Age).

The conditions of the various Federations are given in the following reports received from the Federations themselves (except the Ukrainian Federation from which no report was received).

REPORT OF THE HUNGARIAN SOCIALIST LABOR  
FEDERATION TO THE 1916 CONVENTION OF THE SOCIALIST  
LABOR PARTY, NEW YORK, N.Y.

Greetings:—

We do not wish to take up your time with a lengthy report. The figures and comparisons we give will show that our movement makes a steady progress. Internal strifes are a thing of the past, the Federation adheres to the principles and tactics of the Socialist Labor Party as firmly as possible and does all it can to help the Party to fulfill its great historic mission.

We do not have a large membership. But we know now, that we can depend upon the membership to do their duty to the movement. A year and a half ago, we had practically the same number of Sections and members but there was very little activity on the part of these Sections and members. Since then, a great change took place. Every Section is active, arranging mass-meetings and lectures in regular intervals, in every Section there are press and literature agents. We have Sections in the following places:

Akron, Ohio .....	15
Bridgeport, Conn. ....	23
Brooklyn, N.Y. ....	9
Chicago, Ill. ....	26

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Cincinnati, Ohio .....	17
Cleveland, Ohio I. ....	26
Cleveland, Ohio II .....	10
Dayton, Ohio .....	12
Detroit, Mich. ....	36
Lorain, Ohio .....	21
Los Angeles, Calif. ....	15
Milwaukee, Wis. ....	22
Newark, Ohio .....	5
New York, N.Y. ....	23
Peoria, Ill. ....	10
San Francisco, Cal. ....	12
St. Louis, Mo. ....	23
Stratford, Conn. ....	9
Toledo, Ohio .....	9
Members-at-large .....	5

That is: 19 {20?} Sections, 329 {328?} members. Of course, the propaganda is not limited to the abovementioned places. We have comrades doing excellent work in Jersey City, New Brunswick, Philadelphia, South Bethlehem, Buffalo, Erie, Barberton, Dillonvale, Flint, Clinton and many other towns. Slowly but surely we are making inroads in every direction among the Hungarian wage slaves, advocating revolutionary socialism with speech, press and literature.

For years we have been unable to employ organizers. But in the last year we succeeded to collect funds for this purpose. Now we have two organizers permanently employed, they cover their own expenses by getting subs and selling literature.

The maintaining of our paper has been a very difficult problem for years. We had a weekly paper. It was kept alive by donations and collections. We found that the method of publishing a paper on donations is detrimental to the movement. The comrades covering the deficit by donations acquired the notion that donations are all that is required of them. In the long run, the movement did not gain anything by this system. We made a change. We made *A Munkas* a semi-monthly to bring the expense down to the amount of the income from subscriptions, then, instead of donations, we had an increased circulation of *A Munkas*. It has increased to such an extent, that the time is not far, when we shall have a weekly paper again with enough subscribers to cover all expenses.

In the month of September, 1914, when we decided to make our

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paper a semi-monthly, we had 800 subscribers, at present we have over 1700. In the first half of 1915 one third of the subscribers have been in arrears, in the first month of this year only 6% of the subscribers have been in arrears.

As to our literature, we had a great progress in the last year. In 1914, we sold \$8.44 worth of literature. In 1915, we sold \$445.30 worth of literature. In the first three months of this year, we sold over \$200.00 worth of literature.

In 1913 and 1914, we did not publish leaflets and pamphlets. In 1915, we published the following:

<i>War and Socialism</i> , by L. Basky .....	3000 copies
<i>Industrial Unionism</i> , by E.V. Debs .....	5000 copies
<i>Fifteen Question [About Socialism]</i> , by Daniel De Leon .....	5000 copies
<i>Antipatriotism</i> , by G. Herve .....	5000 copies

and numerous leaflets. At present, two more are on the press: *Socialism vs. Anarchism*, by Daniel De Leon and *The Question of Unity* by L. Basky. Besides these we have on stock *What Means This Strike?* and *The Preamble of the I.W.W.*

Lately we took steps to bring about a co-operation between the Party Sections and the Sections of the Federation wherever it is possible.

In short: Our Sections are doing a good work everywhere; we are able to employ organizers; the circulation of *A Munkas* is increasing; we arm ourselves with mighty weapons by translating and publishing the literature of the Party. We do all in our power to educate and organize the Hungarian wage-slaves of this country on the sound basis of the Socialist Labor Party.

Fraternally yours,  
Executive Committee  
Hungarian Socialist Labor Federation.  
Louis Basky, Secretary.

### REPORT OF THE JEWISH SOCIALIST LABOR FEDERATION TO THE 1916 CONVENTION OF THE SOCIALIST LABOR PARTY, NEW YORK, N.Y.

Greetings:—

Dear Comrades:—

The Jewish Socialist Labor Federation after a struggle for over 18



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months to hold its own, is in a position to make the following report, with the full knowledge of our duties and responsibilities that we have toward the Socialist Labor Party as an affiliated body.

We were in a flourishing condition before the war broke out. Our headquarters were at that time in Toronto, Canada, where we had a good working branch of devoted S.L.P. men. The economic depression in Canada, which followed the outbreak of the hostilities in Europe compelled our most active members, including the Sub-Committee and the General Secretary, to leave Toronto in search of a living and thus the organization was crippled. We were compelled to discontinue our monthly magazine, the *Neue Zeit* and that was a severe shock to the organization. Communications between our Branches were limited to the meagre monthly reports of the General Secretary.

The headquarters were transferred to Buffalo, N.Y., where our General Secretary, Comrade Rosenfeld, moved to. But he was soon compelled to leave Buffalo and resign from his office. Then by a special referendum our membership decided to transfer the headquarters to New York City where they are at present. When we got the books here, we found in them the result of wandering headquarters a decline in membership, a large debt to members and sympathizers and pitiful neglect of the Federation business as a whole. We immediately started to rebuild the organization, gathering our forces for the great work on hand. The results are gratifying. We have succeeded in bringing into life again the dormant branches that we had, and organized a new one in Cleveland, Ohio. We set our house in order and have good prospects for the near future.

We have organized a special Press Committee of which Comrade Dr. (Julius) Hammer is the Treasurer. The purpose of this committee is to gather a fund to start a Jewish weekly paper and publish all the works of our late teacher, Daniel De Leon. All our Branches are working zealously for this fund; making entertainments, etc., to raise money. The Press Committee has just issued a Marx and De Leon 1¢ stamp, which will be sent with an appeal for support to all the Jewish radical organizations in the country and we hope that within a short time we will again be able to deliver the message of the S.L.P. to the Jewish workers.

We have translated in Yiddish the leaflet on *Preparedness and National Defense* and are going to print several pamphlets on timely questions. At present, we are raising a fund for an organizer who will go out when the coming National Campaign will be in swing.

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We have a great field among the Jewish workers and we are going to plow with our energy the seeds of revolutionary socialist education and organization, which will ultimately emancipate our class from iniquity, capitalist system, and usher in the Industrial Republic.

Fraternally yours,  
Louis OPOCHINSKY  
Acting Secretary, Jewish Socialist Labor Federation.

### REPORT OF THE LETTISH SOCIALIST LABOR FEDERATION TO THE 1916 CONVENTION OF THE SOCIALIST LABOR PARTY, NEW YORK, N.Y.

Greeting:—

Conditions in the organization are better than previous year. Fighting spirit seems to grow. The Branches have held many agitation lectures and still continues the same, which is important in making a greater number of workers acquainted with the principles of the Socialist Labor Party.

The membership of the organization as previously (Feb. 13–16) report{ed} on Dec. 31st, 1915 are in good standing—120, on books—77, making a total of 197 members. I have not got on hand a correct figure of the membership during the period of January, February and March 1916, but from reports received, I see that during aforesaid period most of the members on the books are paying their dues and becoming active again, and now members are joining the organization. Members are also taking part in the Presidential campaign.

The circulation of *Proletareets* is satisfactory. This is due to comrades who voluntarily sacrifice themselves for the benefit of the organ, which is acquainting the Lettish speaking workers with our principles.

The financial conditions as to my knowledge are satisfactory.

Fraternally yours,  
Ed SETMAN,  
Secretary, Lettish Socialist Labor Federation.

### REPORT OF THE SCANDINAVIAN SOCIALIST LABOR FEDERATION TO THE 1916 CONVENTION OF THE SOCIALIST LABOR PARTY, NEW YORK, N.Y.

Nat'l Sec'y S.L.P.

Dear Comrade:—

Pursuant to your request, I herewith render a report of the condi-

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tion of the Scandinavian Socialist Labor Federation at the present time, although it is impossible to furnish a detailed report, due to the fact that we have not as yet received reports for the last six months of the preceding year from all of the branches.

As reported in January, the membership of the Federation in July 1915 was 602, with 420 members in good standing. At the present time, we have 37 Branches on the books of the Federation, of which 36 were in existence January 1st, and one was organized in February, this year. 32 Branches have sent in their reports for the six months ending Dec, 31, 1915, which reports show that we in the beginning of the year had 554 members in those 32 Branches, with 392 in good standing. The other four Branches are nevertheless in existence, their aggregate membership according to previous reports being 41, with 37 in good standing. Including the new Branch, in Waterbury, Conn., the Federation now has a total membership of 602, of which 436 are in good standing.

During the three first months of this year we have bought 1,900 dues stamps from the National Office of the Party, and 1,829 stamps were sold to the Branches during the same period, which would indicate that the membership in good standing is to-day about 600 or that all the members of the Federation are in good standing.

The activity of the Federation has been promising during this winter and we have taken measures to do as effective propaganda work as possible during the National Campaign. At present, we are preparing a propaganda tour through the Scandinavian settlements in the North Western states, particularly Minnesota, where the Scandinavian population is numerous and where the Federation as yet has only a few Branches. In other parts of the country, the agitation is carried on through the Branches and district organizations.

We have also succeeded in improving the finances of the organ of the Federation, *Arbetaren*, so that the old debt to the Party institution now is practically paid, although it has required strenuous efforts on the part of the membership to accomplish this result. Much, however, remains yet to be done in this direction. The Branches of the Federation have been instructed to co-operate with the English Sections of the Party during the campaign, but too such cannot be expected from them in this respect, since the agitation among the Scandinavian workmen and the maintenance and circulation of the *Arbetaren* takes most of the members' time and energy.

The Federation carries a somewhat large stock of pamphlets, and the sale of literature has been comparatively good. During the six

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months ending Dec, 31st, 1915—1,301 pamphlets were sold. Besides that, we are selling larger books on socialist topics, such as *Woman Under Socialism*, by Bebel, *The Paris Commune*, by Marx, and other books. We have at present in stock 34,237 pamphlets, 772 socialist songbooks and 150 other books. Most of our pamphlets are translations of writings by De Leon.

The Federation has now decided to issue two different leaflets in the Swedish language, to be printed in 10,000 copies each, for the campaign and general agitation.

This is, briefly, the condition of the Federation just now. The outlook for the future is good, although there is plenty of hard work ahead.

Fraternally yours,  
Thor Borg,  
Secretary, Scandinavian Socialist Labor Party

### REPORT OF THE SOUTH SLAVONIAN SOCIALIST LABOR FEDERATION TO THE 1916 CONVENTION OF THE SOCIALIST LABOR PARTY, NEW YORK, N.Y.

Dear Comrades:—

The following is a brief report of the condition of our Federation.

Since the time we sent you our latest report, the number of our Branches has increased from 8 to 11. That is, one new Branch was organized and two were re-organized. Since the same time the membership has increased by 36 and numbers now 270.

Besides that, we received several calls from Milwaukee, Wis. to send a speaker there to re-organize the Branch.

A few days ago we received a letter from a South Slavic member of the San Francisco S.L.P. Section, in which he states that they are going to re-organize the South Slavic Branch in that city.

Since last May, our permanent organizer is doing splendid work on the field of agitation in the state of Pennsylvania.

That state consumed a good deal of sound S.L.P. literature—more than \$200 in value for a single year. In the same state and for the same time, the number of new subscribers to our paper has increased by more than 300. The organizing of that state is in progress now. We expect to have that state as a backbone of our Federation. Then we will go further as soon as financial conditions of our Federation improve. We expect to increase the number of our permanent and temporary organizers, who will flood all the Eastern states of the Union,

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because these states are the centres of the industrial life and our workingmen.

In short, the field for our agitation and propaganda throughout the country is excellent. We will do all that lies in our power to draw the greatest possible profit from this situation, never losing our sight of the Revolutionary banner and never giving up an inch of the position of the dear old S.L.P.

Fraternally yours,  
Joe. Novosell,  
Temporary Secretary, South Slavonian S.L.F.

### PARTY MEMBERSHIP.

It is difficult to arrive at an exact figure as to the membership of the Party but the number of dues stamps purchased during the six-month period ending Dec. 31st, 1915, indicated a membership of 2,000. Later reports received during the first three months indicate a membership in good standing of about 2,500. At least another 1,000 should be added for members who are in arrears for temporary reasons—the leaving of a Section for another city, unemployment, etc.

Needless to say the last two or three years have caused ravages within the Party, and any other organization, less disciplined, less firmly grounded, and not possessed by a faith-born of conviction and knowledge of facts—of being right, would have succumbed to these ravages ere this. That we have not only maintained our organization, but even improved upon it by making it more compact, is the best testimony to the invincibility of the Party. Our enemies are beginning to recognize that the *Socialist Labor Party* is in the field to stay, and they are evidently taking measures to conform to this recognition.

Undoubtedly a great deal more could be done by the membership if every member would take his or her Party pledge really serious. However, on the whole, and taking due recognition of the fact that our members have made great sacrifices during these many years of hard fighting, we may well feel that we have done well indeed.

### AGITATION

Owing to extreme shortage of funds, there has been very little national agitation, though the Sections and states have conducted such agitation as their means would permit them. We must recognize that unless organizers are kept steady in the field we shall not make much headway. Fortunately, the present outlook in this direction is excel-

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lent, better, it seems, than it has been for the last 8 or 10 years. We have employed every possible legitimate means for raising a campaign fund, and if the present tendencies continue we shall have quite a fund on hand, which fund will enable us to keep several agitators in the field, and to aid weak states in carrying on their local campaign. It is hoped that the *Socialist Labor Party* banner will be raised in at least 25 states, and that at least 1,000,000 leaflets will be distributed throughout the country.

### PARTY PRESS AND LITERATURE

The condition of the *Weekly People* is not the best. The failure on the part of the members to keep up an uninterrupted subscription campaign is the main reason for this. But even under the best condition a press such as the S.L.P. maintains, cannot be expected to be maintained without sacrifice on the part of its readers and the members of the Party. As De Leon once put it in an editorial in the *Weekly People* of Oct. 11, 1902: "The Socialist Labor Party, as the fighting exponent of the rights and aspirations of the working class, and as the uncompromising pursuer of these rights, will always be in 'hot water.' The child of struggle, its struggles will never be ended until it has broken wide a breach in the capitalist wall for the working class to march through to its deliverance."<sup>1</sup>

Yet, while we must be prepared to make sacrifices in the future as we have done it in the past we should take under serious consideration whether it is not possible to lessen the dangers always confronting us, and also to lessen the burden and worries on the part of those who are in charge at headquarters.

The last report (period ending Dec. 31, 1915) shows that it has been possible to reduce the expenses in spite of a decreased income. It should be borne in mind also that the weekly amount called for is not alone necessitated by the deficit incurred, but partly because we have to pay off \$75.00 every month on the press purchased in February 1915. However, another year or so will see us through this debt, and other things remaining unchanged the situation will be relieved to that extent.

Other factors are debts incurred by previous managers of the Party plant. On these, we have to pay certain amounts regularly, the total aggregating about \$25.00 or so per month. This, however, still leaves

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<sup>1</sup> ["We Should Stutter," *Daily People*, September 30, 1902—R.B.]

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a deficit of about \$50.00 per week, which, chiefly because of lack of sub-getting and literature activity, has to be covered by voluntary contributions.

From a mechanical standpoint, the *Weekly People* is as nearly perfect as a newspaper can be. It is produced at a much less cost than previously.

The literature department is in good shape, though here too lack of activity is responsible for occasional difficulties. While a profit is made on our publications, the fact that they are not sold as fast as they could and should be means, in effect, that they cost us more to produce. The slower these pamphlets move the more they will cost, as with the same facilities that we now have a much greater volume of business could be done.

The fact that they move so slowly, together with the fact that the price of paper, ink, etc., is steadily rising, makes it necessary for us to print in small quantities. However, in the case of pamphlets we do not print less than 1,000 at the time. More frequently 3,000 and in some instances 5,000 or even more at the time. We have an excellent supply of propaganda pamphlets which both from the mechanical as well as from the literary and scientific standpoint are superior to anything else published as socialist literature. We are continually increasing the variety of subjects and are just now preparing to issue a pamphlet by the late Gustav Bang.

As to leaflets, we have a good supply on hand and expect to be able to continue to print more, both of the kinds we now have as well as new ones, in spite of the soaring paper prices. The states and Sections have been furnished with leaflets out of the leaflet fund.

Our Language Federations continue to publish their respective organs and indications are that improvements take place all around. No doubt they are facing largely the same financial difficulties that embarrass the *Weekly People* but they seem to get clear of these difficulties.

As already stated the Federations also translate and publish the Party's English literature, both in their papers and in pamphlet form.

## CONCLUSION

The close of the European war will unquestionably create conditions that will render the Social revolution inevitable in a comparatively short time, unless the entire civilized world is to be turned into an International Industrial Feudalism. In preparing our work at this

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convention, we should bear this in mind. Eventually the entire socialist movement will have to accept the position of the *Socialist Labor Party* as the only one that will meet the needs of the International proletariat.

The *Socialist Labor Party* must be prepared to take the lead in this work. It must do so regardless of adverse criticism and contumely heaped upon it. The Party is conscious of its duties and obligations to the world's workers and will pursue its career as steadfastly now as in the past. As our great Comrade Daniel De Leon said:

*“With malice toward none, with charity for all, the S.L.P. moves by chart, its path lighted from above by a firmament where the North Star shines distinctly in its place, and is for never an instant confused with a rush-light, or the fitful phosphorescence of a lightning bug.”*

There lies land to the West—we *must* and *will* sail on.

Fraternally submitted,  
NATIONAL EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE,  
SOCIALIST LABOR PARTY  
[Signed] Arnold Petersen  
National Secretary.

April 29th, 1916

P.S. to the report of the N.E.C. to the National Convention, 1916.

Comrades:—

As per correspondence submitted, it will be noted that a conference has been called by the International Socialist Bureau, said conference to take place on May 20th. A few days ago, Mr. Hillquit of the Socialist Party called up your National Secretary and asked him whether he would join in requesting to have the conference postponed. Feeling that even if the convention should take favorable action on this conference it would be impossible to get a delegate to Europe in time for the Conference, your National Secretary consented. Some cablegrams and correspondence, etc., relating to this matter is herewith submitted.

Fraternally submitted,  
NATIONAL EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE,  
SOCIALIST LABOR PARTY  
[Signed] Arnold Petersen  
National Secretary.

AP/EH



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The report of the National Executive Committee was received and the recommendations contained therein were referred to the various committees.

The Editor of the *Weekly People*, Edmund Seidel, submitted the following report:

### REPORT OF EDITOR OF WEEKLY PEOPLE.

April 23, 1916.

To the Delegates of the Fourteenth National Convention of the Socialist Labor Party:

Comrades:

In making this report as Editor of the Party's official organ, the *Weekly People*, I would state at the start that I have no particular recommendations to make. I desire only to state my views on what might be done to increase the effectiveness of our press as an agitational medium, and let these views serve, so far as they may, in the nature of suggestions.

This question of strengthening the *Weekly People's* effectiveness, and thereby aiding to build up its circulation, is one which comes up occasionally in friendly suggestions to the editorial office. Suggestions, of course, are always in order and are welcome. In the modern world, there is no such thing as one man "knowing it all," and a person in charge of such a responsible position as the editorship of a Party organ will always do well to keep in touch with the comrades in the field, learn the nature of the requirements, and receive suggestions. It is through the exchange of opinions that a proper balance may be struck.

At the same time it should be remembered that suggestions may at times be offered, which, owing to the lack of facilities in the Party plant, may be impossible of carrying out, and others again may be inadvisable. Thus, from the typographical standpoint, it would be desirable to employ different styles of type in the reading matter, say larger type for certain articles which should be given more prominence than others, but our facilities forbid our doing that as a regular practice. On the other hand, it would be a mistake to adopt the hysterical sensational methods of certain papers which screech at the top of their voices, or to ape them in their attempts to make something different "a paramount" issue every week. The *Weekly People* employs emphasis enough whenever the occasion warrants it, and it employs that to the extent of its mechanical ability.

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There have been, however, suggestions that have been offered at different times, suggestions good in themselves, but which to carry out properly, called for a special line of work, such as for instance, the writing of epigrammatic sentences in the nature of darts against capitalism, or the conducting of a department for beginners in socialism. Anyone who has tried his hand in either of those departments will appreciate the special line of work required. Epigrammatic writing is a gift not given to all, and the conducting of a beginners' department is enough to keep a special writer busy with that work alone.

Valuable and desirable as such departments would be as additions to the make-up of the *Weekly People*, I would say that they are not, in my opinion, the particular feature that is lacking. The particular feature which I think would make the *Weekly People* most interesting and most lively reading would be to have it reflect greater Party activity; that is, have it show that the movement is *doing* things; and, secondly, and perhaps most interesting of all, have it reflect our getting into closer touch with the working class upon the economic field. I shall dwell upon this latter point more fully directly. Meanwhile I would state that more activity, persistently and systematically conducted, means *results*; results produce enthusiasm and enlist others in the work. And this in turn produces the reports, the kind of reading matter which stirs the comrades to emulation and lets outsiders know what *we* are doing.

It is this splendid enthusiasm that we need in our work, such as we had when the Party first took the field with its vigorous and unterrified revolutionary stand, both upon the political and upon the economic fields. Of course we know that since we first took the field, events in the labor movement took a course that required the indomitable energy,—born only of conviction in the correctness of one's cause—of the S.L.P. to hold its ground against all insidious and perfidious elements that appeared. The S.L.P. had to stand its ground while the workingmen made their experiences with the misleading movements that sprang up. This struggle was most strenuous and trying, but the Party stood its ground and it has since seen its principles and position vindicated, as it knew they were bound to be. The field now has been considerably cleared of the rubbish of false principles and practice, and has been made more receptive for the principles of our organization. But we must proceed to utilize the opportunities that present themselves, and get to work with our former vim and effort.

This brings me to a phase of activity, which, if taken up more ex-

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tensively, will, I believe, make things hum all around and see the Party membership, as well as the whole labor movement in motion with something of its former life. I have referred to the need of our getting into closer touch with the working class upon the economic field, the labor union field. I have more directly in mind our making greater efforts along the lines of “locking horns” with the labor faker right upon his own domain,—inside the union. There can be no doubt as to the nature of the reading matter that will be provided by such a locking of horns, and as to the interest aroused in such matter.

I would say that wherever our members are inside the A.F. of L. unions they should not be “asleep at the switch,” as Comrade Hosman expressed it. They should be “boring from within” in the only way to “bore,” and as only an S.L.P. man will “bore,” differently from the Socialist Party method in this respect. The labor misleaders, in my opinion, have been having a too easy time of it misleading the rank and file since S.L.P. men, through the force of developments, have been outside the A. F. of L. Those labor misleaders have been given practically no opposition upon their terrain. Now we have come to such a stage, where, it seems to me, we must take up the contest aggressively at closer quarters again. This, of course, refers only to one line of activity, but a very important line.

What such a line of activity means in the way of clarifying the issue and of showing ourselves as fighting for the real interests of the working class should be easily apparent. It means that we would not only be opposing the A.F. of L. kind of unionism on theoretical principles, but we would be camping closer upon the trail of the labor faker and discharging a more telling gun-fire through his malpractices. We all know how eagerly our exposures of these labor fakers are read by those who are immediately concerned. We in the *People* office can always depend on getting orders for extra copies of the *Weekly People* whenever we have such exposures to make. The exposures touch the rank and file more closely than abstract or critical reading matter, and this gives us the cue as to what kind of reading finds the readiest reception.

Of course, the recovery of this line of activity would not be for the sole purpose of furnishing interesting reading matter for our columns. It would have a more fundamental purpose; the purpose, I say, of contending with the labor misleaders for mastery of the situation. The reports of “things doing” would naturally grow out of such a situation.

There are hardly any large organizations in the A.F. of L. but are the stamping ground of a clique of officials who use the organizations

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as private domains for themselves, where their own little “labor question” is solved for them, and where they, for the rest, act as our Comrade De Leon has aptly said, as lightning rods conducting the revolutionary aspirations of the workingmen into the ground. Those misleaders must be frustrated in this work, and we can do considerably more frustration than we are doing. I only wish to call attention to the point, and let it go for what it is worth.

I might say that I was in large part led to this conclusion upon this point in my going over the files of *The People* of the nineties of last century. One there gets an excellent picture of the life and the enthusiasm that prevailed in the movement, and I could not help but think that that spirit existed because of the actual clash at close quarters that was on at the time. We were right in the thick of the fight and were doing things. The running fire that was kept up on the labor misleaders and the back fire that was returned on occasion showed how the Party’s shots told. And it strikes me that in this connection there is a certain similarity between the capitalist’s actions and the labor faker’s actions. The capitalist isn’t so much perturbed over his workmen’s talking socialism in the abstract, but let them get on the job of organizing in the shop and the talk has a different ring to our friend Moneybags. The labor faker may not care so much about theoretical discussions and arguments, but let someone get on the job disputing his control, and the fur flies. I think we must see to it that we get the “fur flying” some more, and I feel sure that it can be done.

Nor would I say that the recovering of this kind of work means the abandoning of any Party tenet or principle. For the Party has never opposed “boring from within”; it has insisted only that it be real “boring.” We all know, however, that events for a good many years have of necessity carried us outside the pure and simple unions. We have been busily occupied with building or trying to build up working class unions, and have given to the working class the only constructive idea of real labor unionism and socialism. The concept or industrial unionism has been sown, too solidly, in my opinion, to be ever uprooted. Of course, that concept is not as clear to all who have an idea of it as we should like it to be. But the sprouts are there, to be developed further. In view of the present situation, however, it seems to us that we can with profit, as *one* means of activity, go over our former course and gather and crystallize the favorable sentiments that our agitation has produced.

In this connection, I am disposed to consider a famous passage of Karl Marx’s as peculiarly applicable. You all know that passage of his

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which occurs in his *Eighteenth Brumaire*, and which reads as follows:

“Proletarian revolutions . . . such as those of the nineteenth century, criticize themselves constantly; constantly interrupt themselves in their own course; come back to what seems to have been accomplished, in order to start over anew; scorn with cruel thoroughness the half measures, weaknesses and meanesses of their first attempt; seem to throw down their adversary only in order to enable him to draw fresh strength from the earth, and again to rise up against them in more gigantic stature; constantly recoil in fear before the undefined monster magnitude of their own objects—until finally the situation is created which renders all retreat impossible, and the conditions themselves cry out: ‘Hic Rhodus, hic salta!’”

The first part of this quotation I think can be peculiarly applied to the situation that confronts us. We can go over the ground as we did of yore. And that ground is not exactly the same, as when we first started out. Twenty years of agitation have borne their fruit, and while the nature of the opposition of trade union officialdom has not changed, that opposition, because of the experiences which the workers have meanwhile made, cannot be perpetrated with the same impunity as in the earlier days.

Despite all this, I would not delude myself with too great expectations as to results on this score,—I know what “boring from within” eventually means. But that results can be obtained, and important and valuable results, are also a certainty. For results were obtained in the days preceding the S.T. & L.A., results that finally gave us the S.T. & L.A. I see no reason why we should not be able to get the same and greater results today.

The point, then, that I desire to bring out here is that on the labor union field there is a rich and promising material that should bring grist to our mill, material that will put the labor misleaders on the run and win to our cause more adherents in the working class. And that material will answer the question of what particular feature of interest to workingmen is lacking in the columns of our Party press.

Before leaving this point, and for the sake of precaution, I wish to “lock a switch.” When I say that we should come to closer quarters with the labor leaders of the A.F. of L. and contend with them for mastery of the situation, I have not in mind the acquiring of the union offices as such. Such offices may easily enough be acquired in many instances, because the rank and file, being less on the alert and understanding less of the labor question than the Socialist, is often

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disposed to put him into office. But "getting an office" is not converting the men to our position.

On the other hand, there is the notorious fact, amply confirmed by the Party's experience, that the cunning labor fakers will seek to silence a threatening leader of an opposition movement by tendering him a job, where, if he accept(s), he will be compromised and lost to the movement. I would regard the seeking of office as utterly at variance with proper "boring from within." It is the *men and the organization* that we are after; not the jobs.

I would say that the proper role of a Socialist upon the floor of a union is that of a "minority leader," as the term is used in Congress; or that of a "whip," as the term is used in England. And the "whipping" that the Socialist should do would be "whipping" the organization into line so far as he can with true proletarian interests, with socialism. When the organization, or the majority of the organization, is thus brought into line for the proper principles and ideas, it would be time enough to take control of office. Meanwhile "capturing" of office is not capturing the organization.

With regard to other interesting articles for our paper, I should like to report an action which I took just about a year ago, in May, 1915. It has always been my desire to see us get out a kind of "handbook of facts" for Socialists and workingmen, to have at our disposal some sort of an almanac of facts supplying data on matters concerning the working class movement. The gathering of such material, however, means the co-operation of a number of men, unless one man is specially hired for the task. Even then, the matter of our being able to bear the expense of publishing such a book seems to stand in the way.

However, in speaking over this idea last year with a comrade, Solon De Leon, I was given the suggestion of writing to those of our comrades who are ready with the pen and asking them to write on particular topics. The idea was to assign to such comrades particular subjects, and then work them up into articles for the *Weekly People*. The Party would thus have concrete matter with which to reinforce its general arguments.

Acting upon this suggestion, I drew up a letter-form embodying the idea. The following extracts from that letter-form show the scope of the work mapped out. Each comrade written to was assigned a subject and addressed, in part, as follows:

"As Editor of the *Weekly People* I should like to communicate with you upon the question of developing a corps of special writ-

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ers for our paper. Such writers would have special subjects assigned them and they would have to collect whatever concrete data were available on their subjects and work it up into articles. Such articles would add immensely to the propaganda feature of our paper besides supplying valuable information for our agitators.

“Thus, data might be gathered upon such topics as the distribution of wealth, industrial accidents, etc., immigration, unemployment, increased productivity of machinery, wage and price movements, inadequacy of the political state, trade union affairs, results of strikes, etc. You can readily see the value of having such concrete information at the disposal of the movement. . . .”

These letters were sent out to about fifteen of the comrades. Some few comrades replied favorably, while others stated they could not give the time required for the work. Indeed, the work does require time and attention, and facilities also, in the way of access to sources. For the present the idea must be shelved, though it is a good one to keep an eye open to.

Another matter, not properly editorial, but which is a matter with which I have had to do in the way of writing appeals, is that of the subscription-getting department. The organizing of the subscription-getting department is really a special line of work. In order to get proper results there, a person must pay regular attention to the department and build up the work. It is impossible for an editor to give attention to such a department. The work requires the services of a circulation manager. Moreover, a capable circulation manager, in my opinion, could not only put our press in much better shape, but he could extend the sales of our literature and make the New York Labor News Company a greater source of revenue to the Party. But the employment of such a man is out of the question, for the present at least.

There are some few things, however, that have come under my observation in giving what little attention I could give to the subscription-getting department, and one of these matters struck me most forcibly. This was, the number of opportunities that our comrades let pass by where they could do valuable work advertising our press and Party, and gradually build up a demand for the press, or at least put our papers into the hands of more workingmen.

There are any number of mass meetings, lectures and demonstrations that are held in all large cities during the fall, winter, and spring of the year. Such meetings are held almost every evening in New York City, and several of them on different evenings at times,



## SOCIALIST LABOR PARTY

particularly on Sundays. These meetings afford splendid opportunities for our comrades to organize themselves into squads of three and four members each to cover the meetings with our pamphlets and our press. Yet we cannot say that we have heard reports from any number of places or cities that such opportunities were taken advantage of. In New York City there has been but one man, Comrade Michael Cody, who has been attending to such work. It was manifestly impossible for him to cover the entire territory. Other Sections have no doubt their own way of attending to this work, but these opportunities afforded by the vast number of mass meetings should never be missed. In this connection we must remember that we ourselves must place our press—our most effective weapon,—into the workers' hands. We cannot expect someone else to do it for us, no more than we can expect someone else but the working class will emancipate the working class.

As said in the beginning of this report, there is nothing submitted here in the nature of definite recommendations. The points touched upon are submitted as points that have suggested themselves to me in my incumbency as editor of your official organ.

[Note: The Editor on May 3, requested that what follows hereafter be stricken. See page 118.]

There is one matter, however, that I wish to bring to your attention, and upon which I ask for a decision. This is with reference to some passages which occur in a document which the National Secretary, Comrade Petersen, drew up in reply to a communication from the Social Democratic Party of Switzerland. The Sub-Committee of the National Executive Committee adopted the reply and requested publication of it in the *Weekly People*.

In reading the reply prior to handing it over for publication, I came across several statements which are not warranted by the facts; statements which to let stand would lay us open to the charge of not properly understanding Marx or Engels upon the particular points involved, and of improperly quoting them. For this reason I decided not to publish the matter, and I appeared before the following Sub-Committee, March 30, this year, to present my objections. The Sub-Committee, after hearing me and also Comrade Petersen, decided not to sustain my objections and voted again for the publication of the matter. I could not accept the committee's decision, and gave notice that I would appeal. In view of the proximity of the National Conven-



## FOURTEENTH NATIONAL CONVENTION

tion, I decided to hold the matter for the convention's action. Otherwise, I should have appealed to the National Executive Committee. I therefore herewith submit the matter.

The first of the passages that I have reference to occurs on pages 5 and 6 of the reply, and reads as follows:

“There can be no doubt that a great number of Socialists in Europe look upon the state as a permanent feature, at least as a fixture that will last into the socialist republic, and in a way to act as the administrative and directing force in the socialist productive process. We have previously pointed out how utterly impossible it is for the state to act in this capacity.\* That the founders of scientific socialism clearly realized this is proven by the statement of Engels: ‘The state is not abolished! It *dies out!*’”

I fully agree with what is stated in the foregoing extract, up to the point of the *asterisk*. It is perfectly sound, and could have stopped there. It is the last sentence of the extract that is improperly applied, the sentence which reads: “That the founders of scientific socialism clearly realized this is proven by the statement of Engels: ‘The state is not abolished. It dies out!’” This sentence, in stating that, “The founders of scientific socialism clearly realized this,” has reference to our particular conception of the industrially structural form of socialism; it has reference to the particular industrial form worked out by Comrade De Leon, which is his distinct contribution to constructive socialism and to socialist sociology. Yet the reply, in quoting the familiar passage of Engels’, “The state is not abolished; it dies out,” attempts to connect up what Engels meant with what Comrade De Leon discovered. There is not the slightest justification for doing that. What is more, the using of this passage of Engels’ as is done in the reply is essentially a misquoting of Engels, as it separates his passage from everything he and Marx had in mind and stated, and applies it to a form of industrial organization that, so far as we know, they had no inkling of.

I hold that neither Engels nor Marx, in making or in subscribing to that statement, had in mind such a distinct conception as is worked out for us. I hold that Engels’ statement is to be interpreted in the light of what he said upon the point. The particular concept that both Marx and Engels had upon this point is easily gleaned from their works upon the matter. There is ample evidence to show that the concept which they held in using that statement was a dictatorship of the proletariat, a transition period from capitalism to socialism, a period

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during which the proletariat held public power and saw to it that socialist production was organized upon one domain after another. These contentions, I say, can be established by consulting the works of Marx and Engels. An examination of the facts here stated should be made.

The other passage in the reply that I find incorrect is as follows:

“We can hear someone say: ‘Yes, that industrial organization will come in due time after the revolution is accomplished.’ We take it that all those who have made a study of the works of Marx and Engels agree that the state will ‘disappear’ the very moment the proletariat seizes hold of it. Now since the state is the only force which today preserves at least a semblance of order, it is clear that if it passes away at a crisis and if there is no other organized force to take control, we shall face chaos and anarchy, which, as history teaches us, invariably leads to tyranny and autocracy. Since Engels was neither an Anarchist nor a believer in autocracy he must have had in mind a force, organized on the only other field outside the political—the industrial field.”

This passage is seriously defective, both in point of historical fact and in point of logic. In point of historical fact the passage does violence to the actual conception which Marx and Engels entertained as to the “state’s disappearing.” It not only does that, but it by its very language ignores the concept they had, and proceeds to argue what they “must have had in mind.” For it should be remembered, in this connection, that Marx and Engels were a unit on this proposition. A proper reading of Engels and of Marx will reveal what they “had in mind.”

In point of logic the passage is defective because, if Engels had had in mind organization upon the industrial field, he would never have hesitated to say so.

What Marx and Engels had in mind was specifically the *dictatorship of the proletariat*, as I have already explained, and they were definite enough upon the point. There is therefore no justification for interpreting their expression as is done in the passages in this reply, Those passages should be removed from the reply.

I ask the convention to take up this matter for action. I regard the matter as serious and of prime importance. We do not want to begin, at this late date, to become erratic; we want to keep the Party upon the same high plane which it has hitherto occupied. We do all honor to the works of Marx and Engels by interpreting them in the light of

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what those founders said; we can cast reflection only upon ourselves by proceeding differently. Karl Marx and Frederick Engels performed brilliant labors in their field; Comrade De Leon did likewise in his field. Let us not take any step that will mar their work.

Fraternally yours,  
[Signed] Edmund Seidel  
Editor, *Weekly People*.

Adjournment was taken at 12:10 P.M.

### AFTERNOON SESSION, SATURDAY, APRIL 29

The afternoon session was opened at 2 o'clock.

#### NATIONAL SECRETARY'S REPLY TO THE EDITOR OF THE WEEKLY PEOPLE

At this time National Secretary, Arnold Petersen, replied to Comrade Seidel as follows:

April 26th, 1916

To the Fourteenth National Convention, S.L.P.

Comrades:—

At its regular meeting held March 9th, 1916, the N.E.C. Sub-Committee instructed me to forward to Fritz Platten, Secretary of the Social Democratic Party of Switzerland, an answer to a recent communication received from that body. The answer of the National Secretary was read before the Sub-Committee, endorsed and ordered sent to Fritz Platten, and also ordered published in the *Weekly People*. At a subsequent meeting (March 30, 1916) the Editor of the *Weekly People*, Comrade E. Seidel, appeared before the Sub-Committee stating that he took issue with a certain passage in the letter and that he did not feel that the letter should be published as written. The Sub-Committee did not sustain his objection. (Eight members were present, 5 voted not to sustain, 3 abstained from voting.) Comrade Seidel then declared that he would submit the matter to the National Convention, and assuming that he adheres to this decision I feel it is proper that I submit my side of the case.

Not knowing what Comrade Seidel's statement contains I am compelled to take up the objection as stated by the Editor before the Sub-Committee. I do so reluctantly knowing how much important work

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this convention has to attend to, and feeling that the statement in my letter is so obviously the Party's position, so obvious as to require little argument on my part to point out how mistaken Comrade Seidel is, I shall endeavor to make my remarks as brief as possible.

I shall assume that Comrade Seidel will submit the letter in question. To make sure, however, I am herewith submitting a copy with the passage objected to blue-penciled (pp. 5 & 6 my copy).

Comrade Seidel argues that Marx and Engels shared the opinion of the majority of the present day Socialists that the political state, its class feature removed, would continue to direct production. He argues further that it was Comrade De Leon's distinct contribution to socialist theory to point out that the political state must be done away with altogether, and that the future society will be governed through industrial representation. This position, I hold, is utterly wrong, and one which, if adopted, would put the Party in a most ridiculous position, leaving us open to the enemy's attacks without an opportunity of delivering blow for blow. It would with one stroke remove a fundamental pillar of the Party, a pillar which it has so proudly and correctly clung to, namely that the S.L.P. is strictly in line with anything which the founders of scientific socialism taught and advocated. It would at once furnish the S.P. with an opportunity to point out that the position of the S.L.P. on this most vital question is in decided conflict with the views of Marx and Engels. This, however, would in the final analysis not matter if it were true, but it is decidedly not true and I shall show why.

We are all familiar with the position of Marx on the economic organization of labor. Time and again Comrade De Leon pointed out that Marx emphasized that only the economic organization could set on foot a proper political party of the working class—in other words, as the S.L.P. has ever maintained, that the economic organization is the substance, the political the reflex. It should need no strong argument to show that of necessity the substance is destined to survive, the shadow or the reflex to pass away. To survive—for what? Surely not for ornamental purposes! If Marx conceived of the economic organization as the substance, and therefore the thing destined to survive, surely no one will maintain that Marx still conceived of such an idea as a continuation of the state (whether in the hands of "the people" or otherwise). Marx was no lunkhead and Comrade Seidel's argument would make him out to be one.

Already in 1847 Marx wrote:

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“The working class will substitute, in the course of its development, for the old order of civil society an association which will exclude classes and their antagonism, and there will no longer be political power, properly speaking, since political power is simply the official form of the antagonism in civil society.”—Karl Marx, *Poverty of Philosophy*, 20th Century Ed. page 159.

Note his denomination of the Socialist Republic as an “association”—association of what? Of Labor, of course, “associated” (organized) as producers—industrially organized in modern parlance.

Aside from this we have some very specific statements by Engels, one of which is quoted in the very passage under discussion. To refresh the memory of the comrades I shall quote from Engels’ *Utopia to Science* the following:

“While the capitalist mode of production more and more completely transforms the great majority of the population into proletarians, it creates the power which, under penalty of its own destruction, is forced to accomplish this revolution. While it forces on more and more the transformation of the vast means of production, already socialized, into state property, it shows itself the way to accomplishing this revolution. *The proletariat seizes political power and turns the means of production into state property.*

“But, in doing this, it abolishes itself as proletariat, abolishes all class distinctions and class antagonisms, abolishes also the state as state. Society thus far, based upon class antagonisms, had need of the state; that is, of an organization of the particular class which was *pro tempore* the exploiting class, an organization for the purpose of preventing any interference from without with the existing conditions of production, and therefore, especially, for the purpose of forcibly keeping the exploited classes in the condition of oppression corresponding with the given mode of production (slavery, serfdom, wage-labor). The state was the official representative of society as a whole; the gathering of it together into a visible embodiment. But it was this only in so far as it was the state of that class which itself represented, for the time being, society as a whole; in ancient times, the state of slave-owning citizens; in the middle ages, the feudal lords; in our own time, the bourgeoisie. When at last it becomes the real representative of the whole of society, *it renders itself unnecessary.* As soon as there is no longer any social class to be held in subjection; as soon as class rule and the individual struggle for existence based upon our present anarchy in production, with the collisions and excesses arising from these, are removed, nothing

more remains to be repressed, and a special repressive force, a state, is no longer necessary. The first act by virtue of which the state really constitutes itself the representative of the whole of society—the taking possession of the means of production in the name of society—this is, at the same time, its last independent act as a state. state interference in social relations becomes, in one domain after another, superfluous, and then dies out of itself; the government of persons is replaced by the administration of things, and by the conduct of processes of production. The state is not ‘abolished.’ *It dies out.* This gives the measure of the value of the phrase ‘a free state,’ both as to its justifiable use at times by agitators, and as to its ultimate scientific insufficiency; and also of the demands of the so-called anarchists for the abolition of the state out of hand.”—(*Socialism Utopian & Scientific*, pp. 48–49)

Engels shows clearly that the state dies out. He even administers a slight rebuke to those who, as Socialists, employ the term “a free state” and points out that scientifically speaking the term is inaccurate (insufficient) having in mind of course, that a thing that dies cannot be said to become “free”—in short, that something entirely different must take the place of the state, and what can that something else be but the “association of the producers” or the industrially organized workers? Obviously, a thing that dies cannot direct anything, least of all the all important machinery of production.

Comrade Seidel argues in defense of his position that Engels in speaking of the dying out of the state meant that its oppressive feature would be removed, and that he (Engels) had no reference to the state as a territorially delegated body. Here again Engels disproves the contention of Comrade Seidel. In the following Engels plainly shows that he thoroughly understood that the state was not merely a tool of coercion, but that its essential feature was that it divides its members by territory.

“The state differs from gentilism [in that it first divides its members by territories.] As we have seen, the old bonds of blood kinship uniting the gentile bodies had become inefficient, because they were dependent on the condition, now no longer a fact, that all gentiles should live on a certain territory. The territory was the same; but the human beings had changed. Hence the division by territories was chosen as the point of departure, and citizens had to exercise their rights and duties wherever they chose their abode without regard to gens and tribe. This organization of inhabitants by localities is a common feature of all states. It seems natural to us now. But we have seen what long

## FOURTEENTH NATIONAL CONVENTION

and hard fighting was required before it could take, in Athens and Rome, the place of the old organization by blood kinship.

“In the second place, the state created a public power of coercion that did no longer coincide with the old self-organized and armed population. This special power is necessary, because a self-organized army of the people has become impossible since the division of society into classes took place. . . .”—Frederick Engels, *Origin of the State*. Pages 206–207.

The above is clear and subject to only one interpretation. That he regarded the territorial feature as of prime importance is shown by the fact that he mentions that first and the coercive only second. Bearing in mind that Engels said, without qualification, that the state “dies out” what foundation is there for the belief that he only had in mind that the repressive or coercive feature of the state would die?

In the following passage he makes his position still clearer, referring to the organized workers as an association of producers:

“The state, then, did not exist from all eternity. There have been societies without it, that had no idea of any state or public power. At a certain stage of economic development, which was of necessity accompanied by a division of society into classes, the state became the inevitable result of this division. We are now rapidly approaching a stage of evolution in production, in which the existence of classes has not only ceased to be a necessity, but becomes a positive fetter on production. Hence these classes must fall as inevitably as they once arose. The state must irrevocably fall with them. The society that in to re-organize production on the basis of a free and equal *association of the producers*, will transfer the machinery of state where it will then belong: Into the Museum of Antiquities by the side of the spinning wheel and the bronze ax.”—Frederick Engels, “Origin of the state,” *ibid.* pp. 211–212.

Nor were Marx and Engels alone in holding that the state in its entirety would die out. The third (or fourth as some would have it) of the great German Socialists, August Bebel, expressed himself as follows:

“Along with the state, die out its representatives—cabinet ministers, parliaments, standing armies, police and constables, courts, district attorneys, prison officials, tariff and tax collectors, in short the whole political apparatus. . . . The great and yet so petty parliamentary struggles, with which the men of

tongue imagine they rule and guide the world, are no more, [they will have made room for administrative colleges and delegations whose attention will be engaged in the best means of production and distribution, in ascertaining the volume of supplies needed, in introducing and applying effective improvements in art, in architecture, in intercourse, in the process of production etc. . . . The hundreds of thousands of former representatives of the state pass over into the various trades, and help with their intelligence and strength to increase the wealth and comforts of society.”]—August Bebel, *Woman*, tr. by De Leon. Page 319.

I think I have sufficiently proved that far from sharing the views of Comrade Seidel the founders of scientific socialism held the very opposite views.

It is equally clear that Comrade De Leon held to the view expressed by me in the letter to Fritz Platten. Now often has not Comrade De Leon referred to the statement of Engels (that the state dies out) in underscoring the fact that the S.L.P. is strictly in line with the founders of Scientific socialism? One instance that comes to mind readily is his chapter in *Father Gassoniana* entitled “The state” pp. 51–53. I am quoting the chapter in its entirety.

“In his February 6 Boston address against socialism, reported in the *Boston Post*, Father Thomas I. Gasson said:

“The socialism of which I speak is that economic social theory which wishes to place the ownership, production and distribution of all goods in the hands of one body, the state. The great authors of the system of socialism of which I speak are Karl Marx, Engels and others.’

“At another place in his address Father Gasson stated: ‘I was intending to read citations from several socialistic authors, but unfortunately my eyesight is bad’; and the report in the *Post* adds in parentheses: ‘Father Gasson had the works of several socialistic authors on the desk.’

“It was a fortunate and far from an unfortunate circumstance for Father Gasson that the bad condition of his eyes prevented him to read from the ‘socialistic authors’ whose works he had before him on the desk. Had the Father’s eyesight been good, and had he started to read from those works, he would then and there have become acquainted with socialism. Acquaintance with socialism would have informed Father Gasson that ‘state Ownership, Production and Distribution of All Goods’ and ‘socialism’ go together as nicely as ‘Father-Gassonism’ and ‘Darwinism,’ or as Roman Catholic politics and socialist politics.

“It is not because ‘state Ownership’ is a bad, or an undesirable



working system of society that 'socialism' is not 'state Ownership.' 'socialism' is not 'state Ownership' for the simple and sufficient reason that 'state Ownership,' as a working system, is a sociologic impossibility. Had Father Gasson taken the pains to post himself on the terminology that he uses, had he, for instance, acquainted himself with Lewis H. Morgan's *Ancient Society*, Father Gasson would have known what the term 'state' means in ethnology, and he would have been saved the blunder of imputing 'state Ownership' to 'socialism.' At any rate, neither Marx nor Engels held any views of the sort imputed to them in the Father's address—far otherwise, and to the contrary.

"For instance, in Engels' *Development of Socialism from Utopia to Science*—a work prized and praised by Marx—this passage occurs under the heading: 'The state Dies a Natural Death':

"By urging more and more the conversion of the large, already socialized means of production into state property, it [capitalism] points the path for the accomplishment of this [the socialist] revolution. *The proletariat seizes the machinery of the state and converts the means of production first into state property.*<sup>1</sup> But, by so doing, it extinguishes itself as proletariat; by so doing it extinguishes all class distinctions and class contrasts; and along with them, the state as such. The society that existed until then, and that moved in class contrasts, needed the state, i.e., an organization of whatever class happened at the time to be the exploiting one, for the purpose of preserving the external conditions under which it carried on production; in other words, for the purpose of forcibly keeping the exploited class down in that condition of subjection—slavery, bondage or vassalage, or wage-labor—which the corresponding mode of production predicated. The state was the official representative of the whole society; it was the constitution of the latter into a visible body; but it was so only in so far as it was the state of that class which itself, at its time, represented the whole society; in antiquity, the state of slave-holding citizens; in the middle ages, the state of the feudal nobility; in our own days, the state of the capitalist class. By at last becoming actually the representative of the whole social body, the state renders itself superfluous. So soon as there is no longer any social class to be kept down; so soon as, together with class rule and the individual struggle for life, founded in the previous anarchy of production, the conflicts and excesses that issued therefrom have been removed, there is nothing more to be repressed, and the state or Government, as a special power of repression is no longer necessary.'

"Shallow thinkers of imperfect information fall into the error of concluding that socialism is anarchy. Vastly shallower must that thinker be, and vastly more imperfect his information, who

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<sup>1</sup> [Emphasis in the original.—R.B.]

## SOCIALIST LABOR PARTY

would, flying to the opposite extreme, take socialism to be state Ownership. Father Gasson stated that the authors of the socialist system which he meant were 'Karl Marx, Engels and others.' Guess it must be 'others,' and those others not Socialists." (*Daily People*, Vol. XII, No. 14. Friday, July 14, 1911)

There remains but one more point to take up and that is Comrade Seidel's argument that the theory that the state must yield to the 'administration of things' or in S.L.P. parlance, the Industrial Republic, was the distinct contribution of Comrade De Leon. I hold this to be an erroneous conception of Comrade De Leon's contribution to socialist theory. Comrade De Leon's specific contribution to socialist theory was to point out that the working class must organize itself *right now*, into industrial unions, in order to be prepared to conduct production when the state passes away. He pointed out on numerous occasions that the evolutionary process does not, and should not end with the machinery of production, but that it continues with equal force on the economic organization of labor. To have pointed this out is a very important and distinct contribution to socialist theory and is decidedly in line with the views held and expressed by the founders of scientific socialism. In pointing this out Comrade De Leon built upon the groundwork furnished by Marx, Morgan and Engels. Only the fatuous would blame Marx and Engels for not pointing out in so many words that the workers must organize industrially. To explain why they did not does not seem necessary, and at any rate, it does not seem to belong in this discussion.

The above statement has been made rather longer than I at first intended to make it. But having started it {I} felt that I could not do full justice to the subject without going somewhat into detail and by quoting liberally from the works of Marx, Engels, Bebel and De Leon.

Fraternally,

[Signed] Arnold Petersen

P.S. Am also submitting clippings from the *Weekly People*, being part of articles dealing with the subject discussed above. I here take the identical view expressed in the letter to Fritz Platten, and it seems rather strange that Comrade Seidel as Editor permitted them to go through without critical comment.—A.P.

L.D. Hosman was seated as delegate to represent the state of Colorado.

## FOURTEENTH NATIONAL CONVENTION

### Election of Committees

The following committees were elected:

*Committee on Weekly People Editor's Report.*

1. A.H. Lyzell; 2. Louis Basky; 3. Rud. Katz; 4. Boris Reinstein; 5. Robt. McLure.

*Committee on Party and its Attitude towards Economic Organization.*

1. H. Richter; 2. Aug. Gillhaus; 3. Louis Basky; 4. A. Furstenberg; 5. L.D. Hosman.

*Committee on Party Press and Literature.*

1. H.O. Smith; 2. Ed. Seidel; 3. Oscar Kinsalas; 4. Wm. H. Cox; 5. Rich. Koepfel.

*Committee on Platform and Resolutions Pertaining Thereto.*

1. Donald Munro; 2. Worden H. Mills; 3. A.E. Reimer; 4. H. Richter; 5. Ed. Seidel.

*Committee on Organization and National Campaign.*

1. J.J. Burkhardt; 2. F. Zermann; 3. C.H. Seaholm; 4. Aug. Gillhaus; 5. R. Koepfel.

*Committee on the International Socialist Movement.*

1. Geo. Ohls; 2. Donald Munro; 3. P. McDermott; 4. A.H. Lyzell; 5. A.E. Reimer.

*Committee to Draw Resolutions on Deaths of D. De Leon, Oscar Neebe, Brandborg & Others.*

1. Boris Reinstein; 2. J.J. Burkhardt; 3. A.E. Reimer.

The resolutions introduced at this time were referred to the Committee on Resolutions.

Comrade Reinstein declined to act on the Committee on Editor's Report and L.D. Hosman was elected to fill the vacancy.

### Communications

The following telegram was received:

Granite City, Ill. April 29, 1916, 10 A.M.  
Arnold Petersen

*SOCIALIST LABOR PARTY*

45 Rose St., New York

In behalf of the Executive Committee and in the name of organized Bulgarian workers send revolutionary greetings to the convention of S.L.P. and wish success.

Theo Baeff, Secretary

Adjournment followed.

## SECOND DAY'S SESSION, SUNDAY, APRIL 30

The convention was called to order by Chairman A.E. Reimer at 9:20 A.M. in room number 506 of the World Bldg.

The minutes of the Saturday session were read and attention was called to the fact that the secretary had omitted the following committees:

### *Committee on Proposed Unity Conference with the Socialist Party.*

1. Boris Reinstein, New York; 2. F. Zermann, Illinois; 3. Aug. Gillhaus, New York; 4. Rud. Katz, New Jersey; 5. F. Hanson, Scandinavian Federation.

### *Committee on Constitution.*

1. Word H. Mills, Maryland; 2. A.E. Reimer, Massachusetts; 3. R. Koepfel, Ohio; 4. P. McDermott, Rhode Island; 5. F. Zermann, Illinois.

### *Auditing Committee*

1. W. Cox, Missouri; 2. H. Smith, New Jersey; 3. Geo. Ohls, Pennsylvania.

After the corrections were noted the minutes of the Saturday session were adopted.

Delegate Udovicki of {the} South Slavonian Federation did not respond to the roll call.

Upon motion of Comrade Koepfel the names of Pfister and Roadhouse of California, Reagan of Washington and G. Sherwood of Minnesota were stricken from the roll call because they were not attending the convention.

Aug. Gillhaus was elected chairman for the day's session and Donald Munro was elected vice-chairman.

The Committee on Credentials recommended that the following delegates be seated: F.E. Waitz, Ohio; P.E. De Lee, New York, and C. Carlson as alternate for J.D. Carlson. The committee's recommendation was concurred in and {the} delegates were seated.

Upon motion of Comrade Reinstein it was decided to print the various committee reports so that the delegates can study the same.

Upon Comrade Reimer's motion the Committee on Platform was ordered to report at 2 P.M. (Sunday).

## Communications

The following telegrams were received:

## *SOCIALIST LABOR PARTY*

Buffalo, N.Y., April 29, 1916, 11:45 P.M.  
S.L.P. Convention, Assembly Hall, World Bldg., Park Row, New  
York.

We wish success to your work in spreading the revolutionary  
ideas of the S.L.P.

Buffalo Branch  
Jewish Socialist Labor Federation

\* \* \* \* \*

New York, April 29, 1916  
Arnold Petersen, Socialist Labor Party convention, Assembly  
Room, World Bldg., N.Y. City  
The members of the Amalgamated Clothing Workers of America  
pray for socialist unity on basis agreeable to both parties.  
Economic and political unity of the working class never so  
urgent as now. Best wishes for successful convention. With you  
in the fight against militarism and for emancipation of working  
class.

Joseph Schlossberg

### Reports of Committees

#### COMMITTEE ON CONSTITUTION

The Committee on Constitution submitted its report at this time  
through Comrade A.E. Reimer. The committee called attention to the  
fact that the extract of a letter from J.E. Riordan, of the state of  
Washington, to National Secretary Petersen, did not come through  
the proper channels and as it presented nothing definite no action  
was taken thereon by the committee.

A copy of the letter is herewith submitted:

“Now this brings to mind that I wrote you some time ago in  
regard to changing our Constitution. It seems to me that we  
ought to so change the Constitution that in cases like the  
Clausen affair the Section could be compelled to act and act  
quickly instead of taking their own time for it. I realize that an  
organization like ours must have a centralized government or  
central head and that head must be the N.E.C. Yet it appears to  
me that it would be a good idea to place a little power in the  
hands of the S.E.C. so that the S.E.C. of a state which should  
know more about the conditions existing in the Party in the  
state and be more familiar with the personnel of the Party  
members, could act in matters of this kind and nip in the bud  
any signs of disruption or treason. It takes too long to get these  
questions settled if we have to go through a long line of red-tape  
with the National Office and while doing this a Section may be  
wrecked and even a whole state Organization may be disrupted.

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These ideas of mine are the result of some experiences we had a few years ago here when Augustine was National Secretary. Of course, I know it depends to a great extent on the man or men whom we have in the National offices, as to how these matters are handled, and should a National Secretary take the wrong side as sometimes happens then the state organization is placed in a hell of a predicament and what I want to see is a constitution that will make it almost impossible for any man or set of men to start out and wreck an organization before the Party can head them off. Now I am not an expert constitution-maker and haven't got the time to sit down and make one if I were, but I thought it might be well to make these suggestions to you and you can bring the question before the convention, where our best and brainiest men in the Party can tackle the question.

J.E. Riordan.”

It was moved by Richter and seconded by De Lee that all of the committee's recommendations be adopted. The motion was lost.

The convention then decided to take up the report seriatim.

At this time the Committee on Credentials recommended the seating of I. Lipshutz of the Jewish Socialist Labor Federation. Report was concurred in and Lipshutz was seated as a delegate.

Moved by Seaholm and seconded by Malmberg that Article 5, Section 6, of the Constitution be taken up for discussion. The motion carried.

The committee recommended that Article 5, Section 6, be amended to read as follows: “The National Executive Committee 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 one-third of its members, pledging themselves to attend; said call to be sent to the National Secretary and published in the national organ twice in succession.” The reasons for the foregoing change are stated in the National Secretary's report, which can be found in the minutes for Saturday, April 29.

It was moved by Hanson and seconded by Koepfel that the amendment as recommended by the committee be adopted.

Comrade Reinstein opposed the change because it would be dangerous to the Party if the National Executive Committee met but once a year. Comrade Seidel also opposed the change. Comrades Koepfel, Fuerstenberg and De Lee spoke in favor of the proposed change.

The motion to adopt the amendment was carried by a vote of 25 in favor and 9 opposed. The roll call on the foregoing motion was as follows:

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*In favor:* F. Zermann, J. Burkhardt, W. Mills, H. Richter, W. Cox, O. Kinsalas, A. Reimer, H. Smith, A. Gillhaus, R. Koeppel, G. Ohls, P. McDermott, D. Munro, A. Schnabel, L. Basky, J. Havascy, J. Flack, W. Extine, C. Seaholm, Axel Peterson, F. Hanson, C. Carlson, A. Fuerstenberg, P. De Lee and F. Waitz. 25

*Opposed:* R. Katz, E. Seidel, B. Reinstein, R. McLure, V. Mazanek, J. Procum, J. Salanek, A. Lyzell and N. Malmberg. 9

The Committee on Constitution recommended amending Section 2 of Article 5 by adding a new paragraph which is to read as follows:

“All members of the National Executive Committee must be citizens of the United States, but a state or federation 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.”

The reasons for the foregoing paragraph are stated in the National Secretary's report.

After considerable discussion the amendment carried.

All the other changes recommended by the committee were adopted; they are as follows:

*Article 2, Section 1, Paragraph (a)* was amended as follows: “They shall report to their National and State Executive Committees, their organization as a Section with the names and addresses of the members.”

*Article 2, Section 1, Paragraph (b)* was amended to read “Each Section shall send to the National and State Executive Committees a report of its numerical and financial conditions and the names and addresses of members in good standing and otherwise on December 31st of each year.”

*Section 3 of Article 2*, was eliminated, therefore, old Section 4 now becomes Section 3, old Section 5 becomes Section 4, etc.

*Old Section 5 of Article 2* but now Section 4 was amended to read “Every Section shall elect from its members an Organizer, and such additional officers as it deems proper. The Organizer shall conduct the correspondence with the National and State Executive Committees, and shall send an official report to each of the said committees on December 31st of each year; the Organizer shall send at least seventeen<sup>1</sup> cents of the monthly dues of each member to the State Executive Committee, or, in the absence of such, to the National Execu-

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<sup>1</sup> [1916 Constitution says “thirty.”—R.B.]



## FOURTEENTH NATIONAL CONVENTION

tive Committee; the Organizer shall conduct the local organization and agitation.”

*Old Section 12 of Article 2* now Section 11, was amended to read: “No expelled or suspended member shall be accorded the privileges of a member of the Party unless properly reinstated by the Section or language federation that expelled or suspended him or, if it shall have ceased to exist, by the State Executive Committee or, in the absence of such, by the National Executive Committee.”

*Article 3, Section 1*, was amended to read: “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.”

*Article 4, Section 3*, was amended to read: “The Committee shall send regular annual reports to the National Executive Committee, giving the state of the organization and also a financial report for the twelve months ending December 31st.”

*Article 5, Section 14, Paragraph (g)*, was amended to read: “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.”

*Article 5, Section 14, Paragraph (h)*, was amended to read: “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 five per cent of all the Sections in good standing shall subsequently re-endorse it. The voting to close within nine weeks from the time the proposition was submitted to a general vote.”

*Article 8, Section 1*, was amended to read: “The Sections shall levy upon each of their members a monthly tax of at least seventeen cents to be paid monthly to the State Executive Committee.”

*Article 8, Section 2*, was amended to read: “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 twelve cents each, and in the absence of such to the Sections at the rate of at least seventeen.”

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*Article 10, Section 1*, was amended to read as follows: “The *Weekly People* (and such daily paper as the Party may at any time publish) shall be the official organ of the Party.”

*Article 11, Section 7*, was amended to read: “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 nor shall any such person be eligible to any office within the Party except in the case of a new Section and with the specific approval of the State Executive Committee.”

*Article 11, Section 18*, was amended to read: “The National Executive Committee shall set aside 5 cents of the money received for every due stamps sold (not including stamps sold to language federations) to be used as a propaganda leaflet fund. Propaganda leaflets covering various subjects shall be issued by the National Executive Committee in the English language and furnished to the English-speaking Sections according to the amount paid by each state or Section into the leaflet fund. The National Executive Committee may also issue leaflets in foreign languages at its own discretion.”<sup>1</sup>

*Article 12, Section 1*, was amended to read: “Each federation shall pay a per capita tax of four cents per member per month into the national treasury.”

The convention concurred in the recommendation of the Committee on Constitution not to abolish the federation plan of organization as suggested by a communication from Secretary Theo. Kaucher of the Missouri State Committee.

A resolution from the Committee on Party Press and Literature recommending “an increase in the price of dues stamps to state committees from 12 to 17 cents and to Sections in unorganized states from 17 to 22 cents; the additional 5 cents to be used exclusively to eliminate the weekly deficit on the *Weekly People*” was reported unfavorably by the Committee on Constitution to which this resolution had been referred. Upon action of the convention this resolution was laid over.<sup>2</sup>

A resolution from the Hungarian Socialist Labor Federation “that members of the Socialist Labor Party be prohibited to accept salaried

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<sup>1</sup> A resolution from Section Providence R.I., “that an auxiliary branch—members would not be compelled to pay dues—or have a vote,” was not recommended by the Committee on Constitution and the convention concurred in the committee’s report. (The original letter is on file with the National Secretary.)—*Secretary*.

<sup>2</sup> [See original re: “Rhode Island resolution.”]

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offices in the American Federation of Labor” was defeated.  
Adjournment was taken at 12:10 P.M.

### AFTERNOON SESSION, SUNDAY, APRIL 30

The convention reconvened at 1:55 P.M.

#### Communications

The following telegram was received:

Milwaukee, Wisconsin, April 30, 1916 P.M.  
National Convention Socialist Labor Party, World Building on  
Park Row, New York City.

Greetings to the representatives and assemblers of real revolutionary socialism of America. All workers thinking materialistic are with you. Step forth courageous to abolish present system and build up the Industrial Republic.

Bulgarian-Macedonian Socialist August Bebel.

The following delegates were elected on the Mileage Committee:  
Geo. Ohl, P.D. De Lee and H. Smith.

It was decided to have a group photograph of the convention taken.<sup>1</sup>

A recess of 30 minutes was now taken to give the delegates time to study the new draft of the Party platform.

#### Reports of Committees

##### COMMITTEE ON PLATFORM AND RESOLUTIONS

Chairman Mills of the Committee on Platform submitted what he termed to be the majority report of the committee, which was as follows:

##### “PROPOSED NATIONAL PLATFORM OF THE SOCIALIST LABOR PARTY OF AMERICA, 1916.

“The Socialist Labor Party of America in convention assembled declares that the purpose of government is to secure to every person the opportunity for fullest participation in all things that conduce to happiness, liberty and moral and physical well-being.

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<sup>1</sup> The photo taken was of such poor quality that the convention declined to purchase it from the photographer.—*Secretary*.

## SOCIALIST LABOR PARTY

“Experience demonstrates that government under the plan of the Political State favors one portion of the people, with abundance of the good things of social life, and deprives the greater number, the working class, of practically all things that life holds dear; that the class that owns the means of production enjoys all the best products of the workers’ toil and the workers are robbed of all they produce except a subsistence, and many are forced to perish by lack of even the simple essentials of life.

“The political form of government is the buttress that maintains the capitalist system of private ownership, that allows and encourages the lesser number, the idlers, thus to exploit and rob the greater number, the workers, in the industries.

“We maintain that political government is class rule in the interest of an especially favored idle class at the expense of the useful working class; and that, therefore, political and economic class-rule should and must be abolished, and a system of government substituted that will give to all, equally, the completest opportunity.

“We hold that government should be of, by and in the interest of all the people. The working class citizenry now has the political franchise, but this is futile as long as the workers do not have also the industrial franchise. We would replace the Political State and Private Ownership with the Industrial Republic—Socialist Society—in which title to the socially necessary means of production is vested in the Industrial Commonwealth, and every citizen has the right to vote in the management of the industries. The qualification for the rights of industrial citizenship in the Socialist Republic inheres in one’s being a socially useful worker, with due provision for such as are incapacitated by age or condition of health.

“We realize that to bring the Socialist Commonwealth into existence the workers must educate themselves in the form of organization necessary to destroy capitalism, and rear upon its ruins the Socialist Republic of Labor.

“We declare that the time actively to begin this work is now: by organizing on both the political and the economic field. The political organization must be formed to fight out the struggle between the classes on the civilized plane, under the rights guaranteed by civil law. The economic organization must be formed to carry on the daily struggle against the employing class in the workshops and to prepare for ultimately taking over and administering the industries. Thus the political hustings become means of educating the workers and recruiting the ranks of the industrial unions destined to become the constituencies of the government of the future—the Industrial Republic or Commonwealth of Labor.

“Socialist government differs from political government in that the administrative bodies of the Political State are com-

## FOURTEENTH NATIONAL CONVENTION

posed of men elected to represent geographical areas and irreconcilably antagonistic property interests; the Industrial Commonwealth is composed of working people democratically elected by the workers in the industries thus represented in the administrative councils.

“In the meantime, while the contest between industrial democracy and capitalism is being waged for final supremacy, the integrally organized and trained industrial unions will become capable of gradually and increasingly enforcing demands for larger wages, shorter hours, and better working conditions.

“Today, under capitalism supported by the Political State, due to the inherent tendencies in the Capitalist System, obedient to the laws of the system, the various groups of capitalists in different countries are continually clashing over foreign markets for the surplus products of which the working class is robbed. The result is wars in which the lives of millions of workers are sacrificed. Hence we see that the workers, exploited and robbed in times of peace and at home, are compelled to slaughter their fellow workers of other lands in order to force a market for the wealth they have produced for the capitalists. With socialism in force wars would cease.

“The working class can have no possible interest in the quarrels of capitalists over what disposition is made of the products of which the workers are robbed. They are made victims of war’s horrors only because they have not yet come to understand this fact.

“Under the rule of capitalism there are but two Nations—the worldwide Nation of the Capitalist Class, and the Nation of the world’s working class. As the interests of the capitalist class throughout the world are, broadly speaking, common internationally, so are the interests of the working class everywhere.

“Therefore we the workers recognize in the ‘Preparedness’ program of the owning class a plan and movement hostile to the working class, irrespective of country.

“The only ‘national defense’ worthy of the workers’ attention is preparation to defend their own class interests in this and other countries. Their only foe is the capitalist class wherever it exists.

“The Socialist Labor Party for reason given in this manifesto, and other reasons more fully set forth in the Party’s literature, raises the banner of revolt and demands the unconditional surrender of the capitalist class; and we call upon the wage earners of America to enlist under the banner of the Socialist Labor Party and to organize industrially, determined on conquering their rights.

“Also, we call upon all other intelligent citizens to place themselves squarely upon the grounds of working class interests and join in the noble work of human emancipation, so that a speedy

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end may be put to the existing savage class conflict by placing the land and all the means of production, transportation and general distribution into the hands of the people as a collective body, and substituting the Socialist Co-operative Commonwealth for the present state of planless production, labor exploitation for private profit, industrial war, and social disorder. We invite you to become a worker with us in the effort to abolish the evil system and construct in its stead a Commonwealth in which every citizen worker shall benefit to the full by the free exercise of his faculties, multiplied by all the modern factors of civilization.”

Approved for submission to the convention,  
Arthur B. Reimer, Word H. Mills, Herman Richter,  
Edmund Seidel, D.L. Munro.

Comrade Seidel submitted his minority report. Comrade Reimer read the draft of a platform written by Comrade Arnold Petersen.<sup>1</sup>

Moved by Reinstein and seconded by Fuerstenberg that the three drafts of the new Party platform be again submitted to the Committee on Platform. The motion was lost.

At this time Comrade Seidel withdrew his minority report.

Moved by Hosman and seconded by Cox that the majority report of the Committee on Platform be taken up seriatim. The motion carried.

Moved by Seaholm and seconded by Reimer that the first paragraph of Seidel’s platform draft be adopted. The motion was lost.

Moved and seconded that the convention discuss the platform as a committee of the whole. (No action)

Moved by Hosman and seconded by Reimer that the platform draft be again referred to the committee. The motion carried by a vote of 18 to 12.

The committee thereupon again went in session and the delegates were requested to offer their suggestions or criticisms to the committee. The committee was ordered to report again at 4 P.M.

### NOMINATIONS FOR PRESIDENT AND VICE-PRESIDENT

Moved by Reinstein and seconded by Zermann that the convention proceed to nominate the S.L.P. presidential candidates for 1916. Motion carried.

Schnabel nominated Caleb Harrison of Chicago. Reinstein nominated Reimer of Boston. There being a dispute as to whether Com-

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<sup>1</sup> [The whereabouts of these documents is not known.—*R.B.*]

## FOURTEENTH NATIONAL CONVENTION

rade Reimer would accept, a committee of three, consisting of Comrades Katz, Hanson and De Lee was appointed by the chair to inquire of Reimer (who was attending session of Committee on Platform, in an adjoining room) whether he would accept the nomination. The committee reported that Reimer would accept. Schnabel then requested permission to withdraw Harrison's name, which request, however, was courteously refused by the chairman. The vote was 26 for Reimer and 10 for Harrison. The roll call was as follows:

*For Reimer:* F. Zermann, J.J. Burkhardt, W. Mills, R. Katz, E. Seidel, A. Gillhaus, B. Reinstein, R. Koeppel, F. Waitz, P. De Lee, P. McDermott, D. Munro, Alb. Schnabel, L. Basky, J. Havascy, J. Flack, V. Mazanek, W. Extine, J. Saleneck, C. Seaholm, Axel Peterson, A. Lyzell, F. Hanson, N. Malmberg, C. Carlson, I. Lipshutz. 26

*For Harrison:* H. Richter, W. Cox, O. Kinsalas, A. Reimer, H. Smith, Geo. Ohls, R. McLure, L. Hosman, J. Procum and A. Fuerstenberg. 10

Reimer was then unanimously nominated.

The National Secretary was instructed to wire Comrade Harrison informing him of his nomination as vice-presidential candidate and also requesting him to wire his acceptance.<sup>1</sup>

Adjournment was taken until 4 P.M.

## EVENING SESSION, SUNDAY, APRIL 30

convention reconvened at 4:15 P.M.

The convention decided to pay for the berths of the delegates while riding to and from New York; same to be paid out of the mileage fund.

### Reports of Committees

#### COMMITTEE ON PLATFORM AND RESOLUTIONS

The Committee on Platform reported. The platform as submitted was unanimously adopted, and is as follows:

#### PLATFORM OF THE SOCIALIST LABOR PARTY

"The Socialist Labor Party, in national convention assembled, reaffirming its previous platform declarations, reasserts the right of man to life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness.

"We hold that the purpose of government is to secure to every

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<sup>1</sup> See page 76 for Harrison's acceptance.—*Secretary*.

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

“We hold that the true theory of economics is that the means of production must be owned, operated and controlled by the people in common. Man cannot exercise his right of life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness without the ownership of the land on and the tool with which to work. Deprived of these, his life, his liberty and his fate fall into the hands of that class which owns these essentials for work and production.

“We hold that the existing contradiction between social production and capitalist appropriation—the latter resulting from the private ownership of the natural and social opportunities—divides the people into two classes: the Capitalist Class and the working class; throws society into convulsions of the Class Struggle; and perverts government in the interests of the Capitalist Class.

“Thus Labor is robbed of the wealth 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.

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

“In place of such a system the Socialist Labor Party aims to substitute a system of social ownership of the means of production, industrially administered by the working class,—the workers to assume control and direction as well as operation of their industrial affairs.

“This solution of necessity requires the organization of the working class *as a class* upon revolutionary political and industrial lines.

“We therefore call upon the wage-workers to organize themselves into a revolutionary political organization under the banner of the Socialist Labor Party; and to organize themselves likewise upon the industrial field into a revolutionary industrial union in keeping with their political aims.

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



## FOURTEENTH NATIONAL CONVENTION

ties, multiplied by all the modern factors of civilization.”

### COMMITTEE ON ATTITUDE OF THE PARTY TOWARD ECONOMIC ORGANIZATION

The Committee on Attitude of the Party toward Economic Organization submitted the following report:

#### ATTITUDE TOWARD TRADE UNIONS

“Whereas, ‘Neutrality’ toward economic organizations of Labor on the part of a political party of socialism is equivalent to neutrality toward organizations that endorse and support the system of private ownership of the social means of producing wealth, the system which the Party is fighting; and

“Whereas, The bona fide or revolutionary Socialist Movement needs the economic as well as the political organization of Labor, the latter for propaganda and as a civilized means of registering public opinion through the ballot; the former as the only conceivable organized force without which all ballot is impotent, and which force is essential for ultimately locking out the capitalist class from the industries; therefore, be it

“Resolved, That the Socialist Labor Party do all in its power to show the fallacy of craft unionism, and urge the workers to organize industrially on the principles of the Workers’ International Industrial Union.

“Whereas, There exist today in the United States two conceptions of what an economic organization of Labor should be; and

“Whereas, One conception—that held by the American Federation of Labor and kindred unions—is that the organization should concede the right of capitalists to own and control industry, and should be built upon narrow craft lines for the sole purpose of protecting its members in their employment and of securing petty improvements in the conditions of Labor, thus becoming a mere ‘watch-your-job-and-boost-your-pay’ organization; and

“Whereas, The other conception—that held only by the Workers’ International Industrial Union—is that the economic organization of Labor should deny the right of capitalism to continue in the ownership and control of industry and that it should be built upon industrial lines, not only with the aim of more effectively co-operating in the daily struggle against the employing class, but for the supreme purpose of taking possession of the industries and operating them in the interests of society as a whole.”

Reinstein offered an amendment that the convention readopt the:

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“Resolution on economic organization presented at the Stuttgart International Socialist Congress jointly by the delegate of the S.L.P. and the delegate of the I.W.W., and adopted at the Twelfth National Convention of the S.L.P., July, 1908,” as a declaration of the Party’s position on the trades union question:

“Whereas, The integrally organized industrial organization of the working class is the present embryo of the Commonwealth of Labor, or Socialist Republic, and foreshadows the organic form of that Commonwealth, as well as its administrative powers;

“Whereas, Craft Unionism, wherever capitalism has reached untrammelled full bloom, has approved itself what the plutocratic *Wall Street Journal* of New York has hailed it, in hailing the Gompers-Mitchell American Federation of Labor, ‘The bulwark of capitalist Society,’ that bred the officialdom which the capitalist Mark Hanna designated as his ‘Labor-Lieutenanship’; therefore be it

“Resolved, 1. That ‘Neutrality’ towards Trades Unions, on the part of a political party of socialism, is equivalent to ‘neutrality toward the machinations of the capitalist class’;

“2. That the bona fide, or revolutionary Socialist Movement needs the political as well as the economic organization of Labor, the former for propaganda and warfare upon the civilized plane of the ballot; the latter as the only conceivable force with which to back up the ballot, without which all ballot is moonshine, and which force is essential for the ultimate lock-out of the capitalist class;

“3. That, without the political organization, the Labor or Socialist Movement could not reach its triumph; without the economic, the day of its political triumph would be the day of its defeat. Without the economic organization, the movement would attract and breed the pure and simple politician, who would debauch and sell out the working class; without the political organization, the movement would attract and breed the agent provocateur, who would assassinate the movement.”

### Resolutions

The time for resolutions having arrived, a resolution of Comrade Richter was read and referred to the Committee on Platform and Resolutions.

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At this time Comrade Reimer was informed by the chairman that he was unanimously nominated for president on the S.L.P. ticket, to which Reimer answered in well-selected words.

## *FOURTEENTH NATIONAL CONVENTION*

The time for adjournment having arrived it was decided to extend the time until {the} question under discussion was disposed of.

Reinstein requested permission to alter his amendment so that the committee's report be accepted as a supplementary declaration to the Party's present declaration on economic organization. The convention refused to give him permission to so alter his amendment.

The convention then adopted the report of the committee.

Adjournment was taken at 6:35 P.M. but before the convention adjourned it reaffirmed the following resolution on conduct during strikes: "Resolution on conduct during strikes, adopted at the Twelfth National Convention of the S.L.P., July 1908:

"Resolved, that the Socialist Labor Party, while retaining its right to criticize and expose all wrongfully constructed and conducted labor organizations, and exercising its duty to do so, emphatically maintains its position that it is the duty of every member of the Party to stand on the side of the workmen whenever a bona-fide strike or other conflict for improved conditions of labor occurs, either as a spontaneous action of the workers or as a result of action taken by any labor organization whatever."

### THIRD DAY'S SESSION, MONDAY, MAY 1

The convention was called to order on Monday, May 1st, by Chairman Gillhaus at 9:35 A.M. in Room number 509 of the World Bldg.

The roll call showed that delegates Flack, Peterson and Udovicki were absent.

The minutes of the Sunday session were adopted.

W. Cox was elected chairman for the day and D. Munro was elected vice-chairman.

#### COMMITTEE ON CREDENTIALS

The Committee on Credentials recommended the seating of A.H. Frink of Connecticut and C.E. Nylen as alternate for Axel Peterson. The delegates were seated.

Comrade {Anna} Spann, delegate for New Jersey, relieved the Alternate H. Smith.

#### Communications

The following telegrams were received and read:

\* \* \* \* \*

Chicago, Illinois April 30, 1916

Arnold Peterson, World Bldg., New York

Will accept. Socialist greetings to the convention. On with the work.

Caleb Harrison.<sup>1</sup>

\* \* \* \* \*

Jamestown, New York, April 30, 1916, 12:24 A.M.

Arnold Peterson, 45 Rose Street, New York

Dear Comrade: Section Jamestown and Scandinavian S.L.P. Club assembled after opening 1916 campaign with successful meeting sends its greetings and best wishes to the comrade delegates of our Fourteenth National Convention. Let 1916 be a historic year for the S.L.P.

Jamestown S.L.P.

O. Beldner, Section Org.;

Oscar Anderson, Scand. S.L.P. Club, Org.

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Rochester, N.Y., April 30, 1916

Convention of the S.L.P.

World Bldg., Park Row, New York

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<sup>1</sup> Note: See page 90 for further information relative to Harrison's telegram.—*Secretary*.

## FOURTEENTH NATIONAL CONVENTION

Comrades, We congratulate you to the 14th National Convention of the S.L.P. We are with you for the Industrial Republic. Yours for the cause.

Jewish Socialist Labor Federation  
Branch Rochester.

\* \* \* \* \*

Akron, Ohio, April 30, 1916

Socialist Labor Party Convention, Assembly Hall, The World Building, Park Row, New York, New York.

The Hungarian workingmen of the city of Akron, Ohio at May Day festival assembled send their heartiest congratulations to the Socialist Labor Party's convention—The congress of the class concerns working class of America. Down with capitalist preparedness we are for working class preparedness.

Chairman Husar

\* \* \* \* \*

Chicago, Illinois, April 30, 1916

Socialist Labor Party, World Bldg., Room 506, New York, N.Y.

We congratulate you to the Fourteenth Annual {sic} Convention. Wishing you both Socialist Parties shall be united. From Lodzer Branch 527, Workmen's circle.

Hyman Greenblat  
Secretary.

\* \* \* \* \*

New York

The 14th National Convention of the Socialist Labor Party,  
World's Bldg., Room 507, New York

Congratulations. Shall your work succeed in bringing sooner the emancipation of the working class. We pledge ourselves to strengthen the revolutionary Socialistic forces of the American proletariat by enlisting the betrayed Jewish workingmen in your ranks, organizing then to overthrow this canibalic {cannibalistic?} system.

General Executive Committee,  
Jewish Socialist Labor Federation,  
Louis Opochnsky, Acting Secretary

\* \* \* \* \*

Akron, Ohio, April 30, 1916

National Convention S.L.P.,  
45 Rose Street, New York

Comrades greeting, with you in spirit that your great and useful work will be successful for future of our revolutionary movement of the working class.

S.S. {South Slavonian} Branch

## SOCIALIST LABOR PARTY

### Reports of Committees

#### COMMITTEE ON ORGANIZATION AND NATIONAL CAMPAIGN

The Committee on Organization and National Campaign submitted its report. It recommended that "the convention heartily approves of the proposition set forth in the letter recently sent to the Sections from the National Headquarters by Comrade Reinstein:

"1. That the Party bend its energies to the task of raising the S.L.P. banner in as great a number of states as at all possible; making sure of giving the workers of the states enrolled in 1912 an opportunity to register their vote for revolutionary socialism, and leaving no labor undone in our effort to capture a substantial number of new states.

"2. That we consider the distribution of two million leaflets most possible of accomplishment, and do expect that no Party Section will think its quota of leaflets too big, and that no Party member will shirk his duty in this greatly important manner {matter?}."

The convention concurred in the foregoing recommendation.

The matter regarding the sending out of postal cards calling attention to the Party and the *Weekly People* was referred to the Committee on Organization and National Campaign.

The following resolution introduced by the Committee on Organization and National Campaign was adopted by the convention:

"Whereas, there are at the present time two Ladies' Auxiliaries to the Socialist Labor Party, one, the oldest in Cleveland, Ohio, and the other one, more recently organized, in Los Angeles, California, and

"Whereas these Auxiliary Organizations have proved to be of great help to the Party, therefore, be it

"Resolved, to call upon all Sections to make every effort to interest the wives and daughters of the Party members in organizing such auxiliaries."

Chairman Mills of the Committee on Platform stated that insofar as the present platform contained and embodied all the essential features, there is no need at the present time to adopt a permanent platform. The committee's report was accepted.

The Resolution on Preparedness was ordered printed.

The reports of the Committee on the International Socialist Movement were adopted. The two reports were as follows:

## FOURTEENTH NATIONAL CONVENTION

### No. 1

“On the invitation of the Executive Bureau of the International Socialist Bureau to send a delegate to a conference of neutrals to be held at the Hague, your committee recommends,

“That we do not participate for the reason that we feel that the time is not opportune for such a conference and that the expense would not be warranted.”

### No. 2

“On the invitation of the International Socialist Commission in Bern to the Socialist Labor Party to join that body, your committee, though recognizing and being in accord with the general proposition laid down in their manifesto, which breathes the true spirit of Internationalism, and taking full cognizance of the class struggle, also notes its failure to recognize the necessity of an economic organization or industrial union as its only conceivable right {might?} to enforce the sentiments of said conference, and for this reason if put to the test the International Socialist Commission, like the old International, must fail. We, therefore, recommend against a formal joining of said International Socialist Commission at this time.”

## Communications

The following telegram was received:

\* \* \* \* \*

Cleveland, Ohio, May 1-16

National Convention of the Socialist Labor Party,

Assembly Hall, World Bldg., New York, N.Y.

Greeting, Forward, comrades, we are with you. South Slavonic S.L.P. Federation, Cleveland, Ohio.

Joe Woosel,  
Secretary.

## Reports of Committees

### COMMITTEE ON PARTY PRESS AND LITERATURE

The Committee on Party Press and Literature reported. Comrade Seaholm's suggestion that the price of two *Weekly People* copies to one subscriber be \$1.50 was not recommended. The matter was referred to the committee.

The Committee on Party Press and Literature urged the adoption of a resolution “that wherever feasible at indoor meetings, subscription cards for the *Weekly People* and other Party organs or literature be sold as an entrance fee.”

## *SOCIALIST LABOR PARTY*

A substitute was offered requesting Comrade Katz to appear before the Sub-Committee of the N.E.C., with the convention's approval, relative to the sub. card and agitation plan. The substitute was later withdrawn with the convention's approval.

The original motion to concur in the committee's report was adopted.

The convention adopted the following resolution upon the committee's recommendation:

“As in many cities the public library will purchase certain books for general circulation, if such a request is made backed by a petition signed by a given number of persons. We recommend that Sections in such cities use this method of circulating such petitions for the purpose of having the Sue books placed in the public library.”

The committee reported unfavorably on a resolution introduced by delegates Seidel, Reinstein and Gillhaus that Sections having a membership of 50 and over be assessed two dollars weekly, and Sections having a membership under 50 be assessed one dollar weekly for the purpose of covering the *Weekly People* deficit. The report of the committee was concurred in.

\* \* \* \* \*

Because Room 509 was too small to accommodate the delegates and spectators, Comrade Katz had been ordered to find a more suitable meeting place. He reported that it was difficult to find a more suitable place in the vicinity, so the convention decided to stay in the World Building.

\* \* \* \* \*

The letter of the Missouri State Committee to National Secretary stating their delegate “W. Cox received instructions to bring before the convention; to have German Party organ reduced to four pages and to contain sound socialist teachings” was discussed. Comrade Koeppel, Editor of German Party organ, stated that the Missouri recommendation would mean the death of the German Party paper. He also explained at length how the objectionable plate matter was inserted, and that the printing firm refused to submit proofs to him at price they were doing the printing for, but that he now receives proofs of all matter, thereby remedying the situation. Koeppel also called attention to the fact that the Party owes \$900 to the printing firm,



## FOURTEENTH NATIONAL CONVENTION

and that the ads. appearing in our German paper help pay part of the expenses.

Comrade Peterson thought the lack of a German Language Federation is really responsible for such a situation.<sup>1</sup>

A motion to extend the morning session was lost. Adjournment taken at 12 o'clock.

### AFTERNOON SESSION, MONDAY, MAY 1

Convention reconvened at 2 P.M.

#### Communications

The following telegram was received:

\* \* \* \* \*

Detroit, Michigan, May 1st, 1916

National Convention, S.L.P.

World Bldg., Assembly Hall, N.Y.C.

Sail on! O you true soldiers of social revolution! Sail on! Until the goal is reached. Sail on! We are with you.

The Branch South Slavic S.L.F.

1138 Russell Street

#### Reports of Committees

##### AUDITING COMMITTEE

The auditing committee submitted the following report:

Your committee has compared the report of the National Executive Committee to this convention giving the receipts and expenditures of the National Office of the four years ending December 31, 1915, and found that that report agrees with the various reports covering the semi-annual periods which reports are signed as audited by the various auditing committees, except that report for the period ending January 31, 1914, which was signed by an auditing committee, "subject to completion of audit of moving fund." Also that the financial statements of the Party plant are signed as audited by committees or accountants "excepting two or three not audited."

With regard to the report for the period ending Jan. 31, 1914, we would submit the following in explanation from Comrade Augustine,

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<sup>1</sup> For final action on this matter see page 93.—*Secretary*. [It appears no definite action was taken.—*R.B.*]

## SOCIALIST LABOR PARTY

the former National Secretary:

“The accounts handled by me were audited by the National Auditing Committee, said audit being made subject to an audit of the Moving Fund, which fund was handled by the then treasurer, F.W. Ball. For various reasons it did not seem possible for the Auditing Committee, Mr. Ball and myself to get together, and as Mr. Ball subsequently (July 1914) resigned from the Party it became still more difficult to finish the audit. I am willing and ready to meet the Auditing Committee and, if possible, Mr. Ball any time so that this matter may be finally settled.”

In explanation of the two or three reports of the Party plant not audited we submit the following statement of Comrade Petersen:

“These statements are submitted as they were submitted to the National Executive Committee. All but two or three are audited. Lack of funds and inability to secure voluntary services are responsible for the non-auditing of those periods, The N.E.C. is now having the plant books audited by Public Certified Accountants.”

It was decided to receive the report and have the 1914 period referred to in the report audited.

### COMMITTEE ON PLATFORM AND RESOLUTIONS

The Committee on Platform submitted its Resolution on Preparedness, which read as follows:

“Whereas, The conflict of economic interests of groups of capitalists in different countries that are compelled to seek foreign markets and to attempt to dominate the world market, makes war between nations actual or ever imminent, and

“Whereas, The workers are exploited and robbed in times of peace at home, and [in times of war are]<sup>1</sup> compelled to slaughter their fellow workers in other lands in order to force a market for the wealth produced by them but of which they are robbed by the capitalists; and

“Whereas, The working class can have no possible interest in the quarrels of the robber class over division or disposition of the wealth stolen from the workers; and no set of circumstances can justify the sending of one country’s proletariat to slaughter the

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<sup>1</sup> Note: This change was made after committee reported. On Wednesday, May 4 another paragraph was added to this resolution. See De Lee amendment, next page, and Reinstein amendment, page 101.—*Secretary*.

## FOURTEENTH NATIONAL CONVENTION

proletariat of another country in defense of capitalism in any form whatever, and

“Whereas, Under the rule of capitalism as expressed in government by the political state there are but two Nations—the working class and the Capitalist Class; and as, broadly speaking, the interests of the capitalist class are common internationally, so are the interests of the workers common internationally;

“Therefore, We recognize in the military ‘preparedness’ program of the owning class a movement hostile to the interests and lives of the working people and maintain that the only ‘national defense’ program worthy of the workers’ attention is the kind that contemplates defense of their own class interests against the only real enemy, which is the capitalist class, irrespective of country; and to prepare by organization politically and industrially to seize the power of government and take possession of industries in all countries to the end that socialism shall be established, thus establishing community of economic interests of the peoples of all countries and races, which must result in abolishing wars together with the cause of wars forever.”

De Lee moved to amend the second paragraph by inserting after the word “and” in the third line the words “in times of war are.” The motion carried.

Frink moved that the words “the interests of the capitalist class are common internationally” be stricken from the fourth paragraph. The motion was defeated

Koepfel moved that the words “broadly speaking” be stricken from the fourth paragraph. The motion was defeated,

The resolution was then adopted, including De Lee’s change in the second paragraph.

### COMMITTEE ON PARTY PRESS AND LITERATURE

Committee on Party Press and Literature reported again. It recommended “that comrades thruout the country take better advantage of opportunities offered by public meetings, to sell copies of our Party press and pamphlets.” The recommendation was concurred in.

Gillhaus moved that the recommendation of the Missouri S.L.P. State Committee “to have the German Party organ reduced to four pages and to contain sound socialist teachings” divided into two parts. Carried. The convention did not concur in the first part “to have German Party organ reduced to four pages.” The convention could take no action on the second part which stated “and to contain sound

## *SOCIALIST LABOR PARTY*

socialist teachings.” The wording was so ambiguous that no definite and intelligent action could be taken thereon. If the convention would concur in the second part of the aforesaid recommendation, it would go on record by impliedly admitting that our German Party organ did not contain “sound socialist teachings” in the past. And, on the other hand, if it would *not* concur in the second part, the convention would have gone on record as being opposed to “sound socialist teachings” appearing in our German Party organ in the future.

### COMMITTEE ON ORGANIZATION

The Committee on Organization reported that the cards now being used by the National Office for agitational purposes should be used. Carried.

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Upon motion of Katz the N.E.C. Sub-Committee was ordered and empowered to fill vacancies on the S.L.P. presidential ticket.

### COMMITTEE ON CONSTITUTION AND PLATFORM

The Committee on Constitution reported unfavorably on a 5 cents increase of dues. The report was concurred in.

Adjournment.

## FOURTH DAY'S SESSION, TUESDAY, MAY 2

The convention was called to order by Chairman Cox, in Room 510 of the World Bldg.

The minutes of the Monday session were adopted.

Delegates Wiest, Havascy, Flack, Mazanek, Seaholm, Udovicki and Lipshutz did not respond to the roll call,

A. Gillhaus was elected chairman for the day, and D. Munro was elected vice-chairman.

### Reports of Committees

#### COMMITTEE ON UNITY

B. Reinstein submitted the report of the Committee on the proposed Unity with the Socialist Party.

#### STATEMENT ADOPTED BY THE SOCIALIST LABOR PARTY IN FOURTEENTH NATIONAL CONVENTION WITH RE- GARD TO THE QUESTION OF UNITY WITH THE SOCIAL- IST PARTY.<sup>1</sup>

The Socialist Labor Party, in 14th National Convention assembled, accepts the invitation of the Socialist Party to elect five representatives to meet in Conference five representatives of the Socialist Party to consider and, if possible, arrange for unity of the two parties.

In doing so the Socialist Labor Party acts true to the position it held in the past and to the solemn declaration on the subject it made to the workers and to the Socialist and Labor movement of this and other countries, namely:

That there is in America, as elsewhere, only one working class to fight for and only one capitalist class to fight against, and that consequently there is no room for more than one party of socialism in any given country. The Socialist Labor Party recognizes that the continued division and public rivalry and antagonism in the political arena between the two parties speaking in the name and flying the flag of socialism, cannot but have a confusing and demoralizing effect upon the masses of workers inclining toward socialism; that such a condition retards the advance of a properly built political Socialist movement as well as that of a true Industrial Union movement—the two vital means to the emancipation of the working class from wage slavery.

The Socialist Labor Party recognizes, in addition to the above, that the point was reached in the history of America, when the

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<sup>1</sup> This is the original draft as submitted to the convention by the committee.—*Secretary*.

## SOCIALIST LABOR PARTY

very basis institutions and elementary rights and liberties of this country are in danger of being destroyed by a powerful militarist machine which the capitalist class of America—while pretending to be engaged in mere so-called “preparedness” against a foreign invasion—is building for its own protection against the threatening revolution of the American working class.

The S.L.P. holds, therefore, that in view of this immediate danger it is especially important, in fact mandatory, that all Socialist organizations should present a solid united front against the common enemy—the capitalist class and its government. Whatever blows it may be possible to deal the capitalists and their militarist outposts must be dealt, in order to be effective, by the vigorous combined power of a united Socialist army.

Besides, in order to advance to victory, this Socialist army must be in position to rapidly add to its ranks elements that naturally belong in its ranks—men and women of the working class. At present there are not only innumerable individuals but many Socialist and Labor organizations, which abstain from joining as active supporters anyone {of either?} of the two contending parties of socialism so long as they are divided. An appeal to such individuals and bodies to join the Socialist movement—an appeal issued in the name of one united party—is much more likely to meet with a ready response, than can be expected under the present divided condition of the Socialist movement of the land.

In view of the above the Socialist Labor Party—though it is conscious of its improving condition, its growing strength and its ability, if need be, to maintain indefinitely its separate position in the political arena and the arena of the Socialist movement generally,—stands ready to do all in its power for the unification of the Socialist forces of the land.—All, that is compatible with the interests of the working class and with the dignity of the Socialist Labor Party as a loyal champion of this class.

The Socialist Labor Party knows{,} however, that unity, to be of lasting benefit, must be a lasting unity—unity based upon agreement on at least such of the principles of the Socialist movement as make co-operation and, eventually, a more complete accord possible.

The Socialist Labor Party therefore defines in the following:

I. The IRREDUCIBLE MINIMUM of principles dealing with the aim, the means, the organization, and administration of the united party—principles without the unqualified agreement on which no co-operation is possible; and

II.—The MAXIMUM OF PRINCIPLES, full agreement on which may, in the opinion of the Socialist Labor Party, eventually make possible complete organic amalgamation of the two parties and their more fully harmonious co-operation.

The convention instructs the representatives of the S.L.P. at

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the Unity Conference to insist on the following:

I—Irreducible Minimum of Conditions for Unity:

A—As to aim.

A declaration to the effect that the united party aims:

1—To abolish the capitalist system of wage slavery and the consequent exploitation of the working class by the capitalist class, by transforming into collective property of society all land and capital—all means now used for communication and production, transportation and distribution of commodities.

2—To give all possible assistance—moral, financial, political and otherwise—to workmen involved in strikes, lockouts or other conflicts calculated to protect and extend the rights, and generally improve the condition of the workers, as far as it may still be possible under the capitalist wage system.

Comment:—No good can come from unity with a party which, while appealing to workers in the name of socialism, aims at anything less than the above.

B—As to Political Action:

Declaration in favor of independent political action of the working class under the Socialist banner, without any fusion or compromise, on candidates or principles, whatever.

Comment:—The impossibility to cooperate on the basis of any other attitude on the question of political action is self-evident.

C—As to economic action:

Recognition and declaration in favor of the fact that the emancipation of the working class from wage slavery cannot be achieved by political action only; and, therefore, the unqualified acceptance of the fact that it is absolutely indispensable for that purpose to have the working class organized in the economic arena on the lines of what is known in this country as pro-political or Socialist Industrial Unionism; and that, consequently, it is the duty of the Socialists to study the essential principles of Industrial Unionism in order to be able to advocate these principles both inside of the existing craft unions,—to the extent as it may still be possible,—and outside of same, and thus carry on that educational propaganda which will sooner or later crystallize in a country-wide army of industrially organized workers.

Declaration in favor of the fact, that the Socialists, while reserving their right to criticize and expose all wrongfully constructed and conducted labor organizations, owe it as a duty to stand on the side of the workmen whenever a [bona fide] strike or other conflict for improved conditions of labor occurs, either as a spontaneous action of the workers or as a result of action taken by any labor organization whatever.

Comment:—That the emancipation of the proletariat from wage slavery is impossible by means of political action only, without economic organization of labor built on the lines not of

## *SOCIALIST LABOR PARTY*

craft unionism, but of what is called in America Industrial Unionism, was recognized and proclaimed since 1907 by the entire International Socialist movement, when the Stuttgart International Socialist Congress has adopted its trade union resolution containing, among others, the following two paragraphs:

“To emancipate the proletariat completely from the bonds of intellectual, political, and economic serfdom, the political and economic struggle are alike necessary.”

“The development of the capitalist system of production; the increased concentration of the means of production; the growing alliances of employers; the increasing dependence of particular trades upon the totality of bourgeois society—[all this] would reduce trade unions to impotence, if, concerning themselves with nothing more than trade interests, they took their stand on corporate [craft] selfishness, and admitted the theory of harmony of interests between labor and capital.”

The Socialist Party is committed to these principles by the unanimous vote cast for that resolution in Stuttgart by the International Secretary of the Socialist Party, Morris Hillquit, by Algernon Lee, A.M. Simons, and other delegates of the Socialist Party to that Congress. In case of refusal of the Socialist Party to accept those principles as one of the unqualified conditions for unity, the Socialist Labor Party has no choice but to refuse to enter with it into any kind of agreement for unity, as no good can come from unity with a body, which commits itself in favor of certain principles in Europe, but fails or refuses to commit itself in favor of {the} same principles at home, in America, especially when these principles are so vital for the success of the Socialist movement.

D—As to Militarism and War:—

Recognition and declaration in favor of the fact:

1—That the navy, the army, and all other militarist establishments, advocated under the pretext of “preparedness” against foreign invasion, are maintained in reality for twofold purposes:

a—To protect the capitalist class against the rebellions of the workers and the threatening final revolution of the working class; and

b.—To secure for the capitalist class of various countries a better opportunity for seizing foreign markets they need so badly in order to realize cash on the wealth they have robbed their home workers of, under the operation of the capitalist wage system.

2—That the elected representatives of the Party must, therefore, under penalty of expulsion from the Party, be prohibited from voting under any circumstances for any appropriation of men or money for war or militarism, whether on the increased scale of so-called “preparedness,” or on the scale of our present



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army and navy.

3—That the Socialist movement, in order to succeed, must be unqualifiedly international in its scope and character.

4—The acceptance of the International principle that so-called national defense, at this late day of international capitalism, is an anachronism, and that the proposed united party go on record as being utterly opposed to this theory of national defense, placing itself squarely on the ground of the class struggle, recognizing that the proletariat of the world has no country which it can call its own—consequently it has no country to DEFEND, but a country and world to GAIN from the capitalist class of this country and the world.

E—As to Administration and Organization of the united party.

Pending the time when complete accord on all essential questions of principles and tactics, and consequent complete organic amalgamation of the two parties, will become both desirable and possible, as a result of co-operation and comradely intercourse of the now warring parties, the S.L.P. must insist that the unity of the two parties must represent a Federation of two distinct bodies, each retaining its organization in its integrity and each enjoying a proper amount of self-government, and of representation in the governing bodies of the movement.

As a consequence of this character of organization it must follow, as far as the S.L.P. sub-division of the united party is concerned, that:

1—The S.L.P. retain jurisdiction over its members, scattered though they are all over the country.

2—The S.L.P. retain ownership and control of all its present property: its printing plant; its various organs; its Labor News publications, copyrighted or otherwise; and be itself responsible for its own liabilities. Same to apply to the Socialist Party.

3—In the National Administration:

a—The S.L.P. elect two members to the National Executive Committee of the united party, which committee is to be enlarged from five to seven, the S.P. electing the other five.

b—The S.L.P. elect as many members of the National Committee and as many delegates to the National Conventions as a state organization of the present S.P., with a like number of total membership, would be entitled to.

4—In the International Administration:

a—The S.L.P. retain its member in the International Socialist Bureau, the S.P. retaining its own and also the third member the American movement is entitled to whenever it has one or more Socialist Congressmen in Washington.

b—The S.L.P. elect at least two delegates to the International Socialist Congresses, and retain its separate vote on questions voted on in such congresses.

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5—The S.L.P. pay through its National Secretary to the National Treasury of the united party its per capita in dues.

6—The S.L.P. surrenders its right to nominate national, state or local candidates in opposition to the Socialist Party, but, on the contrary, should co-operate with the S.P. in nomination of a joint ticket, adoption of political platforms, and conduct of joint campaigns, and generally co-operate with the Socialist Party wherever possible, in work of propaganda and agitation.

7—The S.L.P. sub-divisions attach themselves, on the basis of proportional representation to local and state organizations of the present S.P. for the purpose of jointly nominating candidates and conducting such work of propaganda, upon which they succeed in coming to agreement with the majority of the S.P.; but in no case should the S.L.P. be forced against its will into local undertakings, such as establishing headquarters, publishing local papers, etc., and held liable for any part of eventual deficits incurred by such undertakings.

8—In case of failure to agree with the S.P. majority on questions of principles and policies, not conflicting with any basic principles of the agreement, the S.L.P. reserves unqualifiedly the right to publicly advocate such views upon its own subdivisions' responsibility.

Comment:—The Federative form of unity, with all these conclusions from it, is alone possible at this stage. When a man falls and fractures the bone of his leg the bone cannot be knit together immediately. First the surface(s) of the fracture must be brought in contact with each other and kept in that condition, instead of in condition of friction. Then evolution and nature have a chance to do the rest, and by and by the bone grows together. Likewise with the fracture the Socialist movement in America sustained nearly seventeen years ago. To cure it, the two parts must first be brought in contact with each other and kept in contact. Then co-operation and evolution will gradually make complete organic amalgamation possible.

In the following are enumerated some of the principles and policies, upon all or some of which the two parties, presumably, may not agree at this stage, and for the adoption of which the S.L.P. representatives in the coming Unity Conference are instructed to plead:

The S.L.P. reserves the right to publicly advocate upon its own responsibility such of these principles and policies as will fail of adoption at the Unity Conference.

### MAXIMUM DEMANDS

1—Declaration that the capitalist Political State,—composed of elected or of appointed representatives of political districts and territorial geographical divisions (county, state, etc.)—must, under socialism, be substituted by the government of Industrial

## FOURTEENTH NATIONAL CONVENTION

Democracy, composed of workers elected by their fellow-workers in the various industries for the purpose of conducting and regulating the production and distribution of wealth.

2—The exposure of the American Federation of Labor as the representative of the reactionary anti-Socialist craft union movement and as an obstacle in the path for the improvement of conditions of Labor.

3—Declaration that the United Socialist Party aims to socialize, along with other means of production, all land used for production of commodities, whether such land be owned by a big or small farmer, or be tilled by wage labor or otherwise.

4—Endorsement of the Stuttgart resolution on Immigration question. That resolution declares that it is proper for Socialists to support only such laws as prohibit importation of strike breakers and of contract labor. But, outside of those two elements, it is improper for Socialists to support any laws which, in any way, interfere with or abolish the right of a workman of any country whatever, China or Japan not excepted, to go to any other country as individual workmen in search of a living. That the political and economic labor movement of the country toward which the current of immigration flows, should endeavor to offset the possible temporary harmful effect of immigration, and turn that current of immigration into a source of strength, instead of weakness, by drawing immigrants into the ranks of the labor movement of the new country, for that purpose doing away with high initiation fees, "closing of union books," and other such methods used by the A.F. of L. craft unions for the purpose of monopolizing jobs for the few inside of such unions.

5—Declaration repudiating the fallacy of the so-called "buying out the capitalists" as the means for emancipation of the working class.

6—Construction of a constitution of the United Socialist Party which would decentralize and make much more democratic the present constitution of the S.P.

7—Prohibition of the state autonomy being used to advocate principles or policies which are conflicting with the general principles of the United Socialist Party.

8—The adoption of the general name of United Socialist Party of America, wherever that does not militate against the state laws. The S.L.P. then reserves for its sub-division the name "Socialist Labor Propagandists."

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The Socialist Labor Party feels that by thus publicly indicating in advance of the convening of the Unity Conference the conditions the S.L.P. must insist on as indispensable for the unification of the Socialist forces of America—conditions which at this day must certainly be acceptable to any truly Socialist body,—and by indicating the Socialist Labor Party's readiness to

## *SOCIALIST LABOR PARTY*

waive, for the present, if it need be, agreement on other important principles, the S.L.P. has given ample evidence of the earnestness and sincerity of its desire to do its share toward Socialist unity in America.

It is now up to the representatives of the Socialist Party to show whether they pay due attention to the desires of their rank and file, expressed so overwhelmingly in favor of unity; whether they are likewise willing to deal with this momentous problem in the broad and liberal spirit of Socialist comradeship. If they are, then there will be before long an important change for the better in the condition and progress of the Socialist movement of this country.

If they are not, then it will be up to the rank and file of the Socialist Party to show, whether they will allow the narrow spirit of a few leaders to stand between them and their so emphatically expressed desire for Socialist unity.

In any case, if this Socialist unity of America is prevented this time, the working class will know the reason why, and on whose shoulders the responsibility for it lies.

Whatever the action of the Socialist Party representatives or rank and file in this matter may ultimately be, the Socialist Labor Party, conscious of having fully discharged its duty toward its class on this question, will with serene calmness await developments and, meanwhile, will proceed with the work in hand, the work of advancing the principles needed for the freeing of the proletariat from the chains of wage slavery.

In conclusion, the convention appeals to the members and friends of the Socialist Labor Party everywhere, with all the emphasis at its command, that they, while standing ready to accept the proffered hand of fellowship on conditions consistent with our sacred mission of working for the emancipation of the proletariat, should "keep the powder dry." They should proceed, without any interruption or lagging, with the preparations for as vigorous a campaign as the utmost exertions on the part of the entire membership of the Party may make possible, and as one of the most dangerous crises in the history of the country, that we are face to face with, renders vital to the extreme.

Unanimously submitted by  
August Gillhaus, F. Hanson, Rudolph Katz,  
Boris Reinstein, Frank Zermann  
Committee.

Upon the motion of Hanson the report of the committee was received.

It was decided to discuss the report seriatim.

A motion to take a 30 minutes' recess, to allow and enable the delegates to read the report on Unity, was lost by a vote of 17 to 10.

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It was moved by Reinstein to take up other business and resume discussion on unity in the afternoon. The motion was lost by a vote of 13 to 10.

A motion to reconsider the taking up of the Unity Report seriatim carried.

Motion made that the convention go on record in favor of socialist unity in principle. The motion carried.

Reimer moved that the convention go on record in favor of unity with the Socialist Party in principle. Upon the suggestion of Comrade Mills the motion was altered to read "that the S.L.P. in principle is in favor of unity with the Socialist Party."

Hosman amended the foregoing motion{,} "that the S.L.P. is in favor of a unity conference." The chairman declared the amendment out of order.

Reinstein then offered an amendment to the motion to the effect "that the convention is in favor of going into conference with the Socialist Party to consider whether unity with the Socialist Party is possible on conditions acceptable to the Socialist Labor Party." The amendment carried.

### COMMITTEE ON ORGANIZATION AND NATIONAL CAMPAIGN

The Committee on Organization and National Campaign submitted a resolution recommending the formation of a German Language Federation, which read as follows:

"In view of the fact that the Party's propaganda among foreign-speaking workers in this country is being conducted in a satisfactory manner through the language federations now affiliated with the Party, and in view of the fact that the language federation form of organization largely removes from the councils of the mother organization matters not properly belonging there; and in view of the further fact that there now exists no federation carrying on the Party's propaganda among the numerous German-speaking workers to be found in this country this convention instructs the National Executive Committee to take steps to bring about the formation of a German Socialist Labor Federation."

The report was received.

Adjournment taken at 12 P.M.

**AFTERNOON SESSION, TUESDAY, MAY 2**

Convention reconvened at 2 P.M.

Reports of Committees

COMMITTEE ON UNITY

Reinstein then read each paragraph of the Unity Report separately.

Moved by Cox that words “minimum” and “maximum” be stricken from paragraphs I and II, A-1.

This motion was amended by Hosman that the matter be held in abeyance until the report is more fully discussed. The amendment carried.

Moved to strike out Paragraph 2 and Paragraph following(,) which contained the comment A-1. Amendment was offered by Hosman that only Paragraph 2 be stricken. The amendment carried.

Moved by Hosman that {the} word “revolutionary” be inserted for the word “independent” in first Paragraph of Section B on Page A-1. The motion carried.

Moved by Hosman that {the} words “or principles” be stricken in same Paragraph (as referred to herein in the preceding Paragraph) and that the words “and advocating no immediate demands whatever” be inserted therefor.

Hosman’s motion was laid on the table until the first Paragraph of Section E was disposed of.

The previous question was called for, i.e., Paragraph 1 of Section E. The Paragraph was unanimously adopted.

Moved to strike out the last sentence in Paragraph 2 of Section E: “Same to apply to the Socialist Party.” Motion carried.

The chairman declared Hosman’s motion to change first Paragraph of Section B out of order, from which decision Hosman appealed. The decision of the chair was upheld by a vote of 18 to 8.

Section B “As to Political Action” in page A-1 was then adopted.

Moved to change compound word “country-wide” in the first Paragraph of Section C to “world-wide.” The motion carried.

The following was added to the first Paragraph of Section C (page A-1){:} “That the proposed united party go on record as condemning generally, craft unionism as a form of labor organization which defeats the very object which the workers, consciously or otherwise,

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strive to attain.” The foregoing was unanimously adopted.

Paragraph a of Section D was amended to read: “To protect the capitalist class against rebellious workers and the threatening final revolution of the working class; and”

The words “and kindred organizations” were inserted after American Federation of Labor in the second Paragraph under Maximum Demands, also the words “and the emancipation of Labor” after the word {“}conditions{”} in the same Paragraph.

### Resolutions

The time for resolutions having arrived, a resolution by Gillhaus and others, was read and same referred to the Committee on Party Press and Literature.

### Reports of Committees

#### COMMITTEE ON UNITY

It was moved and seconded that paragraphs 1 to 7 inclusive under Maximum Demands be inserted under the Minimum Demands.

A motion to close the debate on the foregoing motion was carried by a vote of 19 to 8.

The motion was lost by a vote of 17 to 9.

Moved by Koeppel that words “Minimum” and “Maximum” be stricken and only the word {“}Demands{”} retained. A motion to table the motion was carried by a vote of 12 to 8.

Upon Reinstein’s motion the report of the committee was adopted by the convention. Before adoption, however, a few words were changed in a few places and Reinstein was ordered to edit the second Paragraph to the effect that it was the Socialist Labor Party that took the initiative in this matter. The report as finally adopted with Reinstein’s revision of the paragraph in question, will be found in the Appendix.

The Committee on Unity also recommended that the National Headquarters of the Socialist Party, the papers of the Socialist Party, and the socialist papers of other countries receive copies of the report. That the convention nominate 10 members, of which 5 are to be elected by a referendum vote of the Party members, to act as the S.L.P. representatives at the proposed Unity Conference. Ten alternates are also to be nominated and five to be elected through a referendum vote of the Party members, i.e., the five candidates for both delegates and alternates receiving the highest number of votes are to be elected.

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The committee also recommended that the S.L.P. pay expenses of its delegates and half of the conference expenses, after a proper auditing. The National Secretary of the S.L.P. is to be instructed to inquire of the Socialist Party whether it will share expenses in taking a stenographic report of the proposed conference. If the Socialist Party will not concede to this arrangement, then it is to be notified that no conference will be held.

The committee recommended further that the secretaries of each delegation act as the press committee of the conference.

The convention concurred in all of the foregoing recommendations.

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A vote was taken as to what city would be preferable to hold the proposed conference in; the vote was as follows: Chicago 11 and New York City 13.

Adjournment taken at 6:20 P.M.

### **EVENING SESSION, TUESDAY, MAY 2**

The convention reconvened at 7:30 P.M.

#### Reports of Committees

##### COMMITTEE ON PLATFORM AND RESOLUTIONS

The Committee on Platform and Resolutions reported favorably on the following resolution:

“Whereas, the Federal Commission on Industrial Relations, after two years of study, public hearings in more than twenty cities, and a vast amount of research by a competent staff, has brought in a valuable report on the causes of industrial unrest; and

Whereas the available supply of this important document has been speedily exhausted, therefore be it

Resolved, that the Socialist Labor Party in national convention assembled calls upon the United States Senate to pass the necessary appropriation bill and provide for the printing of an adequate edition of this report, to the end that the document be made accessible to students of the Labor Question throughout the country.”

The convention, however, did not concur in the committee's report.



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### COMMITTEE ON CONSTITUTION AND PLATFORM

The Committee on Constitution reported favorably on new Section 4 of Article 3, which with the offered amendment reads as follows:

“In cities, towns or other localities where there exists a Section of the Socialist Labor Party and a Section or Sections of any S.L.P. Language Federation there shall be formed a central committee composed of delegates from said Sections whose function it shall be to co-operate 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 separately.

“In case the creation of such central committee is not deemed warranted then arrangements should at least be made for having one or more elected representatives of the Language Branches attend the meetings of the Party Section and report to both the Section and the Branch of the doings of each.”

The report of the committee was concurred in.

### COMMITTEE ON PARTY PRESS AND LITERATURE

The Committee on Party Press and Literature recommended the adoption of the following: “that the National Office in conjunction with *The People* office outline a plan by which the Sections be requested to procure at least the minimum amount of subscribers to make the paper self-supporting. Also, that each Section be assigned the specific number of subscribers it has to procure within a certain time.”

The report was concurred in. The committee also reported unfavorably on the Seaholm resolution “that a discount on the subscription price of the *Weekly People* be given so that a subscriber may have two copies of the paper sent to him for one year for the price of \$1.50.” Report of the committee was concurred in.

### Nomination of Delegates and Alternates to the Proposed Unity Conference

Moved to nominate delegates and alternates to the proposed Unity Conference. The motion carried.

The following were nominated: Reinstein, Katz, Reimer, Schnabel, Petersen, Harrison, De Lee, Seidel, Bobinsky, Mills, Zermann and

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Carm. The vote was as follows: Reinstein 25, Katz 25, Reimer 25, Schnabel 24, Petersen 20, Harrison 24, De Lee 18, Seidel 24, Bobinsky 14, Mills 21, Zermann 12, Carm 14. Zermann was eliminated and the vote on Carm and Bobinsky being a tie another vote on Carm and Bobinsky was taken which resulted in 11 votes for Carm and 10 for Bobinsky. The revised list of nominated delegate and votes received follows:

[Note: These names are arranged as decided by the convention on Wednesday, May 3. See page 117]

1. B. Reinstein, Buffalo, N.Y. ....	25 votes
2. R. Katz, Maywood, N.J. ....	25 votes
3. A. Reimer, Boston, Mass. ....	25 votes
4. Alb. Schnabel, Milwaukee, Wis. ....	24 votes
5. Caleb Harrison, Chicago, Ill. ....	24 votes
6. Ed. Seidel, New York, N.Y. ....	24 votes
7. W. Mills, Baltimore, Md. ....	21 votes
8. Arnold Petersen, New York, N.Y. ....	20 votes
9. P. De Lee, Troy, N.Y. ....	18 votes
10. A. Carm, Chicago, Ill. ....	11 votes

The following alternates were nominated: 1. Aug. Gillhaus, Brooklyn, N.Y.; 2. Dr. Hammer, New York, N.Y.; 3. J. Kircher, Cleveland, Ohio; 4. R. McLure, Philadelphia, Pa.; 5. W. Cox, St. Louis, Mo.; 6. H. Richter, Detroit, Mich.; 7. F. Hanson; 8. L.D. Hosman, New York, N.Y.;<sup>1</sup> 9. Olive Johnson, New York, N.Y.; 10. R. Koeppel, Cleveland, Ohio

It was moved and seconded that in the event of the Unity Conference a special assessment of 35¢ be levied to defray the expenses for same, and in case the conference is not held the money is to be turned over to the Press Security League. Carried.

Moved by Reinstein that the National Secretary be authorized to call upon the Sections and members to raise money or advance payments for the publishing of the stenographic report of the proposed Unity Conference. Motion carried.

\* \* \* \* \*

The Committee on Unity was discharged.

The Committee on Attitude of the Party toward Economic Organi-

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<sup>1</sup> F. Zermann of Chicago was nominated later to fill vacancy caused by Hosman's withdrawal.—*Secretary*.

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zation was discharged.

### Reports of Committees

#### COMMITTEE ON REPORT OF THE EDITOR

The Committee on Report of the Editor of *Weekly People* and his controversy with the Sub-Committee reported to sustain the Editor's position. The report was as follows:

#### REPORT ON THE APPEAL OF EDITOR OF THE WEEKLY PEOPLE.

Your committee, after going over the matter of the Appeal of the Editor of the *Weekly People* against the decision of the Sub-Committee relative to the refusal of the Editor to publish certain passages in a letter written by Comrade Arnold Petersen, the National Secretary of the Party to Fritz Patten reports as follows:

We find that the question at issue is, if Marx and Engels, the founders of scientific socialism, clearly realized that the working class must, to assure its emancipation, organize within the frame of the Capitalist political state, the structure of the Industrial Administration, or Socialist Republic, i.e., the Government over things instead of men, so that the proletariat may develop the indispensable power and training to take hold and operate all means of useful, wealth-production, transportation and distribution.

The fact that Marx and Engels have pointed out that the political state will, following the Social Revolution, die out, does not in the opinion of your committee demonstrate that the founders of scientific socialism realized in those early stages of the Socialist Movement the functions of the Socialist Economic Organization and the statement that "The state is not abolished, but dies out," does not prove that they did.

The National Secretary declared that the committee had misunderstood his position on the controversy matter. He declared that he did not impute to Marx and Engels the conception of industrial unionism as an indispensable means for the accomplishment of the social revolution. He stated it as his belief (in answer to a direct question by B. Reinstein) that Marx and Engels regarded it possible to reorganize society on industrial lines after the success of the revolution, and as soon as the state had "died out." He referred to his answer to the Editor (see pp. 72 (?) to 74 (?)) in which he (the secretary) gives Comrade

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De Leon full credit for having shown how necessary it is that the workers organize right now in order to ensure a successful revolution. He admitted, however, that one of the passages objected to by the Editor in the letter to Fritz Platten, if read alone, might justify such an interpretation as the committee put on it.

Therefore we recommend that the Appeal of the Editor of the *Weekly People* be sustained.

[Signed] Alb. Schnabel

After considerable discussion, the previous question was called for. Carried.

The committee's recommendation was concurred in.

Adjournment was taken at 11:15 P.M.

## FIFTH DAY'S SESSION, WEDNESDAY, MAY 3

The convention was called to order by Chairman Gillhaus in Room No. 510 of the World Bldg.<sup>1</sup>

The following delegates did not respond to the roll call: Kinsalás, Wiest, Havascy, Flack, Mazanek, Procum, Seaholm, Fuerstenberg, Malmberg, Udovicki and Lipshutz.

The minutes of the Tuesday's session were adopted.

A. Reimer was elected chairman and D. Munro vice-chairman.

L. Hosman withdrew as alternate delegate to Unity Conference and F. Zermann of Chicago was nominated in his stead.

The Committee on Constitution was discharged.

The Committee on Party Press and Literature was discharged.

### Reports of Committees.

#### COMMITTEE ON MEMORIAL RESOLUTIONS

The Committee on Memorial Resolutions had no report to offer. They were of the opinion that if we mention the names of some of our departed comrades and not of others, the families and relatives of those who are not mentioned would naturally feel slighted, and that it would be best not to draw up special memorial resolutions. The convention concurred in the views expressed by the committee and, therefore, no action was taken.

The Committee on Organization and National Campaign was discharged.

### Resolutions

#### RESOLUTION ON PREPAREDNESS

Moved by Reinstein that the Resolution on Preparedness be reconsidered. The motion carried.

Reinstein then offered an amendment that another paragraph be added, which read as follows:

“The Socialist Labor Party also holds that pending the time of the complete overthrow of the capitalist wage system, the working classes of the world will not be in a position to make wars impossible, no matter how much they may be imbued with the spirit and ideas of internationalism, anti-militarism and anti-patriotism, unless they build up in their respective countries economic organizations on revolutionary industrial union lines.

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<sup>1</sup> [Convening time not recorded.—R.B.]

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These organizations in order to be effective for the purpose must be sufficiently strong to enable the workers,—in case their governments attempt again to plunge the world into war—to prevent mobilization of troops, ammunitions and other war supplies by paralyzing the mines, and all means of communication, transportation and all industries where ammunition and other war supplies are manufactured.”

The amendment was unanimously adopted. The resolution with the amendment as accepted by the convention reads:

“Whereas, The conflict of economic interests of groups of capitalists in different countries that are compelled to seek foreign markets and to attempt to dominate the world market, makes war between nations actual or ever imminent, and

“Whereas, The workers are exploited and robbed in times of peace at home, and in times of war are compelled to slaughter their fellow workers in other lands in order to force a market for the wealth produced by them but of which they are robbed by the capitalists; and

“Whereas, The working class can have no possible interest in the quarrels of the robber class over division or disposition of the wealth stolen from the workers; and no set of circumstances can justify the sending of one country’s proletariat to slaughter the proletariat of another country in defense of capitalism in any form whatever; and

“Whereas, Under the rule of capitalism as expressed in government by the Political State there are but two Nations—the working class and the Capitalist Class; and as, broadly speaking, the interests of the capitalist class are common internationally, so are the interests of the workers common internationally;

{“}Therefore, We recognize in the military ‘preparedness’ program of the owning class a movement hostile to the interests and lives of the working people and maintain that the only ‘national defense’ program worthy of the workers’ attention is the kind that contemplates defense of their own class interests against the only real enemy, which is the capitalist class, irrespective of country; and to prepare by organization politically and industrially to seize the power of government and take possession of industries in all countries to the end that socialism shall be established, thus establishing community of economic interests of the peoples, of all countries and races, which must result in abolishing wars together with the cause of wars, forever.

“The Socialist Labor Party also holds that pending the time of the complete overthrow of the capitalist wage system, the working classes of the world will not be in a position to make wars

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impossible, no matter how much they may be imbued with the spirit and ideas of internationalism, anti-militarism and anti-patriotism, unless they build up in their respective countries economic organizations on revolutionary industrial union lines. These organizations in order to be effective for the purpose must be sufficiently strong to enable the workers,—in case their governments attempt again to plunge the world into war—to prevent mobilization of troops, ammunitions, and other war supplies by paralyzing the mines, and all means of communication, transportation and all industries where ammunition and other war supplies are manufactured.”

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Moved by Seidel that the convention take up for consideration the question of publishing in book form the articles written by Comrade Katz in *The People* under the caption “With De Leon since ’89.”

Amendment was offered by Reinstein that “the National Office of the S.L.P. ascertain the probable price of a copy of Katz’s book *With D. Leon Since ’89*(; ) that National Secretary gather from the Sections information as to how many copies apportionately, they would be able to sell, and, if they deem it feasible, the National Office be authorized to print the same as soon as possible.” The motion carried.

In memory of our departed comrades the convention rose.

Moved by Reinstein that {the} “convention concur with the general ideas expressed in the report of the Editor of the *Weekly People*, wherein he urges that S.L.P. members, who are compelled to belong to craft unions, make use of every possible opportunity to oppose not only outside of craft unions, but also inside of the same, the nefarious work of corrupt union leaders and their policies, and to agitate for constructive principles of socialism and industrial unionism.” The motion carried.

Moved by Hanson that the Editor’s report as a whole be adopted. Carried.

Editor Seidel of {the} *Weekly People* requested that his reference to his controversy with the Sub-Committee of the N.E.C. be stricken from his report.

The Editor also stated that the following passage in the N.E.C. report to the convention should be stricken out:

“The Party in taking this position (i.e., that the political state cannot conduct the processes of production) is strictly in line with the position of the founders of scientific socialism. As we know both Marx and Engels point to the demise of the political

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state, the latter specifically stating that 'The government of persons is replaced by the administration of things,' and that the state 'dies out.'"

In explanation of his request the Editor referred to the decision of the convention the preceding night. The National Secretary stated that he agreed with the Editor, that he regarded the request of the Editor a logical one, since the convention had gone on record as being not in line (?) with Marx and Engels on that point. Accordingly, the passage was struck out.

### Election of National Officers

Arnold Petersen was elected National Secretary.

E. Seidel was elected Editor for the *Weekly People*.

Reinstein and Reimer were nominated as the Party's representative on the International Socialist Bureau. The vote was Reinstein 19 and Reimer 7. Reinstein was elected. The roll call was as follows:

*For Reinstein:* Zermann, Burkhardt, Mills, Richter, Cox, Katz, Seidel, Koepfel, Waitz, De Lee, Ohls, McLure, Munro, Schnabel, Basky, Extine, Saleneck, Lyzell and Frinke. 19

*For Reimer:* Spann, Gillhaus, Reinstein, McDermott, Hosman, Nysten, and Hanson. 7

Moved by Reinstein that the vote cast in the convention for the nominated delegates to the proposed Unity Conference be mentioned when names are submitted to the referendum vote, to act and be a guidance to the members. And where members receive the same amount of votes, they are to be placed in the order of their nomination, when submitting the names to the referendum vote.

The foregoing motion was unanimously adopted.

The convention adjourned sine die at 1:50 P.M.



## *(Appendix 1)*

### STATEMENT ADOPTED BY THE SOCIALIST LABOR PARTY IN ITS FOURTEENTH NATIONAL CONVENTION WITH REGARD TO THE QUESTION OF UNITY WITH THE SOCIALIST PARTY.

The Socialist Labor Party, in 14th National Convention assembled, accepts the invitation of the Socialist Party to elect five representatives to meet in Conference five representatives of the Socialist Party to consider and, if possible, arrange for unity of the two parties.

In doing so the Socialist Labor Party acts true to the position it held in the past and to the solemn declaration on the subject it made to the workers and to the Socialist and Labor movement of this and other countries.

In fact it was the Socialist Labor Party that took the initiative in this matter by adopting in 1908 the Unity Resolution inviting the Socialist Party to a unity conference, which invitation at that time was rejected by the Socialist Party administration. And again, in 1911, the Socialist Labor Party issued the Unity Memorial, wherein the Socialist Labor Party, replying to the demand for the unity of Socialists in all countries, as expressed by the International Socialist Congress at Copenhagen in 1910, suggested that a unity conference, composed of five representatives from each of the two parties in America, be arranged for. We note with satisfaction that the Socialist Party has at last advanced to the position where it realizes the importance of and its obligation to take up and seriously consider the question of unification of the Socialist movement in America. The Socialist Labor Party held and holds today:

That there is in America, as elsewhere, only one working class to fight for and only one capitalist class to fight against, and that consequently there is no room for more than one party of socialism in any given country. The Socialist Labor Party recognizes that the continued division and public rivalry and antagonism in the political arena between the two parties speaking in the name and flying the flag of socialism cannot but have a confusing and demoralizing effect upon the masses of workers inclining toward socialism; that such a condition retards the advance of a properly built political Socialist movement as well as that of a true Industrial Union movement—the two vital means to the emancipation of the working class from wage slavery.

The Socialist Labor Party recognizes, in addition to the above, that the point has been reached in the history of America, when the very

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basic institutions and elementary rights and liberties of this country are in danger of being destroyed by a powerful militarist machine which the capitalist class of America—while pretending to be engaged in mere so-called “preparedness” against a foreign invasion—is building for its own protection against the threatening revolution of the American working class.

The S.L.P. holds, therefore, that in view of this immediate danger it is especially important, in fact mandatory, that all Socialist organizations should present a solid united front against the common enemy—the capitalist class and its government. Whatever blows it may be possible to deal the capitalists and their militarist outposts must be dealt, in order to be effective, by the vigorous combined power of a united Socialist army.

Besides, in order to advance to victory, this Socialist army must be in position to add rapidly to its ranks elements that naturally belong in its ranks—men and women of the working class. At present there are not only innumerable individuals but many Socialist and Labor organizations, which abstain from joining as active supporters any one of the two contending parties of socialism, so long as they are divided. An appeal to such individuals and bodies to join the Socialist movement—an appeal issued in the name of one united party—is much more likely to meet with a ready response than can be expected under the present divided condition of the Socialist movement of the land.

In view of the above the Socialist Labor Party, though it is conscious of its improving condition, its growing strength and its ability, if need be, to maintain indefinitely its separate position in the political arena and the arena of the Socialist movement generally, stands ready to do all in its power for the unification of the Socialist forces of the land,—all that is compatible with the interests of the working class and with the dignity of the Socialist Labor Party as a loyal champion of this class.

The Socialist Labor Party knows, however, that such a unity, to be of lasting benefit, must be a lasting unity—unity based upon agreement on at least such of the principles of the Socialist movement as make co-operation and, eventually, a more complete accord possible.

The Socialist Labor Party therefore defines in the following:

I—The **IRREDUCIBLE MINIMUM** of principles dealing with the aim, the means, the organization, and administration of the united party—principles without the unqualified agreement on which no co-operation is possible; and

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II—The MAXIMUM OF PRINCIPLES, full agreement on which may, in the opinion of the Socialist Labor Party, eventually make possible complete organic amalgamation of the two parties and their more fully harmonious co-operation.

The convention instructs the representatives of the S.L.P. at the Unity Conference to insist on the following:

I—Irreducible Minimum of Conditions for Unity:

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A—As to Aim:

A declaration to the effect that the united party aims:

1—To abolish the capitalist system of wage slavery and the consequent exploitation of the working class by the capitalist class, by transforming into the collective property of society all land and capital—all means now used for communication and production, transportation and distribution of commodities.

Comment:—No good can come from unity with a party which, while appealing to workers in the name of socialism, aims at anything less than the above.

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B—As to Political Action:

Declaration in favor of revolutionary political action of the working class under the Socialist banner, without any fusion or compromise on candidates or Socialist principles, whatever.

Comment:—The impossibility to cooperate on the basis of any other attitude on the question of political action is self-evident.

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C—As to Economic Action:

Recognition and declaration in favor of the fact that the emancipation of the working class from wage slavery cannot be achieved by political action only; and, therefore, the unqualified acceptance of the fact that it is absolutely indispensable for that purpose to have the working class organized in the economic arena on the lines of what is known in this country as pro-political or Socialist Industrial Unionism; and that, consequently, it is the duty of the party of socialism to teach the essential principles of Industrial Unionism in order to enable the membership to advocate these principles both inside of the existing craft unions,—to the extent as it may still be possible—and outside of the same, and thus carry on that educational propaganda which will sooner or later crystallize in a worldwide army of industri-

ally organized workers.

Declaration to the effect that the proposed united party condemns generally craft unionism as a form of labor organization which defeats the very objects that the workers, consciously or otherwise, strive to attain.

Declaration in favor of the fact, that the Socialists, while reserving their right to criticize and expose all wrongfully constructed and conducted labor organizations, owe it as a duty to stand on the side of the workmen whenever a [bona-fide] strike or other conflict for improved conditions of labor occurs, either as a spontaneous action of the workers or as a result of action taken by any labor organization whatever.

Comment:—That the emancipation of the proletariat from wage slavery is impossible by means of political action only, without economic organization of labor built on the lines not of craft unionism, but of what is called in America Industrial Unionism, was recognized and proclaimed since 1907 by the entire International Socialist movement, when the Stuttgart International Socialist Congress adopted its trade union resolution containing, among others, the following two paragraphs:

“To emancipate the proletariat completely from the bonds of intellectual, political, and economic serfdom, the political and the economic struggle are alike necessary.”

“The development of the capitalist system of production; the increased concentration of the means of production; the growing alliances of employers; the increasing dependence of particular trades upon the totality of bourgeois society—[all this] would reduce trade unions to impotence, if, concerning themselves with nothing more than trade interests, they took their stand on corporate [craft] selfishness, and admitted the theory of the harmony of interests between labor and capital.”

The Socialist Party is committed to these principles by the unanimous vote cast for that resolution in Stuttgart by the International Secretary of the Socialist Party, Morris Hillquit, by Algernon Lee, A.M. Simons, and other delegates of the Socialist Party to that Congress. In case of refusal of the Socialist Party to accept those principles as one of the unqualified conditions for unity, the Socialist Labor Party has no choice but to refuse to enter with it into any kind of agreement for unity, as no good can come from unity with a body which commits itself in favor of certain principles in Europe, but fails or refuses to commit itself in favor of the same principles at home, in

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America, especially when these principles are so vital for the success of the Socialist movement.

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D—As to Militarism and War:—

Recognition and declaration in favor of the fact:

1—That the navy, the army, and all other militarist establishments, advocated under the pretext of “preparedness” against foreign invasion, are maintained in reality for the two-fold purpose:

a—To protect the capitalist class against rebellious workers and the threatening final revolution of the working class; and

b—To secure for the capitalist class of various countries a better opportunity for seizing foreign markets they need so badly in order to realize cash on the wealth they have robbed their workers of at home, under the operation of the capitalist wage system.

2—That the elected representatives of the Party must, therefore, under penalty of expulsion from the Party, be prohibited from voting under any circumstances for any appropriation of men or money for war or militarism, whether on the increased scale of so-called “preparedness,” or on the scale of our present army and navy.

3—That the Socialist movement, in order to succeed, must be unqualifiedly international in its scope and character.

4—The acceptance of the International principle that so-called national defense, at this late day of international capitalism, is an anachronism, and that the proposed united party go on record as being utterly opposed to this theory of national defense, placing itself squarely on the ground of the class struggle, recognizing that the proletariat of the world has no country which it can call its own—consequently it has no country to DEFEND, but a country and world to GAIN from the capitalist class of this country and of the world.

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E—As to Administration and Organization of the united party.

Pending the time when complete accord on all cardinal questions of principles and tactics, and consequent complete organic amalgamation of the two parties, will become both desirable and possible, as a result of co-operation and comradely intercourse of the now warring parties, the S.L.P. must insist that the unity of the two parties must represent a Federation of two distinct bodies, each retaining its organization in its integrity and each enjoying a proper amount of self-

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government, and of representation in the governing bodies of the movement.

As a consequence of this character of organization it must follow, as far as the S.L.P. sub-division of the united party is concerned, that:

1—The S.L.P. retain jurisdiction over its members, scattered though they are all over the country.

2—The S.L.P. retain ownership and control of all its present property; its printing plants; its various organs: its Labor News publications, copyrighted or otherwise; and be itself responsible only for its own liabilities.

3—In the National Administration:

a—The S.L.P. elect two members to the National Executive Committee of the united party, which committee is to be enlarged from five to seven, the S.P. electing the other five.

b—The S.L.P. elect as many members of the National Committee and as many delegates to the National Conventions as a state organization of the present S.P., with a like number of total membership, would be entitled to.

4—In the International Administration:

a—The S.L.P. retain its member on the International Socialist Bureau, the S.P. retaining its own and also the third member the American movement is entitled to whenever it has one or more Socialist Congressmen in Washington.

b—The S.L.P. elect at least two delegates to the International Socialist Congresses, and retain its separate vote on questions voted on in such congresses.

5—The S.L.P. pay through its National Secretary to the National Treasury of the united party its per capita in dues.

6—The S.L.P. surrender its right to nominate national, state or local candidates in opposition to the Socialist Party, but, on the contrary, should co-operate with the S.P. in nomination of a joint ticket, adoption of political platforms, and conducting of joint campaigns, and generally co-operate with the Socialist Party, wherever possible, in work of propaganda and agitation.

7—The S.L.P. sub-divisions attach themselves, on the basis of proportional representation, to local and state organizations of the present S.P. for the purpose of jointly nominating candidates and conducting such work of propaganda, upon which they succeed in coming to agreement with the majority of the S.P.; but in no case shall the S.L.P. be forced against its will into local undertakings, such as establishing headquarters, publishing local papers, etc., and held liable for

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any part of eventual deficits incurred by such undertakings.

8—In case of failure to agree with the S.P. majority on questions of principles and policies, not conflicting with any basic principles of the agreement, the S.L.P. reserves unqualifiedly the right to advocate publicly such views upon its own sub-divisions' responsibility.

Comment:—The Federative form of unity, with all those conclusions from it, is alone possible at this stage. When a man falls and fractures the bone of his leg the bone cannot be knit together immediately. First the surfaces of the fracture must be brought in contact with each other and kept in that condition instead of in condition of friction. Then evolution and nature have a chance to do the rest, and by and by the bone grows together. Likewise with the fracture the Socialist movement in America sustained nearly seventeen years ago. To cure it, the two parts must first be brought into contact with each other and kept in contact. Then co-operation and evolution will gradually make complete organic amalgamation possible.

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In the following are enumerated some of the principles and policies, upon all or some of which the two parties, presumably, may not agree at this stage, and for the adoption of which the S.L.P. representatives in the coming Unity Conference are instructed to plead:

The S.L.P. reserves the right to advocate publicly upon its own responsibility such of these principles and policies as will fail of adoption at the Unity Conference.

### MAXIMUM DEMANDS

1—Declaration that the capitalist Political State,—composed of elected or of appointed representatives of political districts and territorial geographical divisions (county, state, etc.)—must under socialism, be superseded by the government of Industrial Democracy, composed of workers elected by their fellow-workers in the various industries for the purpose of conducting and regulating the production and distribution of wealth.

2—The exposure of the American Federation of Labor and kindred organizations as the representatives of the reactionary anti-Socialist craft union movement and as an obstacle in the path for the improvement of conditions of and the emancipation of Labor.

3—Declaration that the United Socialist Party aims to socialize, along with other means of production, all land used for the production of commodities, whether such land be owned by a big or small farmer,

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or be tilled by wage labor or otherwise.

4—Endorsement of the Stuttgart resolution on the Immigration question. That resolution declares that it is proper for Socialists to support only such laws as prohibit importation of strike breakers and of contract labor. But, outside of these two elements, it is improper for Socialists to support any laws which in any way interfere with or abolish the right of a workman of any country whatever, China or Japan not excepted, to go to any other country as individual workman {workmen?} in search of a living. That the political and economic labor movement of the country toward which the current of immigration flows should endeavor to offset the possible temporary harmful effect of immigration and turn that current of immigration into a source of strength instead of weakness, by drawing immigrants into the ranks of the labor movement of the new country, and for that purpose doing away with high initiation fees, “closing of union books,” and other such methods used by the A.F. of L. craft unions for the purpose of monopolizing jobs for the few inside of such unions.

5—Declaration repudiating the fallacy of the so-called “buying out the capitalists” as the means for the emancipation of the working class.

6—Construction of a constitution of the United Socialist Party which would decentralize and make much more democratic the present constitution of the S.P.

7—Prohibition of the state autonomy being used to advocate principles or policies which conflict with the general principles of the United Socialist Party.

8—The adoption of the general name of United Socialist Party of America, wherever that does not militate against the state laws. The S.L.P. then reserves for its sub-division the name “Socialist Labor Propagandists.”

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The Socialist Labor Party feels that by thus publicly indicating in advance of the convening of the Unity Conference the conditions the S.L.P. must insist on as indispensable for the unification of the Socialist forces of America—conditions which at this day must certainly be acceptable to any truly Socialist body—and by indicating the Socialist Labor Party’s readiness to waive for the present, if it need be, agreement on other important principles, the S.L.P. has given ample evidence of the earnestness and sincerity of its desire to do its share toward Socialist unity in America.



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It is now up to the representatives of the Socialist Party to show whether they pay due attention to the desires of their rank and file, expressed so overwhelmingly in favor of unity; whether they are likewise willing to deal with this momentous problem in the broad and liberal spirit of Socialist comradeship. If they are, then there will be before long an important change for the better in the condition and progress of the Socialist movement of this country. If they are not, then it will be up to the rank and file of the Socialist Party to show whether they will allow the narrow spirit of a few leaders to stand between them and their so emphatically expressed desire for Socialist unity.

In any case, if this Socialist unity of America is prevented this time, the working class will know the reason why, and on whose shoulders the responsibility for it will lie.

Whatever the action of the Socialist Party representatives or rank and file in this matter may ultimately be, the Socialist Labor Party, conscious of having fully discharged its duty toward its class on this question, will with serene calmness await developments and, meanwhile, will proceed with the work in hand, the work of advancing the principles needed for the freeing of the proletariat from the chains of wage slavery.

In conclusion, the convention appeals to the members and friends of the Socialist Labor Party everywhere with all the emphasis at its command, that, while standing ready to accept the proffered hand of fellowship on conditions consistent with our sacred mission of working for the emancipation of the proletariat, they "keep their powder dry." They should proceed, without any interruption or lagging, with the preparations for as vigorous a campaign as the utmost exertions on the part of the entire membership of the Party may make possible, and as one of the most dangerous crises in the history of the country, that we are face to face with, renders vital to the extreme.

## *(Appendix 2)*

*(Weekly People reports on the Fourteenth National Convention)*

### **REIMER AND HARRISON**

#### **SOCIALIST LABOR PARTY PRESIDENTIAL CANDIDATES CHOSEN BY NATIONAL CONVENTION ON APRIL 30**

The national candidates of the Socialist Labor Party in the 1916 election will be Arthur E. Reimer of Boston, for President, and Caleb Harrison of Chicago, for Vice President. These comrades were chosen last Sunday afternoon by the national convention of the Socialist Labor Party, meeting in the assembly hall of the World Building. Reimer was the Party's candidate in 1912.

Two men were placed in nomination for the Presidential candidacy: Reimer and Harrison. The vote was taken by roll call, and resulted in 26 for Reimer and 10 for Harrison. The nomination of Reimer was then made unanimous by the convention, and Harrison was unanimously chosen as his running mate.

Comrade Harrison was not present at the convention. A telegram was immediately sent to him at Chicago, notifying him of his nomination.

The chairman of the Sunday afternoon session of the convention, August Gillhaus, informed Comrade Reimer of his selection, and he responded with a short speech of appreciation.

"I deeply appreciate the confidence you have reposed in me by again nominating me as the standard-bearer of the Party in a national campaign," said Reimer. "In accepting, I do so with full recognition of the responsibility of my position. I am in thorough accord with the principles of the Socialist Labor Party.

"No greater honor could be conferred upon a member of the working class than to be the nominee of a revolutionary organization of labor like the Socialist Labor Party. I shall do my best, as in 1912, to place the Party's position before the workers of the country, and trust that with your support and the support of those you represent, we shall be able at the close of the campaign to say that we have done a noble work and shall be so much nearer the goal for which we are all striving."

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The nomination of Reimer and the close of his speech were greeted with enthusiastic applause by the delegates and the many visitors present.

The 14th national convention of the Socialist Labor Party was opened by the National Secretary, Arnold Petersen, Saturday morning, April 29. Thirty-eight delegates were seated from 14 states and four language federations. The line-up of delegates stood as follows:

Colorado:—L.D. Hosman.

Illinois:—Frank Zermann.

Indiana:—John J. Burkhardt.

Maryland:—Worden H. Mills.

Michigan:—Herman Richter.

Missouri:—Wm. Cox.

Massachusetts:—Oscar Kinsalas, Arthur E. Reimer.

New Jersey:—H.O. Smith,<sup>1</sup> Rudolph Katz.

New York: Edmund Seidel, August Gillhaus, Patrick De Lee, Boris Reinstein.

Ohio:—F.E. Waitz, Richard Koepfel.

Pennsylvania:—Geo. H. Ohls, Robert McLure.

Rhode Island:—Peter McDermott.

Virginia:—Albert Schnabel.

Hungarian Federation:—Louis Basky, Andrew Wiest, John Hovascy, John Flack, Vencel Mazanek.

Lettish Federation:—Waldemar Extine, Jacoc Procum, John Saleneck.

Scandinavian Federation:—{John?} Carlson, Chas. H. Seaholm, Alex. Peterson, A.H. Lyzell, F. Hanson, A. Furstenberg, N. Malmberg.

South Slavonian Federation:—Miladin Udovicki.

Jewish Federation:—Isaac Lifshutz.

The chairman at the morning and afternoon sessions of the first day was Arthur E. Reimer. Albert Schnabel of Wisconsin<sup>2</sup> was elected secretary of the convention.

The chairman on Sunday, the second day of the convention, was August Gillhaus. W. Cox, of Missouri, was elected chairman on Monday.

In assuming the chair Reimer said a few words upon the loss sustained by the Party through the death of Daniel De Leon, and asked

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<sup>1</sup> [The proceedings identify Smith as an alternate.—*R.B.*]

<sup>2</sup> [Schnabel represented Wisconsin. Donald Munro represented Virginia. See proceedings.—*R.B.*]

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the convention to rise in honor of his memory.

A bust of De Leon stood at one side of the convention hall on a pedestal draped with a red flag. An American flag was hung in the rear of the hall. The decorations on the whole were simple but impressive. On the wall behind the chairman's desk were pictures of Marx, Engels and De Leon, while large banners inscribed with appropriate mottoes were hung about the hall. Among these were two aimed at militarism. Geo. Washington was quoted: "They [the United States] will avoid the necessity of those overgrown military establishments which, under any form of government, are inauspicious to liberty, and which are to be regarded as particularly hostile to republican liberty." The other on militarism was from James Madison:

"A standing military force, with an overgrown Executive will not long be safe companions to liberty. The means of defense against foreign danger have always been the instruments of tyranny at home. Among the Romans it was a standing maxim to excite war whenever a revolt was apprehended. Throughout all Europe, the armies kept up under the pretext of defending, have enslaved the people."

A motto from Franklin read: "Commerce [capitalism] is generally cheating." Abraham Lincoln was quoted on Labor:

"Labor is prior to and independent of capital. Capital is only the fruit of labor, and could never have existed if labor had not first existed. Labor is the superior of capital, and deserves much the higher consideration."

Several telegrams were received and read, one from the Amalgamated Clothing Workers, Jos. Schlossberg, secretary, wishing the convention success, expressing the hope of seeing unity of the two Socialist parties and urging constancy in the fight against militarism. Telegraphic greetings from the Bulgarian-Macedonian Socialist groups in Granite City, Ill., and Milwaukee, Wis., and from the Jewish Socialist Labor Federation of Buffalo were also received.

At the opening session the reports of the National Secretary Arnold Petersen and of the Editor of the *Weekly People*, Edmund Seidel, were read. The National Secretary's report reviewed the Party's affairs for the two years that he was in office; called attention to the loss the Party sustained in the death of Comrade Daniel De Leon; another loss in the suspension of the *Daily People*; events in the International Socialist Movement, conditions of the Party plant; state of the organization and state of language federations. The editor's report took up mainly the matter of features for increasing the *Weekly People's* effectiveness as an agitational medium. One part of the Editor's report

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dealt with an objection he had to certain passages in a reply of the National Secretary to the Social Democratic Party of Switzerland, which reply was adopted by the Sub-Committee and given to the Editor for publication. The Editor refused to publish the matter because of the passages he disagreed with. He reported that he had submitted his objections at the subsequent meeting of the Sub-Committee, but the latter voted not to sustain him, and again requested publication. As the Editor still held his objections he decided to appeal to the convention. The passages in question dealt with an interpretation which the National Secretary placed upon Engels' statement, "The State is not abolished, it dies out."

At the opening of the afternoon session on Saturday Arnold Petersen read a reply to that portion of Seidel's report, after which the matter was referred to a special committee consisting of Basky, Hosman, Katz, Lyzell, and McLure.

Committees were elected at the Saturday afternoon session, as follows:

On constitution:—Mills, Reimer, Koepfel, McDermott, and Zermann.

On attitude toward economic organization:—Richter, Gillhaus, Hosman, Basky, and Furstenberg.

Party press and literature:—Smith, Seidel, Cox, Kinsalas, and Koepfel.

On unity conference proposal:—Katz, Hansen, Zermann, Reinstein, and Gillhaus.

Auditing:—Smith, Ohls, and Cox.

Platform and resolutions:—Mills, Munro, Reimer, and Seidel.

Campaign and organization:—Zermann, Seaholm, Gillhaus, Koepfel, and Buckhardt [*sic*].

Mileage:—Ohls, Smith, and De Lee.

The International:—Ohls, Munro, Lyzell, McDermott, and Reimer.

Memorial, on death of De Leon, Neebe, Brandborg and other comrades:—Reinstein, Burkhardt, and Reimer.

The convention adjourned about 3 p.m. Saturday to allow the committees to do their work and re-convened on Sunday, April 30, at 9.30 o'clock.

The Sunday morning session was occupied with hearing and disposing of the report of the Committee on Constitution. The committee reported unfavorably a resolution from the delegate of the Hungarian federation to prevent members of the Socialist Labor Party from taking salaried positions in the A.F. of L. It also reported unfavorably a

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resolution from the Rhode Island delegate, McDermott, proposing auxiliary Sections of the S.L.P. to which men could be admitted without payment of dues, but have no vote in Party affairs.

A proposal to assess the Sections of the Party for the support of the *Weekly People* was reported on unfavorably, as was a resolution to abolish language Federations and have their local organizations become branches of the Party direct.

The committee's recommendations were all concurred in, thus defeating the several changes proposed. Alterations in the constitution proposed by the committee were then taken up, clause by clause. Some of the changes dealt with the amount of money to be turned into (sic) the national and state treasuries for dues stamps. Raising the amount five cents in each case, to conform to the existing fact, which results from the institution of the leaflet fund. These were passed.

A proposed change that caused considerable debate was to hold a meeting of the National Executive Committee only once a year instead of twice, and consequently to have the books audited and the rendered only once. Some of the delegates feared this would lay the Party more open to the attacks of designing men, if any should arise within the organization. But that the majority did not share this apprehension was shown by the vote, 25 being in favor of the change, and 9 against it. The change is expected to result in a saving of time and money to the Party. The N.E.C. will in future meet on the first Saturday in May, each year.

Section 2b of Article II, was changed so as to have Sections render financial reports only once a year, but to both the National Executive Committee and the State Executive Committee. Section 3 of Article II, making obligatory the election of a new chairman at each Section meeting was stricken out, leaving it optional with the Section to elect a permanent chairman or a new one each meeting.

Section 12 of Article II was amended so that expelled members cannot become members again unless reinstated by the Section or language federation that expelled. There was formerly no reference to language federations.

An amendment to Section 2 of Article V compels all members of the National Executive Committee to be citizens of the United States, though when necessary the rule can be suspended at the volition of the N.E.C.

Referendums were limited by an addition to paragraph "h" of Section 14, Article V. Propositions from Sections must be seconded

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within six weeks, and voting must close within nine weeks after submission to a vote.

The suspension of the *Daily People* since last convention made necessary a change in Article X, Section I, which now reads: "The *Weekly People* (and such daily paper that may at any time be published) shall be official Party organs."

No member of the Party who has not been such for at least one year can be an officer of the Party, (exception being made in the case of new Sections), according to an amendment to Article XI, Section 7.

A change was made in the prescribed method of publishing and distributing leaflets on the leaflet fund. The N.E.C. is instructed to print leaflets in English, publication of literature in other languages being left to the discretion of the committee, and the leaflets are to be distributed to the states according to the amount paid in to the fund.

Section 1 of Article XII was changed to read that language federations should pay a per capita tax of four cents per member per month.

A resolution on economic organization recommended for adoption by the committee was adopted by the convention. It appears elsewhere on page one of this paper. Some delegates wanted to keep the old resolution on the subject presented to the Stuttgart International Socialist Congress and adopted by the 1908 convention of the S.L.P., but the great majority believed the new one to be more timely and therefore more useful for the purpose of present day agitation.

The resolution on conduct during strikes adopted at the 1908 convention was re-adopted. It reads as follows:

"Resolved, That the Socialist Labor Party, while retaining its right to criticize and expose all wrongfully constructed and conducted labor organizations, and exercising its duty to do so, emphatically maintains its position that it is the duty of every member of the Party to stand on the side of the workmen whenever a bona fide strike or other conflict for improved conditions of labor occurs, either as a spontaneous action of the workers or as a result of action taken by any labor organization whatever."

The platform, which appears elsewhere on page one, this issue, was adopted at the Sunday afternoon session of the convention. Three separate drafts had been placed before the convention. These were referred to the Committee on Platform, which brought in the draft which was accepted. Resolutions on preparedness were adopted on Monday. They also appear in a separate place on page one of this paper.

*Weekly People*, Vol. XXVI, No. 6. Saturday, May 6, 1916

## National Convention of Socialist Labor Party

Unity Question Debated—Candidates to Unity Conference  
Named—Election of National Secretary, Editor of *Weekly People*, and  
Representative to Int'l Bureau.

The one topic which the national convention of the Socialist Labor Party gave the most close and careful consideration was the question of unity between the Socialist and Socialist Labor parties. The consideration of this question took up a whole day's proceedings on May 2, and made necessary an evening session.

The convention's Committee on Unity, composed of Reinstein, Katz, Gillhaus, Zermann and Hanson, brought in a report on the matter. The report was quite a document and quite exhaustive in treatment. Printed copies were hand to each of the delegates. Boris Reinstein, reporting unanimously for the committee, read the draft agreed upon, and Rudolph Katz stated that there had been three viewpoints in the committee, but all had got together on the proposed draft.

The delegates then discussed the general proposition of unity and afterward took up the committee's report paragraph by paragraph. Two additional paragraphs were inserted, and in several places some passages were added, after which the report of the committee was adopted as a whole. The document will be found elsewhere in this issue under the heading of "Socialist Unity."

The Committee on Unity also recommended the naming of ten candidates to be voted for as regular delegates to the unity conference, and ten alternates, from among which the Party membership was to vote for five each, the membership to have the right to make further nominations. The recommendation was adopted, and the convention named the following as regular candidates, Reinstein, Reimer, Petersen, Mills, Katz, Seidel, Harrison, Carm, Schnabel, Bobinsky, Zermann, and De Lee. Since twelve candidates were named, the convention balloted for ten, and the vote resulted as follows: Reinstein, 25 votes; Reimer, 25; Katz, 25; Seidel, 24; Harrison, 24; Schnabel, 24; Mills, 21; Petersen, 20; De Lee, 18; Bobinsky, 14; Carm, 14; Zermann, 12. As Bobinsky and Carm were tied for tenth place, another vote was taken on these two and it resulted in favor of Carm.

As alternates the convention named Gillhaus, Hammer, Kircher, McLure, Richter, Hanson, Zermann, Olive Johnson, Cox and Koepfel.

The Committee further recommended that the Socialist Labor



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Party pay the expenses of its delegates to the Unity Conference and that the Party agree to pay one-half of the other expenses of the conference after a proper audit had been made. The recommendation was adopted. It was decided to level and assessment of 35 cents per member of the Party to pay the delegates' expenses, and the National Secretary was authorized to call for advance payments for copies of a stenographic report of the proceedings.

There was some discussion on a portion of the report of the Editor of the *Weekly People*, wherein the Editor suggested more activity inside the A.F. of L. unions upon the part of the S.L.P. members inside those unions and more active opposition to the labor leaders of those unions. On this matter the convention passed a motion reading as follows: "That the convention concur with the general idea expressed in the report of the editor of the *Weekly People* where he urges the S.L.P. members who are compelled to belong to a craft union to make use of every possible opportunity to oppose not only outside of craft unions, but also inside of the same, the nefarious work of the corrupt craft union leaders and their policies, and to agitate for constructive policies of Socialism and industrial unionism."

[The editor's report pertaining to this matter will appear in next week's issue.]<sup>1</sup>

The special committee elected to consider the editor's appeal against the Sub-Committee in the matter of certain passages contained in a reply which was sent to the Social Democratic Party of Switzerland reported unanimously to sustain the editor. After some discussion of the matter the convention, without a dissenting vote, voted to concur in the report of the committee.

The matter of publishing in book form the series of articles by Rudolph Katz on, "With De Leon Since '89," came up for discussion, and a motion was passed that the National Office ascertain the probable price of publishing and to get an estimate of the number of copies there would be a demand for.

Various other matters were decided by the convention, such as reducing the size of the *Volksfreund und Arbeiter-zeitung*, the Party's German organ, to four pages. The convention decided against the proposition.

Another resolution requested that Sections having a membership of 50 or over be assessed \$2 per week, and Sections having a membership under 50 be assessed \$1 per week, to make up the deficit upon

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<sup>1</sup> [See the proceedings.—R.B.]

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the *Weekly People*. This recommendation was reported unfavorably. A proposition to advance the dues 5 cents per month per member to be set aside to meet the deficit was also defeated.

The Committee on Party Press and Literature recommended that the National Office in conjunction with the *Weekly People* business office ascertain on a pro rata basis the minimum amount of subscribers that each Section should get in order to put the official organ upon a sound financial basis. The convention adopted the recommendation.

Greater efforts were urged by the Committee on Party Press and Literature toward placing the Sue books into public libraries, and the convention endorsed the report.

The Committee on the International Socialist Movement reported that it thought the holding of an International Socialist Conference at The Hague inopportune at the present time and therefore regarding the sending of a delegate to a conference as called by the International Socialist Bureau unfavorably. The report was adopted by the convention.

In the matter of joining the International Socialist Commission, launched by the Zimmerwald Conference, the foregoing committee reported unfavorably, the reason for the unfavorable report being that the commission failed to express an advanced stand on the need of industrial organization of the proletariat.

The Sub-Committee of the National Executive Committee was named as a committee on vacancies on the national ticket.

The convention elected Arnold Petersen as National Secretary, Edmund Seidel as editor of the *Weekly People*, and Boris Reinstein as the Party's representative on the International Socialist Bureau, the elections to be specifically approved by a referendum vote of the Party membership.

The sessions of the convention came to a close on Wednesday afternoon, May 3, and all delegates felt that a most interesting and important convention had taken place.

*Weekly People*, Vol. XXVI, No. 7. Saturday, May 13, 1916