

Forty-First
National Convention
Socialist Labor Party

May 1 – 4, 1993

Minutes, Reports, Resolutions, Etc.



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*PROCEEDINGS OF THE
41ST NATIONAL CONVENTION
SOCIALIST LABOR PARTY*

May 1–4, 1993
Days Inn Hotel
Santa Clara, Calif.

MORNING SESSION, SATURDAY, MAY 1, 1993

National Secretary Robert Bills called the 41st National Convention of the Socialist Labor Party to order at 9:15 a.m. with the following opening remarks:

In this room have gathered a small body of men and women who have come together to perform a service. The service they have gathered here to perform is not for themselves only, or even for the organization that has caused them to come together. The service they are gathered here to perform is for something much larger than themselves, and much larger than the Socialist Labor Party. It is, in fact, a service to humanity. Yet, it is a service they could not perform if not for the fact that the SLP is in existence.

The SLP stands upon a principle, that principle being that the men and women who perform the useful and constructive labor of the world have the right to assert themselves to regain control over what they have produced and what rightfully belongs to them. It is a principle the obverse of which is that those who do not contribute to the well-being of society and humanity have no right to control the destiny of the world, as they now do by virtue of their personal possession of all the things that all humanity requires for its subsistence and well-being.

No other organization stands on that principle, and no other has been true to it. Accordingly, all those who believe with us that the principle on which the SLP is founded is correct have a duty to defend the SLP, to work for it, to build it up, and to do nothing that might hurt or tend to tear it down. They have that duty just because the SLP is the only organization that stands on that principle, and stands on it without compromise.

We of the SLP believe we are right in this. We believe that because the SLP is the only organization that stands by that princi-

41ST NATIONAL CONVENTION

ple that the two—the organization and the principle—are one and inseparable. If we do not, then, of course, we ought not to be here. As Daniel De Leon expressed it:

“The man who does not believe what he says is a knave; the man who thinks himself infallible is a fool. With this explanation our answer is: ‘We hold Socialism to be correct. It is possible we err. If we err, then the Socialist Labor Party will go down. If we do not err, then the Socialist Labor Party will triumph.’”

—*Daily People*, Nov. 8, 1903

No one here is infallible. All of us have come together to do the best we can for the SLP because we know what hangs in the balance. That’s what we have been chosen to do, and I am confident that that is precisely what we are all here to do. And we will do our best knowing that what we accomplish over the next several days is important. It will be important because it will in large measure determine what progress the SLP will make in the name of the principle on which it is based in the two years that lie just ahead.

Accordingly, it is with great confidence in your determination to serve the SLP, with pride in our Party, and with the pleasure that always comes with this honor, that I now call this 41st National Convention of the Socialist Labor Party into session.

Temporary Organization

K. Boettcher was elected temporary chairperson.

D. Bills was elected temporary recording secretary.

J. Parker was appointed temporary sergeant at arms.

Election of Credentials Committee

H. Coretz and R. Burns were elected to constitute the committee.

At 9:23 a.m. a recess was declared until 9:45 a.m. to allow the committee to do its work. Reconvened at 10:05 a.m.

H. Coretz rendered the following report for the Credentials Committee

Your committee reports the following regular delegates have presented their credentials, and we recommend they be seated:

Sect. Los Angeles (1): Alan Bradshaw; Sect. Sacramento (1): Albert Stokes; Sect. San Francisco Bay Area (2): Donna Bills, Kenneth Boettcher; Sect. Dade Co. (1): Arla A. Albaugh; Sect. St. Pe-

SOCIALIST LABOR PARTY

tersburg (1): Edward Thiele; Sect. Cook Co. (1): Henry Coretz; Sect. Wayne Co. (1): Joseph Toth; Sect. Minneapolis (1): Karl Heck; Sect. New York City (1): Edward Leader; Sect. Akron (1): Katherine Kapitz; Sect. Cleveland (1): Robert Burns; Sect. Portland (1): Sid Fink; Sect. Philadelphia (1): George Taylor; Sect. Seattle (1): Charles Turner; Sect. Milwaukee (1): Michael Mahoney; National Members-at-Large (7): Frank Cline, Louis Fisher, Joseph Frank, Arlene Haber, Joseph Hollon Sr., Christian Markel, James McHugh.

The elections for delegate and alternate in Section Los Angeles were not held in compliance with the Party Constitution.

The delegate from Section Philadelphia is an alternate delegate.

The national member-at-large delegate, James McHugh, is the first alternate on the list.

Fraternally submitted,
[signed] ROBERT P. BURNS, HENRY CORETZ
Credentials Committee

On motion, the report was approved.

Election of Agenda Committee (3)

G.S. Taylor, E. Leader and J. Hollon were elected to constitute the committee.

The National Secretary noted for the record that Financial Secretary E. Barnes and himself are present at this convention.

The chair declared a recess at 10:15 a.m. to allow the committee to prepare its report. Reconvened at 10:40 a.m.

G.S. Taylor submitted the following report for the Agenda Committee:

Saturday Morning Session, May 1

1. Permanent Organization
 - a) Election of Chairperson
 - b) Election of Vice Chairperson
 - c) Election of Recording Secretary
—Appt. of Asst. to Rec. Sec'y
 - d) Appointment of Sergeant at Arms
 - e) Election of Mileage Committee (2)
2. Determination of Attendance Policy
3. Report of Sergeant at Arms
4. Report of the National Secretary (such sections as can be read)
5. Adjournment to Afternoon Session

41ST NATIONAL CONVENTION

Saturday Afternoon Session, May 1

1. Roll Call
2. Report of Sergeant at Arms
3. Report of the National Secretary (completion)
4. Report of the Financial Secretary
5. Introduction of Resolutions:
 - 1st Priority: Resolutions endorsed by sections
 - 2nd Priority: Resolutions from delegates
 - 3rd Priority: Resolutions from nat'l. mem.-at-large
 - 4th Priority: Resolutions defeated at section level
6. Discussion of Sections of National Secretary's Report
7. Discussion of the Financial Secretary's Report
8. Adjournment to Sunday Morning Session

Sunday Morning Session, May 2

1. Call to Order
2. Roll Call
3. Reading of Minutes of Previous Sessions
4. Report of Sergeant at Arms
5. Discussion of National Secretary's Report (if necessary)
6. Discussion of Financial Secretary's Report (if necessary)
7. Unfinished Business (if necessary)
8. New Business (including Resolutions From Delegates)
9. Determination of Committees
10. Referring Matters to Committees
11. Election of Committees
12. Adjournment to Next Session

Order of Business for All Subsequent Sessions

1. Call to Order
2. Election of Chairperson (if necessary)
3. Election of Vice Chairperson (if necessary)
4. Roll Call
5. Report of Sergeant at Arms
6. Reading of Minutes of Previous Day's Sessions (Morning Session Only)
7. Unfinished Business (as needed)
8. Reports of Committees
9. New Business (Last Day—only matters than can be given immediate attention)
10. Last Day—Reading of Minutes

SOCIALIST LABOR PARTY

11. Adjournment

Fraternally submitted,
[signed] GEORGE S. TAYLOR, Chair
JOSEPH HOLLON SR., EDWARD LEADER
Agenda Committee

On motion, the committee's report was approved.

Permanent Organization

K. Boettcher was elected chairperson.
G.S. Taylor was elected vice chairperson.
D. Bills was elected permanent recording secretary.
J. Parker was appointed sergeant at arms.

Election of Mileage Committee

Financial Secretary E. Barnes and the Party's bookkeeper G. Gunderson were elected to constitute the Mileage Committee.

Determination of Attendance Policy

On motion, this convention will be an open convention.
The sergeant at arms reported seven members and one visitor present.

Report of the National Secretary

The National Secretary read the following section of his report:

Comrade Delegates—Greetings:

Every so often the national office will receive a letter from a member or a section that is seeking authorization to lend physical or financial support to some other organization that has run up against a problem that they generally have made for themselves. By and large, these inquiries can seem harmless enough since it rarely takes more than a few lines of reasoning to remind the member or the section of why the SLP is here.

Not so long ago, for example, I received a letter from the organizer of a section regarding a flag burning incident that had occurred in his city and concerning which the section was asking for some guidance.

A witness to the event informed the organizer that the young woman who burned the flag "was attacked by people in the crowd while some policemen stood by and did nothing until a small riot

started. Then they arrested the [flag burner]. Subsequently she was convicted of inciting to violence and sent to jail.”

To this introduction, the organizer added the following:

“The problem with all this it seems to me is that flag burning has nothing to do with the class struggle. However, I also think that their appeal to us is fair enough. Even if we do think their flag burning ‘inappropriate or offensive’ we should nevertheless support them in their fight against an unjust conviction.”

I disagreed with the conclusion drawn by the section and the organizer, not because the flag burning woman happened to be a member of an organization that identifies itself with the socialist movement, but for another reason that was more fundamental. As I explained:

“My objection to what the section proposes is simply this: capitalism produces so many problems, crimes, outrages and atrocities that even a Ross Perot, if he were so minded, could easily nickel-and-dime himself into the poorhouse by contributing to them all.

“People who go around pulling capitalism’s small hairs, particularly people who claim to be Marxists, ought to expect to get slapped. The best thing the SLP can do for them is to repeat and repeat that one well-driven thrust to the heart will lay the monster low once and for all. They waste their time and they divert attention from what needs to be done. I don’t believe we should encourage them, and I certainly don’t believe we ought to divert badly needed resources in their direction.

“The SLP needs every dime it can get, not so it can be provocative and engage in teasing the capitalist beast, but so we can carry on our own work.

“That is my opinion, and I believe it squares with why we all decided to join the SLP.”

By itself, the incident may not seem very important, and since the section readily complied with the advice they received the exchange of letters might easily have been filed and forgotten. However, I believe there is more to it than meets the eye. On the one hand, the section’s sense of justice had been offended by the incident. On the other, their organizational and socialist instincts drew them back from making an error that, though small in itself, points to a more significant problem that needs to be addressed.

As Marxist-De Leonists trained in the school of the SLP we all know that the distinct feature of capitalism is that it enables the

SOCIALIST LABOR PARTY

capitalist class to exploit the working-class majority of nearly all the wealth that they produce, except that small portion that comes back to the useful producers in the form of wages. We all know that this is made possible by virtue of the capitalist class's ownership and possession of all the means of wealth production.

This distinctive feature of the capitalist system is the spring from which flow all the social evils that afflict society today.

As members of the SLP we know that all the blood shed in war and civil strife, whether in Los Angeles or Sarajevo, flows from the evil spring of the capitalist system.

As members of the SLP we understand that the slaughter that maims and kills tens of thousands of working men and women in the workplaces of the country every year flows from the poisoned spring of capitalist anarchy.

As members of the SLP we have no difficulty tracing increased poverty and misery, urban decay, the degradation of millions of men, women and children, violence on the streets and in the home to the same source.

As members of the SLP our training tells us where to look for the source of the increase in emotional and mental illnesses, outrageous and barbaric acts of mass murder, and tragic confrontations between the deluded and the power of the capitalist state as illustrated by recent events near Waco, Texas.

As SLP men and women we know and understand why it is capitalism that has made a sewer of our environment, denuded our forests, and destroyed much of our wildlife.

We know these things, and many more that could easily be identified and catalogued, because we understand the nature of the capitalist system, how it functions, and why it functions as it does.

And because we know these things to be demonstrable and incontrovertible truths, we, the men and women who comprise the Socialist Labor Party, condemn the capitalist system, and call upon the working class to organize its economic and political strength to rid the world of that evil and to usher in the socialist era.

As men and women who have studied the works of the great social scientists whose discoveries unlocked the door to this priceless treasure of knowledge that the SLP—and only the SLP—has remained faithful to, we know something else. We know that unless we continue to remain faithful to the principle on which this organization is based, and unless we guard this organization that is the embodiment of that principle against anything that would weaken

or undermine its existence, we would be guilty of a crime that, in the end, would rank with those I have just identified and attributed to this wretched system under which we live.

If these strike you as strong words, they are meant to. If they strike some of you as an exaggeration or as a bit of hyperbole, I can only say that those who would respond in that way fail to have a full appreciation of the enormous burden of responsibility that falls onto the shoulders of those few who know a great truth among the great mass of humanity that is stumbling in the darkness.

For example: I've heard so much this past year about the SLP being on its last legs, about our collective shortcomings, and so many rationalizations about why it's okay to jump ship and leave the rest of us "poor suckers" behind, that I'm beginning to feel like those adversaries of ours across the political spectrum must feel when they cry, "What's right with America!?" While I have no intention of drawing any invidious comparisons between ourselves and those others, I do want to remind you about what's right with the SLP, and why the only "poor suckers" are those who jump our little ship into the darkness—some of them lured by the siren call of "success."

The SLP is the embodiment of a principle. Now, you don't need to know much about a principle to know that it doesn't take up much space. It is not a physical thing. Some people think that if you can't touch or feel it, smell or taste it, pick it up or set it down, it's not worth having. They will never understand what a principle is, much less why it commands and deserves all the care and attention that can be bestowed on it. If you can't wash, polish, or store it away with your hands they can't "grasp" it. Yet, as intangible as a principle is it can be used or abused.

Once in a great while someone will pass through the SLP who was infatuated by the socialist industrial union program and the Party's revolutionary integrity, yet somehow fails to get beyond that initial infatuation. Most that fall into this category last a year or two, and then they go off in search of some other party or group never to be heard from again. Others may actually linger for years without their weakness being noticed until some occasion arises when their survival within the organization is put to the test of some political or organizational problem that comes along.

Occasionally this weakness will appear in the form of confusion over why the working class seems so apathetic. Some will wonder why the SLP does not attract as many new members as other

SOCIALIST LABOR PARTY

groups and organizations. It always surprises me when I hear this because one need not dip very far into the Party's literature to find the answer.

For one thing, the two questions clearly contradict each other. Those who consider the working class to be hopelessly apathetic or indifferent to their social surroundings fail to give much weight to the fact that those other organizations attract members in larger numbers than the SLP. Those who wonder why this should and must be so forget, underestimate, or never really understood how very different the SLP is from all other movements.

The answer to both questions, of course, is that every other organization or movement that touches on what we of the SLP call the social question—be they political, religious, or whatever—have one thing in common. That one thing that they all share in common is that none of them offer any challenge to the misconceptions, illusions, prejudices or fears of the people they attract. They have no interest in challenging them, for that would only “scare” people away. They count on and build on those misconceptions, illusions, prejudices and fears. They thrive on them, nurture and exploit them. That is the key to their “success.” And as a result they also eventually disappoint those who they attracted.

De Leon may not have had religious cults, save a species, or burn the flag groups in mind when he delivered his address on *Reform or Revolution* nearly a century ago. But what he had to say about false movements applies as well to any group, coalition, organization or movement that is based on a false premise.

“In the first place,” he said, “the tablets of the minds of the working class are scribbled all over by every charlatan who has let himself loose. . . . [O]ne charlatan after another who could speak glibly, and who could get money from this that or the other political party, would go among the people and upon the tablets of the minds of the working classes he scribbled his crude text. So it happens that today, when the apostle of Socialism goes before our people, . . . he must first clutch a sponge, a stout one, and wipe clean the pothooks that the charlatans have left there. Not until he has done that can he begin to preach and teach successfully.

“Then again,” De Leon continued, “with this evil of miseducation, the working class of this country suffers from another. The charlatans, one after the other, set up movements that proceeded along lines of ignorance; movements that were denials of scientific facts; movements that bred hopes in the hearts of the people; yet movements that had to collapse. A movement must

be perfectly sound, and scientifically based or it cannot stand. A falsely based movement is like a lie, and a lie cannot survive. All these movements came to grief, and what was the result?—disappointment, stagnation, diffidence, hopelessness in the masses.”

De Leon went on to survey the fallacies of several movements of the time, and then returned to sum up.

“These false movements, and many other kindred circumstances that I could mention, have confused the judgment of our people, weakened the spring of their hope, and abashed their courage. Hence the existing popular apathy in the midst of popular misery; hence despondency despite unequalled opportunities for redress; hence the backwardness of the movement....”

As this 41st National Convention of the SLP enters into its deliberations it will become apparent that our organization has its share of problems that must be addressed. In coming to grips with those problems it is essential to the future of our Party that we—all of us—be absolutely clear on what problems have inhibited or retarded our growth in recent years. We must sort through, identify and dismiss all improbable explanations until we reach the rock bed where we may clearly and unmistakably identify *the* explanation or explanations that lie at the bottom of a heap of suppositions.

For example: As profound and convincing as some arguments may sound about the “forces of history,” or about it not being “our time,” in the final analysis they are wholly irrelevant as explanations for the present state of our organization. It may not be “our time” for convincing the working class that they must organize themselves into one, integral classwide economic organization of their class. The historical forces may not be ripe for attracting thousands or tens of thousands to join, or at least join forces with, the SLP. However, if the SLP is right in what it teaches about capitalism, and if it is right in its observations about the effects of that system, those same social and historical forces are surely ripe enough for something less than ultimate success that translates into making progress. Surely the social and historical forces that exist logically lead, if not all the way to the opposite conclusion, at least a certain distance in that direction. Capitalism, with all its contradictions and hideous consequences has provided the seedbed

SOCIALIST LABOR PARTY

from which reason alone tells us that the number of the working men and women needed to restore this organization to its former vigor and vitality are there. It also tells us that they are there in numbers that are large enough to be found—not like the proverbial needle in a haystack, but in substantial numbers, and in numbers more than sufficient to ensure that this organization will endure until those social and historical forces are ripe and until “our time” has come. If they aren’t, if all the uncertainty, insecurity and misery capitalism has created has not produced that crop for us to harvest, then it never will.

So, what’s holding us back?

I am firmly convinced that in certain important respects we have become our own worst enemies; not uniformly so, or all to the same extent, or all for the same reason. However, when we have reached a point where members of *this* organization can without contradiction assert that the principle and the organization *are not* inseparable, there is something out of gear. As De Leon expressed it in that same address on *Reform or Revolution*:

“... [T]he revolutionist recognizes that the organization that is propelled by correct principles is as the boiler that must hold the steam, or the steam will amount to nothing. He knows that in the revolution demanded by our age, organization must be the incarnation of principle.... [T]he revolutionist will not make a distinction between the organization and the principle. He will say: ‘The principle and the organization are one.’”

If the first prerequisite to resolving a problem is understanding its nature and its source, this surely provides us with one of the keys we have been searching for. This, I believe, will become more apparent to you as this convention proceeds. It identifies an enemy and the signs of that enemy’s presence. Having identified it, having identified the signs by which we should be alerted to its presence, we should also know where some of our attention should be focused.

There are no mysterious or magical explanations for the state of our organization today. There are no tricks, gimmicks, or schemes that we can pull out of our hats to attract more workers to our organization. The opportunity to attract them is there. Capitalism has created that opportunity, and will continue to provide it as long as it continues to exist. The working men and women needed to flesh out this organization, establish new sections and

strengthen old ones are there. They will be there, and be there in growing numbers, as long as capitalism continues to exist. If we have failed to attract them it is not because the principle on which the SLP is based is incorrect. Neither is it because our tactics have been wrong or poorly chosen. The explanation is simply that we have let our guard down in a number of important respects, and to a certain extent lost faith in ourselves to do the job that needs doing.

If the SLP loses faith in itself as an organization and as the embodiment of a principle, no amount of planning, no amount of activity, no amount of literature, will save it from itself. There are, to repeat, no magic solutions, formulas, potions, or spells that can turn the SLP around. The only thing that will make it into a growing—and soundly growing—organization is faith in itself, in its organization, Constitution and procedures, as well as in its principles. The self-discipline that is born of conviction is the key. And no one holds that key but those of us who belong to and, thereby, have the responsibility, for the survival and future growth and strength of the SLP. [Applause.]

On motion, the report was referred to an appropriate committee when elected.

The National Secretary read the following section of his report:

National Headquarters

The present crisis at the national headquarters is the most threatening of any since 1973, when the Editor of the *Weekly People* walked off the job and left it to his one assistant and the then-National Secretary to contend with the problem. Comrade Nathan Karp and I have been here before. We know from bitter experience what a situation like this means.

Much the same can be said for Comrades Donna Bills and Genevieve Gunderson, both of whom have weathered similar storms in the past. Comrade Bills, who has been with the staff since 1970, was there when John Timm deserted his post and abandoned the *Weekly People* to its fate. Comrade Gunderson, who has been with the staff since 1975, has witnessed and worked through nearly as much, from the “gang of four, plus one” episode down to and including this latest chapter in the saga.

Comrade Ken Boettcher has also been through several crises

SOCIALIST LABOR PARTY

since he joined the staff 10 years ago.

These four members—Donna Bills, Genevieve Gunderson, Ken Boettcher and Nathan Karp—have stood by the SLP through thick and thin. They have seen the national headquarters safely through every storm that has threatened its existence, and now they are doing it again.

The past few weeks have been ones in which our whole time and concentration have been focused on managing the immediate crisis and preparing for this convention. There has been no time to think about the future, or what might be done to prevent a disaster in which *The People*, the national office, or both, might collapse. Every moment of our time and every ounce of our energy have been channeled into preparing this report and keeping *The People* alive until the National Convention could assemble and consider what the priorities should be and how they are to be met.

However, the present headquarters staff has neither the numbers nor the physical endurance to hold things together on the present basis for very long. This convention must either solve the problem by coming up with the additional staff needed to restore stability to the headquarters, or it must devise a plan that the remaining staff can implement.

Two years ago, in my report to the 40th National Convention, I put it this way:

“... We need members to join the staff whose good character and reliability can be vouched for. We have no time for chasing will-o’-the-wisps, and cannot afford the luxury of squandering large sums on relocating and paying people who turn out to be lazy, unreliable or without character. We cannot afford to keep individuals who have become demoralized and take advantage of our situation to ease themselves out at our expense, financially and in other ways. Neither can we afford any longer to have our hopes and expectations raised only to experience more letdowns and disappointments. Experiences of this kind cannot help but have a cumulative effect in undermining the morale and the determination of a staff that has proven itself by sticking it out through thick and thin.

“If from the good, honest and dedicated body of men and women who make up the membership of the Party cannot be found the four or five good, honest and dedicated men and women needed to reinforce and stabilize the national headquarters, some alternative measures will be needed to relieve the pressure on the staff we have. For, with or without reinforcements to the present staff, the national headquarters will have

to be transformed from the holding operation it has been into the aggressive Party-building instrument it must become if the SLP means to survive.”

More recently, when a member of the NEC wrote to express her pleasure at Comrade Jim Parker having come forward to accept the New York Labor News clerk position, I replied:

“So far so good where Comrade Jim Parker is concerned. However, while I don’t want to ‘jinx’ what I am hoping will turn out alright in the end, I cannot forget that we have had some very unhappy experiences with past additions to the staff who seemed to hold promise for awhile, but who eventually proved to be disappointments. The main thing with any job here is self-discipline, which is to say that anyone who joins the staff must be highly self-motivated. One reason for this, of course, is that I am in no position to act as an immediate supervisor in all departments, for reasons that I have as much to do as anyone here and that I have no real assistant. What this translates into is that others whose own responsibilities overlap or come into contact with the Labor News clerk position have to fill that [supervisory] role on a day-to-day basis. This is unavoidable where any new addition to the staff is concerned, since they are the ones who must do the training. But it also adds to their burdens in a different way than when they were doing the hands-on work associated with the position. So, while things look promising now, and while Comrade Parker’s presence has relieved pressure on those who formerly did that work, it has also added to the pressure by compelling them to function in another, supervisory capacity where they should not have to. Comrade Parker, thus far at least, seems to have an appreciation of the problem and appears to be acclimating himself to it without too much difficulty. If all goes well, and as he becomes more familiar with his tasks and responsibilities, he should fit in just fine. Time will tell.”

Comrade Parker, who is doing “just fine,” and your Financial Secretary, Comrade Edna Barnes, make up the balance of a headquarters staff now comprising six salaried employees, including two national officers, and one volunteer. Comrade Diane Secor, the regular subscription clerk, is still on a leave of absence for reasons of health, and it appears that she will not be able to return to work for an extended period of time.

The remaining loyal staff has done everything within their power to prevent the worst from happening until this convention could convene and begin its deliberations. The practical measures

SOCIALIST LABOR PARTY

that have been taken to enable us to publish *The People* were outlined in a letter I wrote to the NEC under date of March 26. For the record, and for the information it provides as you come to grips with this matter, I am inserting the complete text of that letter, as follows:

“To the Members of the NEC

“Dear Comrades:

“This is to inform you that, on Wednesday, March 24, several members of the national headquarters staff met to decide on the practical measures needed to continue uninterrupted publication of *The People* through the month of May 1993. The members who I asked to participate are those who are directly involved in production, including Comrades Donna Bills, Ken Boettcher, Genevieve Gunderson and the undersigned. Comrade Nathan Karp, who has volunteered his assistance, was also present.

“Comrade Boettcher informed us that an average issue of *The People* consumes 42 pages of double-spaced copy typed to ‘editorial margins,’ i.e., about one-half inch all around. Comrade Boettcher usually contributes 15 pages toward that total. By supplying a De Leon editorial, 25 Years Ago and a larger reprint from the past, the undersigned provides about nine pages of material. These figures do not include contributions from the field found suitable for publication. With or without these outside contributions, but assuming Comrade Boettcher keeps pace, an additional 18 pages of publishable matter must be written or reprinted to fill the paper.

“With these requirements in mind, the following decisions were reached:

“1. Our objective is to maintain uninterrupted publication through the issue of May 29, 1993. That is, our aim is to get by the National Convention, following which the entire situation will have to be reassessed.

“2. Comrade Boettcher will continue doing what he has been doing all along. That is, he will maintain his copy load and attend to the mechanics of producing the physical product.

“3. The National Secretary will continue to contribute reprints, etc. He will also do the editing. However, he will make no effort to write articles until he has completed the statement to the membership regarding the removal of the Editor, his report to the National Convention, and the talk scheduled for the National Convention Banquet.

“4. Comrade Karp will contribute as much original copy as possible. Shortfalls will be made up on a contingency basis.

“5. Comrade Donna Bills will do whatever typing is required, and attend to such things as making changes in the activities

41ST NATIONAL CONVENTION

and directory columns, etc.

“6. Comrades Gunderson and D. Bills will do all the proof-reading (copy, page proofs, etc.)

“7. Contributions received from the field will be reviewed and considered as they come in. For the time being, no special effort will be made to increase the number of articles received from that source.

“The preceding covers all the essential points discussed on March 24. It is assumed that unpredictable problems will pop up and that some shuffling will have to be done along the road. These will be dealt with as best we can as they arise.

“Fraternally yours, etc.”

The headquarters staff has come close to fulfilling the objectives outlined in the preceding. They have published the April 17, May 1 and May 15 issues of *The People*. Preparations for the issue of May 29 have begun. However, because two members of the headquarters staff are also delegates to this convention the pressure under which they will be trying to keep that commitment will be extreme. Accordingly, there can be no guarantee that the May 29 issue of *The People* will go to press on time. If any one of the human components in the equation were to falter at this stage due to illness or any other problem over which no control can be exerted, that issue, or any subsequent issue, would be jeopardized.

As stated, there has been no opportunity to think about the future of the headquarters operation or *The People* since the present crisis came to a head last month. If the National Convention cannot devise a plan for dealing with that crisis it must at least provide some guidance on what it expects from the staff and authorize the national office to implement whatever practical measures it deems necessary to stave off complete collapse, including full authority to adjust the publishing schedule of *The People* in any way necessary to maximize the possibility of its continued publication on a regular basis of some kind. That is the absolute minimum.

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As for the headquarters lease, nothing has changed since the general letter of July 15, 1992. For the record, I am inserting the following from that letter into this report:

“After having spent almost two months looking for new premises, and having reached the point where we were about to start serious negotiations to work out a lease agreement for some

SOCIALIST LABOR PARTY

3,200 square feet in a nearby building, we were suddenly informed by our present landlord that he had no immediate need for our present space and we could, if we wished, stay until the end of December 1992. Upon further discussion, he extended that offer until the end of our current lease, which, barring unforeseen developments meant we could probably stay in our present headquarters until December 31, 1993.

“For a number of reasons, . . . we decided to accept his offer. The notice to vacate by August 31 of this year [1992] was withdrawn and destroyed. Accordingly, we are now back on our lease, which as stated above, does not expire until December 31, 1993. That means, of course, that we are also subject to its general terms and conditions, which include the possibility that at some point in the months ahead we may again be served with a notice to vacate within four months of the date of the service. However, we have good reason to hope and believe that our chances of staying for the full term of the lease are quite good.

* * * * *

“Of course, we must keep in mind that our need to move has been postponed not eliminated. Accordingly, between now and such time as the need to move confronts us again, we plan to take steps to consolidate our equipment, files, stock, supplies, etc., so as to reduce to a minimum the amount of space we may need in the future. . . .”

We have heard nothing further from our landlord about any plans of his to expand his business into the space we occupy. However, the lease will eventually run its course, at which time we will have to make a decision. In the meantime, the work on consolidating our files, etc., has come to a grinding halt as Comrade Karp has jumped in to help us deal with the problem in the editorial department.

On motion, the report was referred to an appropriate committee when elected.

The National Secretary read the following section of his report:

State of Organization

On Jan. 1, 1992, the Party had 14 sections and 111 national members-at-large. During the year, one new section was organized at Dade County, Fla. Eight members were lost through death, 10 were dropped for nonpayment of dues and one resigned. No expulsions were reported. Twelve new members were admitted by the NEC and two by sections, for a total of 14 during the year. Eight

41ST NATIONAL CONVENTION

transfers were effected. Accordingly, there was a net gain of one section and a net loss of five members in 1992.

As of Jan. 1, 1993, there were 110 national members-at-large and 15 sections, as follows: Los Angeles, Sacramento and San Francisco Bay Area, Calif.; Dade Co. and St. Petersburg, Fla.; Cook Co., Ill.; Wayne Co., Mich.; Minneapolis, Minn.; New York City, N.Y.; Akron and Cleveland, Ohio; Portland, Ore.; Philadelphia, Pa.; Seattle, Wash.; Milwaukee, Wis. The largest section is still Section San Francisco Bay Area, with 24 members, and the smallest are Sections Dade Co., Minneapolis and New York, each of which have the minimum of five members.

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No section is below strength at the present time. Last year, however, the organizer of one section wrote to inform me that conditions in that section were at a point where serious consideration was being given to disbanding it. Some correspondence and a telephone call followed, until it was eventually decided that the Party's best interests would be served if the section postponed any consideration of disbanding until it actually fell below strength, and until it had exhausted the 12-month allowance provided for sections having less than the minimum of members by Article IV, Section 17(a), of the Party's Constitution. The section agreed, and that is where the matter stands at present.

In the meantime, however, one member of the NEC wrote to express her concern over the state of that particular section, and over several others in similar straits, and to ask if there was any possibility of the national organization intervening in some way to provide some concrete assistance to build the section back up. As she expressed herself:

“I find myself very much concerned by the recent unfortunate turn of events for Section [A]....Since I have served on the NEC for a number of years now, I was aware that the state of Section [A]...was not healthy, but now the section's ability to maintain itself is quite tenuous.

“I am wondering what practical assistance the NEC and the national office can provide Section [A]...to rebuild itself. You mentioned having spoken with [the organizer]...by phone....However, the jist of that conversation is not conveyed. Was the matter of how the section can be revitalized discussed? If so, did [the organizer] have any suggestions? Is there a morale problem among the remaining active members?

SOCIALIST LABOR PARTY

“Section [A]..., unfortunately, is not our only section in such straits. (Section [B]...comes quickly to mind.) There may not be anything that the national organization can do to help these sections until the present Campaign for Socialism project has ended, but I feel very strongly that we cannot allow another section to disband without having exerted an all-out effort—between the national organization and the section—to ‘save’ it.”

Much of the experience of the past year is summed up in the correspondence of the national office with the sections, with national members-at-large, and, as in this particular instance, with the NEC. I took advantage of the opportunity this NEC member’s letter provided to make some broader points on the state of organization that may hold some interest and be of practical assistance to the convention.

“The sum and substance of the telephone conversation I had with the organizer of Section [A]...was contained in the letter I wrote to him..., to which you refer. There was no discussion of what the national office or the NEC might be able to do to shore the section up. I simply urged that everything possible be done to hold the section together for the full 12 months allowed by the Constitution. [The organizer]...agreed that holding out would serve the Party’s interests better than disbanding, even though it might be difficult.

“Every section of the Party is in a deplorable condition. Not one is strong enough to survive indefinitely. Any one of them could collapse tomorrow. None are likely to survive for many years if they are not consistently active.

“There is nothing the national office can do to save Section [A]..., or any other particular section. Furthermore, I think we would miss the forest for the trees if we approached our Party building problems from that angle.

“The Party can still afford to lose sections, at least a few of the 14 still on the books. In a very real sense, we’ve already lost them all. There isn’t one whose membership isn’t scattered all over kingdom come. Few meet their most basic obligations under the Constitution without difficulty. None are able to carry on the level of consistent activity necessary to attract new membership in appreciable numbers, at least not on their own and in isolation from the Party as a whole.

“What the Party cannot afford to lose, however, is its reputation and image as a fighting *national* organization. That was the whole idea behind the *1992 Campaign for Socialism*. Getting the sections, and where possible, members-at-large, to hold public meetings again is absolutely essential to the Party’s sur-

vival. However, even if every one of the campaign meetings were to fail completely in terms of attendance, a Partywide effort of this kind would still have a positive effect where it is most needed, namely, on the readership of *The People*.

“That was why I was so disappointed that Section [B]...County reported it wouldn’t be holding a campaign meeting in August because it wasn’t a ‘good month,’ or some such thing, and that Section [C]...won’t be holding any because they haven’t been successful in the past. Apparently these sections don’t understand that the success or failure of their individual efforts is far less important in the larger picture than their failure to participate. The Party can still afford to try and fail, but it cannot afford to fail to try.

“Singling out Sections [B]...County and [C]...without noting that other sections also failed to make the effort in August may not be entirely fair. However, these two came to mind because their organizers wrote letters in which they made the statements alluded to above, *but primarily because members of the NEC belong to those sections*. NEC members have a special obligation, not only to make decisions for others to live up to, but to set the example. If NEC members lose their perspective, if they won’t insist on their own sections acting on what the NEC has decided, how can we hope to stimulate the rest of the membership to act?

“The important thing to get the membership to understand is the overall positive impact a *Partywide* effort of this kind could have on the readership, and the negative effect a half-hearted and unconvincing effort will have. How much more positive the effect would have been if every section was listed on the front page of the August 8 issue of *The People*! It would have demonstrated that the SLP is still a fighting organization. It would have demonstrated that when the SLP makes a commitment to do something *as a body*, as we did with the campaign, the SLP does it *as a body*.

“The readership of *The People* represents the future of the Party. The image the Party projects to the readership through *The People* is critical to the Party’s survival. The readership is scattered everywhere across the country. Most will never know if a meeting held in New York, St. Petersburg, Seattle or Detroit was a flop or a great success—and that, unfortunately, also applies to most who live in or near to those cities. But everyone of them will know that meetings were held, or were not held.

“All too often our sections think *purely* in local terms. They seem to lose sight of the fact that they are integral components of a larger organization, and that whenever they fail to act on a decision made by the NEC or National Convention, their inaction has a *national* impact.

“The SLP will never attract the new membership it needs to

SOCIALIST LABOR PARTY

save Section [A]..., or any other section, if our sections start from the premise that they must attract large numbers to their public meetings before they consider such efforts worthwhile. It will only succeed in attracting a small portion of those who are watching us, and then only if we act up to the principle that 'fighting for the right is never lost.' In other words, we can only hope to get new members from among those who we can convince that it's worth working hard for a principle, regardless of success. We set the example, and the example we set by our action or inaction, by our persistence in the face of adversity, or lack of it, in short, by our attitude in general, will determine the result. I am convinced that people can be found to join the Party through Section [A]..., Section [B]...County, Section [C]..., or any other section, regardless of what shape that section is in now. But they will join a small and struggling section only if it is struggling, *and has behind it a national organization that is struggling hand-in-hand with it.*

"People, working-class people certainly, know what it is to engage in an uphill fight. That's the story of their lives. The fight against what seem to be long odds isn't what deters them when it comes to an organization like the SLP. Assuming they are convinced of the righteousness of the Party's principles and program, the deterrent is the example we set.

"Please don't misunderstand me, however. I am very pleased and encouraged by the efforts the majority of sections are making. Hopefully, *their* example will be infectious and stimulate others to jump aboard. However, the important thing in the long run is to keep up the momentum we have going long after the campaign is over, and to make it spread."

As an organization, of course, the SLP has accumulated a great body of experience in how to conduct its own affairs. This applies as much to its agitational and educational activities as it does to its organizational and disciplinary needs. It was in connection with the former that I wrote the following to a national member-at-large:

"Over the years the SLP, as an organization, has accumulated an enormous body of experience in developing the interest contacts and readers of *The People* exhibit toward the Party and its program, conducting discussion groups and study classes, and organizing new sections. Unfortunately, not all that experience has been or could be reduced to writing, though much of it can be found scattered through past National Convention reports. A number of those reports are still available, and you may wish to acquire them.

"There are exceptions, of course, as with the Party's hand-

books on *Intervention and Union Work* and the *Civil Liberties Guide*. Several others written and published years ago, and more in line with what you have in mind, need to be reviewed and updated before they are published again. One that still seems to stand up well is the *Guide for SLP Discussion Groups*, which dates from the 1960s. In general, I believe it is as sound and useful as it was when it first appeared. A slightly revised and freshly printed copy of that guide is being enclosed.

“A few copies of an older *Guide for SLP Study Class Instructors* are also available. It is badly dated, if only because much of the literature it recommends instructors use for their classes is no longer available. However, as an outline of general principles—of do’s and don’ts—it still has value. A copy of that guide is also being enclosed.

“At the risk of introducing a hackneyed phrase, the best teacher is personal experience—of dealing with people, making your own mistakes and learning how to correct them. Your own knowledge of the Party, its principles and its program, combined with the asset of your own personality and way of doing things, are the best resources available to you.

“Another asset I would encourage you to take advantage of if at all possible is [a nearby] Section.... I am confident that the section would be happy and pleased to provide you with information, suggestions and other assistance if you could establish and maintain contact with it.

* * * *

“I sincerely hope this letter and [the] material I have enclosed will prove useful to you in your efforts on behalf of the SLP. If you have any specific questions about the material, or believe the national office can provide you with concrete assistance, please let me know.”

Despite the Party’s accumulation of experience, however, there are times when sections and members forget to take advantage of it and commit errors that can have an adverse effect on the Party’s interests. Most of these errors are committed unintentionally and without any thought of doing harm to the Party. Sometimes a section or member will realize that an error has been committed before it comes to the national office’s attention, and will take steps to correct itself. On most other occasions, when it becomes necessary to call an error to their attention, the section or member involved can generally be counted on to readily acknowledge the mistake, and the problem is quickly and easily resolved. Occasionally, however, a section or a member will say and do things that give quite a different impression when mistakes are called to their at-

SOCIALIST LABOR PARTY

tention.

Several examples of problems and errors arising from agitational and educational activities, but which also have organizational and disciplinary implications, follow. Several more of a purely organizational or constitutional nature are also included. For the most part, the categories into which they fall, and the context in which they occurred, are clear from the correspondence. They are cited, in part, for the information and guidance of the membership, but also to point out the extent to which such problems persist and of the enormous burden they place on the organization in general, and on the national office in particular.

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Last summer, the national office received a letter from a sympathizer who lives in a city where a section of the Party is organized. The sympathizer, I'll call him "John Jones," enclosed two checks—one for \$40, the other for \$25—and wrote:

"My name is John Jones. I have been attending [the] section's... discussion group series. I am a sympathizer.

"Last Sunday,... a discussion on labor unions was scheduled. Due to a peculiar set of circumstances, no one from the Party was available to conduct the meeting.

"I received a phone call from [a member] the evening before. [He] asked me to go ahead and try to hold the meeting anyway. I tried. Six of us showed up. We collected \$40.00. We had a lively discussion. We did talk about unions with diverse points of view as to their usefulness for socialists.

* * * *

"Anyway, we all thought that the Party is not active enough in the... area. We all would like to get together on a more regular basis so that we could encourage others to attend. Personally... I think [this city] is ripe for some serious socialist educational efforts....

"We sort of decided (some of us) that a card table and some literature, someplace in the [city],... would be a fun and useful thing to do. Toward that activity I would like to contribute \$25 to cover the costs of the leaflets you would supply if [the] section concurs with the plan.

"The group that has formed more or less around the Party's efforts in [this city] are essentially agreed that socialism as per De Leon is the way to go...."

I replied to this supporter by expressing appreciation for the help he had extended to the section and the SLP, and added:

“Your concern over the level of SLP activity in [the city] is one that is shared by the national office and the section itself, and your suggestion about a literature table is a good one. A large part of the problem is, of course, that there are too few SLP members in the city who are able to plan such activities and participate in them. Perhaps a future discussion meeting could be devoted to working out ways in which the members and close sympathizers such as yourself could cooperate in conducting such activities.”

Circumstances at national headquarters prevented me from doing anything with “Mr. Jones” letter for several weeks, and more than a month passed without the section submitting an explanation of why a nonmember was permitted to conduct an SLP-sponsored discussion group. It finally became necessary to set other matters aside to write to the organizer, in part, as follows:

“I am enclosing copy of a letter received from Mr. John Jones of [your city] and of the reply I wrote [to him].

“It is to Mr. Jones’ credit that he so readily agreed to step in to assist the section as he did, and I hope I have made it clear to him how much his help was appreciated. However, the fact that the discussion meeting was held [more than a month ago], and that it was conducted by a nonmember rather than canceled, came as something of a shock. The additional fact that the section itself still has not reported the circumstances that led to this makes it all the more puzzling.

“I understand that you and [another member] had medical problems that required attention, and perhaps an arrangement had been made for some other member to conduct the meeting. That is pure speculation, of course, and it would be greatly appreciated if an explanation of the actual circumstances were received.

“Incidentally, had the national office been alerted to the problem in advance we could have sent out a special mailing alerting subscribers in the...area...”

The national office still hasn’t received any explanation of why it was not informed of the problem in advance, and only a partial explanation of how the problem arose in the first place. I have no way of judging if “Mr. Jones” and the others he mentions as being seriously interested in the SLP are being encouraged to apply for membership, or if the section considers that they are not ready for membership, or if anything much is being done about it at all. This particular section is without doubt the most unresponsive of

SOCIALIST LABOR PARTY

any to national office correspondence, and is perpetually delinquent in its monthly and annual reporting. The section is small and its membership is scattered. At the same time, however, some of its members have capabilities and they are certainly aware of the Party's problems. "Mr. Jones" letter suggests that there is potential for building the section up, but there appears to be no motivation or enthusiasm for doing what would be needed to stimulate and develop the interest that exists among the core of SLP sympathizers available to it.

It should be added that at least one member of the NEC was sufficiently alarmed by the situation to recommend some kind of intervention or disciplinary action by the national organization, though she was unable to suggest what that might be. At present, however, the national office is virtually helpless to intervene or to ascertain what the real circumstances are, or what the real potential is for salvaging the section before it is too late. It is frustrating, to say the least, but there appears to be nothing that can be done to rectify the situation at the present time.

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Last November, the national office received copy of a section's general letter, the body of which read as follows:

"At our Oct....meeting, the section passed the following motion: that the section's Agitation Committee and all speakers and chairpersons be reminded that it is the Party's long-standing policy not to invite nor permit members of the audience, at Party lectures, to make comments, offer opinions or generally use the question period, as a platform to make speeches, long or short. A question period is just that—a question period.

"The importance of this matter is self-evident. Please keep this letter for future reference."

What was not self-evident, however, was why the section found it necessary to adopt such a motion. In response to my inquiry, the section's new organizer—the annual term having ended in the meantime—wrote the following explanation:

"The section held a public lecture in October in keeping with the Party's recent campaign effort....After [the] Comrade...delivered his speech, the floor was opened for a question period. That question period was not strictly controlled as it should have been. Nonmembers in the audience were permitted

to give what amounted to small speeches on a particular view they held, instead of being restricted to asking a question directly related to the Comrade[s] speech. Others in the audience—both members and nonmembers—were permitted to answer questions that should have been answered by the speaker and only by the speaker. In short, the question period at this public lecture deteriorated into what may be called a ‘free-for-all.’

“This matter was brought before the section at its October meeting, was discussed at some length, and resulted in adoption of the motion previously conveyed. I believe all those present at the section’s meeting clearly understood the error that occurred at its public meeting, and I doubt very much that it will occur again.”

In a later letter to call my attention to an error in the first, the organizer wrote that, “What actually occurred, however, was that after the speech the speaker invited ‘discussion and comment’ from those present in the audience.” He had not called for a question period.

In response to the first of these letters I expressed my appreciation for her first explanation, and added:

“...There have been one or two other instances elsewhere in the Party where I believe similar incidents have taken place, or where the format for certain public meetings seemed to hold the potential for such incidents. Reports of them have been infrequent, however, and even those that the national office has received rarely give any indication that the section involved thought there was anything wrong in the way they went about handling similar situations.

“To a certain extent, these departures and their results may be attributed to the fact that too few public meetings have been held on too infrequent a basis in recent years. The sound procedures for conducting public meetings, which the Party developed from decades of practice, have either been forgotten by some or simply are not known to others.

“Getting the sections to hold public meetings on a regular basis again has been a major concern for the national office. The recent campaign was a success in that regard. Apparently there is a need to place more emphasis on the do’s and don’ts for successful and productive meetings. Your section’s recent experience, and the motion it adopted for its own future guidance, will be helpful in that regard.”

In response to the organizer’s second letter I wrote:

SOCIALIST LABOR PARTY

“The customary procedure at SLP lectures is for the speaker to step aside after finishing his or her presentation, and for the chairperson to resume control of the meeting to make announcements, conduct the collection, and then to initiate the question period by calling for the first question.

“In some sections, the chairperson will field only the first question, repeat it for the benefit of the speaker who is to answer it, and for the audience, which may not have heard it clearly. The speaker may then take the second and all subsequent questions directly.

“In other sections, the chairperson will field all of the questions for the speaker to answer. The choice is optional and depends on the arrangements made or the circumstances that prevail at the time. However, apart from this taking of the second and subsequent questions from the audience, *it is not the speaker's part to conduct the meeting in any way.* That is the chairperson's responsibility. The speaker should never initiate the question period, except in those rare instances where there may not be a chairperson, as in the case of a field worker or national organizer conducting a meeting in a location where no other member is available to provide assistance. And, as the section's motion put it, ‘A question period is just that—a question period.’

“Apparently, this was not clearly understood by the committee that planned the meeting, by the chairperson, or by ‘the speaker who invited “discussion and comment” from those present in the audience.’ Presumably, the section's motion has clarified the matter for the benefit of all concerned.”

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At about the same time as the preceding, the editorial department called my attention to a notice received from a section for inclusion in the activities column of *The People*. The notice prompted me to write to the section involved, as follows:

“A copy of the letter you sent to the editorial department...has been given to me. I was very pleased to note the section's plans for holding three public meetings during the months of February, March and April 1993, and want to wish the section every success in the effort. No matter what the results, however, the example [the] Section...is setting is bound to have a positive effect on the membership generally and should serve to encourage more sections to take up where they left off at the end of the recent election campaign. Hopefully it will also contribute something toward stirring up the few sections that failed to at least make the effort during the campaign.

“One thing I would like to know more about, however, is the ‘panel discussion’ listed for April...While the Party recognizes

and encourages sections to hold regular Discussion Group meetings, there has been no such recognition of 'panel discussions.' Perhaps it is only the terminology that seems unusual, though a panel clearly implies that there will be more than one moderator and, presumably, that more than one member will be fielding questions, etc.

"Incidentally, I am aware that other sections have held 'panel discussions' and that notices promoting them have appeared in *The People*. The national office has rarely made any inquiries about their nature, in spite of the fact that they have never been approved by the organization, because we did not want to discourage activity. That was not a good reason, however, and recently there have been incidents that suggest the need to remind sections of the dangers that can be involved."

At this point I inserted a reference to the motion regarding question periods cited above to illustrate the point I was making, and then continued:

"There is, of course, a difference between a lecture and a discussion meeting. However, a 'panel discussion' seems to hold even more potential for a similar 'free-for-all.' In this connection, I call your attention to Article III of Organizational Norms and Procedures, with special reference to Section E."

The organizer's response was prompt and thorough. As she explained:

"...the questions raised in your letter of Jan. 11 concerning the wisdom of conducting such a meeting warrants an explanation from the section.

"What the section had in mind when it used the term, 'discussion by a panel,' was not anything different from the type of discussion group meeting we have held with only one member introducing a subject for discussion. In our earlier meetings we found that when questions from nonmembers had been answered by the moderator and input from members was given, the meetings tended to lag somewhat. With several members assigned to prepare current events from an SLP perspective, the section thought the discussion might 'flow' better and result in the group's getting more out of the meeting. In retrospect, 'discussion by a panel' is a misnomer for the meeting we planned. One of the definitions of 'panel' is 'a group of people gathered to discuss an issue,' which in effect would mean that all attendees were included in the panel, which assuredly was not our intent.

"Referring to the point raised in your second paragraph, i.e., that with more than one moderator, '...presumably...more than

SOCIALIST LABOR PARTY

one member will be fielding questions, etc.,’ is that not in essence what does happen even in a one-moderator discussion group when input from attending members is given after the moderator has answered a question? It seems it is incorrect to call a meeting a ‘discussion group’ if all attendees do not have a voice in it. I recall that even in the formal study class of 1940, which I attended before becoming a member, section and branch members who were in attendance were often called upon by the instructor for help in explaining some points to the students.

“As to your description of the uncontrolled question period which occurred following one section’s recent campaign lecture, that certainly is a situation that all sections must avoid. Section...will keep it in mind when we begin to hold formal lectures.

“It is hoped that the above explanations are sufficient to clear up the uncertainty you may have had that [the] Section...might get itself into an unorganizational situation in its public meetings.”

In a separate letter, the organizer added the following:

“The section also passed a motion, which was introduced by one of our new members, that the national office be given additional information in reference to the point made in the second paragraph of your letter...The information is that there may be times when newer members, serving as moderators, need the help of seasoned members in answering questions. In discussion on the motion [the] Comrades...said that because of their insufficient background knowledge of SLP history and the whole spectrum of scientific socialism—e.g., the materialist conception of history, original accumulation of capital, etc.—they rely on the help from older members to provide correct answers.

“[The] Comrades...have demonstrated an eagerness to educate themselves in becoming well-grounded SLP men. What would be most beneficial to them at this time would be a membership study class, but their work schedules stand in the way....”

What follows is the body of the reply I wrote to the organizer of the section:

“I note that the original ‘panel discussion’ had to be dropped from the schedule.

“I understand and appreciate from personal experience how uncertain newer members can feel about their readiness to conduct an SLP discussion group or study class. We all go through it. However, sections that assign such responsibilities to newer members who are willing to take them on must allow for the

possibility of mistakes being made. The inexperienced members themselves shouldn't be overly concerned about making mistakes about socialist theory, or its application to the topic under discussion. Sooner or later every study class instructor or discussion group moderator, experienced or otherwise, is going to encounter a question that he or she can't answer on the spot. As you point out, however, other members participating in a discussion group can always lend a hand when it comes to answering a question or developing a topic; provided, of course, that their doing so does not degenerate into a conflict that would reflect badly on the Party.

"The point I wanted to draw to the section's attention, however, is that there is more to conducting a discussion group than knowing your socialism. The question I had in mind was one of *control over the meeting*.

"The provisions of *Organizational Norms & Procedures* that cover study classes and discussion groups are explicit about the selection of the instructor and the moderator. The provision that covers the choice of a discussion group moderator refers back to that covering the choice of a study class instructor. The latter reads as follows:

"The Section shall select the instructor [or moderator] of the study class [or discussion group] and such instructor [or moderator] shall have full authority to conduct the class.' (Emphasis added.)

"Members who lack confidence in their knowledge of Party principles, etc., may also lack confidence in their ability to direct a study class or a discussion group. Here, again, mistakes are going to be made, just as sure as snow is going to fall in winter. Someone has to be in charge, however, and the only reliable teacher on that subject is experience.

"I am enclosing three copies of the *SLP Guide on Discussion Groups*, which the NEC adopted many years ago. Although it dates from the 1960s, it is still a trustworthy guide and one with which all members who take on that responsibility should be familiar with."

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Last February, the national office received a letter from a national member-at-large who had just returned from a visit to Puerto Rico. I will call him Comrade A. Comrade A's letter dealt with several matters of concern to the Party. What is pertinent here, however, is summed up in the following, taken from my reply:

"In your closing paragraph you say that the section could not hold its first business meeting in January, as it had been called

SOCIALIST LABOR PARTY

upon to do, ‘*because* this coming weekend Comrade [B]...and I [you] will be visiting [another city] to speak at that section’s upcoming meeting. I [you] will be *reporting to them* on my [your] visit to Puerto Rico.’ (Emphasis mine.)

“I find this very disturbing, not only because of the distorted sense of priorities and poor judgment it reveals when the very survival of [your new] Section...is in the balance, but also because of the organizational impropriety of a national member-at-large ‘reporting’ to a section of which he is not a member, toward which he has no organizational obligation, and without any prior notification being provided to the national office toward which he does have an obligation.

“Please inform me of why the national office was not provided with prior notification of your intention to ‘report’ to [the other] Section... It would also be appreciated if you would inform me of the nature of the meeting at which you spoke. Was it a section meeting at which only members were present, or a public meeting to which nonmembers were invited. It would also be appreciated if you would inform me of the date on which the meeting was held... In addition, please inform me of how the arrangements for this ‘report’ on your recent visit to Puerto Rico came about? In other words, who extended the invitation to you and how it was made (by telephone, in writing, etc.) Finally, please provide the national office with a copy of the ‘report’ you rendered.

“Your prompt and thorough response will be greatly appreciated.”

Comrade A responded by saying, among other things, “that I now understand that we may have [?] circumvented proper organizational procedures by my having accepted an invitation to visit [the other city to speak] without having informed the N.O. For that please accept my apologies and assurances that it will not happen again.” To which I replied:

“Thank you for acknowledging the organizational impropriety of your visit to [the city]...for the purpose of reporting on your trip to Puerto Rico without prior consultation with the national office. However, it still is not clear to me if the meeting at which you spoke was a section meeting, or a public one.

“Incidentally, I doubt very much that the national office would have raised any question about this matter had prior notification been received—though, to be perfectly frank, the need to get [the] Section...up and rolling ought to have been the main concern of everyone involved.”

In the meantime, I also wrote to the section that had approached

Comrade A and invited him to speak without informing the national office. In reproducing the body of that letter here it should be noted that the organizer of the section in question is a relatively new member of the Party who was only recently elected to the post:

“The national office recently received a letter from Comrade [A]... , a national member-at-large... , from which the following is an excerpt: ‘This coming weekend Comrade [B]...and I will be visiting [the city] to speak at that section’s upcoming meeting. I will be reporting to them on my visit to Puerto Rico.’

“Before I proceed with this I wish to say that I understand and appreciate that you, as a relatively new member of the SLP, may not be fully acquainted with certain established organizational norms and procedures, or the reasons for them. However, as a body, [your] Section...is or ought to be thoroughly familiar with them.

“First: Every member of the SLP is attached to a subdivision. Some are members of sections, while others are national members-at-large.

“Second: Every section (or, in the case of national members-at-large, the NEC), has jurisdiction over its own members.

“Third: No subdivision should ever bypass another subdivision to invite one of the latter’s members to speak or to perform any other Party-related function without the knowledge and approval of the subdivision having jurisdiction over the member in question. There are many sound organizational reasons for this. For example: the member may not be approved as a speaker by the subdivision having jurisdiction over him, or the member may not be in good standing, or may be the subject of some pending disciplinary action of which the subdivision extending the invitation is not informed.

“I am not suggesting that any of the aforementioned considerations apply in this instance. As indicated, however, Comrade [A]...is a national member-at-large. As such, he falls under the jurisdiction of the NEC.

“Accordingly, please inform me of why the national office was not provided with prior notification of the section’s intention to invite Comrade [A]...to ‘report’ to [the] Section...on his recent visit to Puerto Rico. It would be appreciated if you would also inform me of the nature of the meeting at which he was invited to speak, i.e., was it a business meeting, at which only members were present, or a public meeting, to which nonmembers were also invited. It would also be appreciated if you would inform me of the date on which the meeting was held...

“In addition, please inform me of how the arrangements for this ‘report’ came about? In other words, who extended the invitation to Comrade [A]...? Did it result from a motion adopted by the section and conveyed by the organizer, or were the ar-

SOCIALIST LABOR PARTY

rangements made by an individual member acting independently of the section?

“Incidentally, Comrade [B]...is also a national member-at-large, and some explanation of his part in this should be included.

“Finally, please provide the national office with copies of any related correspondence, and in the event the meeting was public, of any publicity that was circulated outside the membership.

“Your prompt and thorough reply will be greatly appreciated.”

It was several weeks before I received a response to this, and when it came it was not from the organizer, but from the former organizer of the section. Comrade C, the former organizer, informed me that the “proposal of a talk was presented to the section at the Dec. meeting, and then mentioned again at the Jan. meeting,” but she failed to state what, if any action, was taken. She went on to give the date of the meeting at which Comrade A spoke, and added that the purpose was to “stimulate discussion in class.” From the latter, I must assume she meant the section’s discussion group. She then proceeded with the following:

“To conclude, I was the one to invite [A]... , in my capacity as organizer, and discussion class moderator. I understand, now, that [A]...did not inform you of his impending talk, and was admittedly in error.

“However, your letter contends that the Section should have first asked permission of the N.O./NEC [?] which has jurisdiction over the member in question, to invite him/her to speak, and furthermore, that the older Section members should have known this, has not been my experience since I have been a member of the party. [This section], which has had numerous speakers over the years, to my knowledge, has always contacted the proposed member directly and left it up to that member to inform his/her section. I can attest from my own experience in the seventies and eighties before joining here that this is true.

“Furthermore, when I have been invited to speak at such affairs as the Eastern Interstate Banquet, and even for the National Convention banquet, no one called my Section and asked them first. Can there be different rules for different members, one rule for members attached to sections and another for those at large?

“If it turns out that our Section violated the rules, please be assured it was done in ignorance.”

I have no time to check to see if Comrade C was ever invited to speak at a nationally sponsored affair, such as the two mentioned.

However, she was definitely in error when she stated that any such invitation by the national organization would bypass the section of the member involved. Copies of all letters addressed to any section member for any purpose—other than those of an executive nature addressed to section members who also happen to be on the NEC, or those concerning some highly personal matter, such as estate arrangements—are sent to the member’s section as a matter of course, and always have been. To proceed:

My first response to this was addressed to the organizer of the section and, among other things, included the following:

“The national office is in receipt of a letter...over the signature of Comrade [C]...Comrade [C]...states that she was asked to write the letter in response to one I had written the section. Though she fails to identify the letter in question by date, the contents of her reply clearly suggest she has reference to the letter...making certain inquiries bearing on Comrade [A’s]...‘report’ on his recent visit to Puerto Rico.

“In addition to stating that the letter was written at the request of the section, she signs herself ‘for’ the section. Unfortunately, however, Comrade [C]...failed to indicate when or if her letter was approved by the section, and, if it was approved at a regular business meeting, the date of the meeting at which it was adopted as the section’s response. (She also failed to state when the section assigned her the task of drafting a response.)

“The national office is under considerable pressure at present, in part because of preparations for the National Convention, the need to publicize the National Convention Banquet, and the additional need to promote the SLP Publications Fund. Time is at a premium for us under these and other pressures, and we simply don’t have the luxury of time needed to respond in detail to correspondence from individual section members.

“Accordingly, please inform me if the letter I have received has been acted on and approved by the section, and of the date of the meeting at which it was approved. Your helpful cooperation in this will be most sincerely appreciated.”

This was promptly followed by a brief letter from the organizer, in which it was stated that, “At the time arrangements were being made for him [Comrade A]...to speak Comrade [C]...was the organizer...and she was in contact with Comrade [A]...and knows all the details that you wish to know about. Therefore the section, at the regular business meeting held on Feb. 27, 1993, approved unanimously by vote to have Comrade [C]...answer your letter.”

With that, it became necessary to set other matters aside to

SOCIALIST LABOR PARTY

write another lengthy letter in the hope of getting across the organizational message that clearly was not getting through, either to the section or to Comrade C. The body of that response follows:

“As preliminary, it should be stated that while the section has the right to charge Comrade [C]...with the responsibility of drafting a response to [my] letter..., it should have approved that response before it was sent. The reason, of course, is that what Comrade [C]...wrote and sent in the section’s name is the section’s responsibility.

“In addition, any action Comrade [C]...took as organizer also was the section’s responsibility. The organizer is responsible to the section, and the section to the national organization. (See Article IV, Section 8[a]). In other words: Was Comrade [C]...instructed to make arrangements with Comrade [A]..., or did she do it on her own? If she did it on her own initiative, did the section approve her action when she reported it to the next section meeting? The organizer of a section is the section’s organizer, and not an independent booking agent.

“To proceed: Comrade [C]...says that if she or the section violated any rule or regulation by inviting Comrade [A]...to speak at a public meeting without checking with the national office first, it was done in ‘ignorance.’ If it was, more’s the pity.

“The rules that assign every member of the SLP to a subdivision of the Party, and place them under the jurisdiction of the subdivision to which they are assigned, have been in existence as long as sections have existed, which is as long as the Party has existed. There is no mystery about any of these rules—not about how they came into being, or about the purposes they are meant to serve. They are not sealed in a vault to be drawn on and cited whenever the national office takes a notion. They were, are, and will remain imbedded in the Party’s Constitution until amended or repealed by the membership expressing its will through the referendum. They have been gone over, reviewed and reaffirmed countless times over the years, *and well within Comrade [C]’s...personal experience*. Furthermore, every member of the SLP has received a brand new copy of the Constitution in which they are printed after every National Convention. There have been seven of these National Conventions during my tenure as National Secretary alone, and the Constitution as amended has been reprinted and distributed after each and every one of them.

“Comrade [C]...asks: ‘Can there be different rules for different members, one rule for members attached to sections and another for those at large?’ But she answered that question herself in the body of the same paragraph. Apparently, some sections and members have followed ‘different rules.’ Whatever those ‘different rules’ are, whoever the members and sections are to

which she alludes to, they, and not the national organization, are responsible for all the confusion that results. As for which set of rules applies, the Party answered that question long ago when it adopted Article IV, Section 3, of its Constitution, to wit: ‘Sections may make rules for their action, *provided these do not conflict with any rules of the National Organization. All rules of the Sections must be approved by the NEC.*’ (Emphasis added.)

“The Party’s Constitution was adopted, and has been frequently amended, for one purpose. That purpose is to enable the members, the sections, and the Party as a whole, to act in an organized, predictable and democratic manner, and to prevent it from flying off in all directions. It embodies the rules that enable the Party to work as one. It serves the same purpose as the owner’s manual to a car or an electrical appliance. It’s there, so to speak, to make sure that we don’t inadvertently throw the proverbial monkey wrench into our own Party’s works, or stick our fingers into an organizational socket of some kind. It should be used and referred to for the purposes it is meant to serve. Violations, even unintentional ones, all have the same effect. They all do some measure of harm to the SLP. There is nothing the Party should be doing, or wants done, that can’t be accomplished within the framework of its experience, as summed up in its Constitution.

“It might prove helpful if the section took a more considered look at [my previous] letter..., and at the constitutional questions it addresses. When that is done, I believe it will be found that the letter contains no ‘contentions.’

“When the section approves a response to this, it should also include a response to the specific requests made in [my earlier]...letter..., if the material requested exists. If the material does not exist, that information would also be appreciated.

“Incidentally, whenever the section has any doubt on a procedural question such as this, on what the established procedure is in any given instance, or on what purpose a particular constitutional provision is intended to serve, they should make their uncertainty or question known to the national office. The national office will cheerfully answer any and all such questions. That’s one of the services the national office is here to provide, and, like the Constitution, it’s one that should be utilized whenever it is needed.”

Although this last letter was written well over six weeks ago, the national office has yet to receive a reply.

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There are several sections that still have problems keeping up with routine monthly and annual reports. By “keeping up” I don’t

SOCIALIST LABOR PARTY

mean that they fall a month or two behind on occasion, but that they perpetually fall months behind, and occasionally a year or more behind. Last year, the problem became so acute with three sections that it was necessary to warn them that if they did not submit long overdue monthly and annual reports the national office would suggest to the NEC that some disciplinary action be taken. That seemed to work, at least for a time. However, this was not the first time it was necessary to be stern with these sections and, unless something changes, it is not likely to be the last.

I realize there are times when a legitimate reason for a delay of a month or two arises with a particular section that is usually prompt in submitting constitutionally required reports. When that happens, the organizer of the delinquent section can generally be counted on to explain the delay, and most often the reason is a perfectly legitimate and understandable one. However, there are other occasions when unnecessary and even protracted delays are not explained, or have no explanation beyond simple procrastination. Last October, for example, the organizer of one section sent in a batch of activity reports for the preceding eight or nine months, and asked to be forgiven for the delay. However, he offered absolutely no explanation for it—an omission that prompted me to write him, as follows:

“You ask to be forgiven for submitting section activity reports dating back as far as last February, yet offer no explanation for the delay. It is not within my authority to forgive violations of the Party’s Constitution, and even if it were I would not exercise it without what I considered to be good cause.

“Section activity reports are simple to fill out. There is nothing complicated, time consuming or demanding about them. They only require a few moments’ time, and can usually be filled in immediately following a business meeting. The failure to submit them in a timely fashion not only violates the Party’s Constitution and suggests a measure of indifference toward the Party’s organizational integrity, it also adds to the workload of a small and already overburdened national office staff.

“I cannot forgive you for what, without an explanation, appears to be nothing more than negligence, and negligence that does harm to the SLP. Rather, I would ask you to think about the effect these unexplained delays have on the Party and on the staff, and to resolve to do better in the future.

“I am also puzzled by the reason you give for the section not holding a business meeting in August. It makes no sense that a section would not meet just because the financial secretary could

not attend. If his absence, or the absence of any member, made it impossible to meet with the minimum of three members necessary, as provided by the Party's Constitution, it would be understandable because it would be unavoidable. But the reason you give is not sufficient. After all, ours is a political organization that is supposed to be planning and conducting political activities. Meeting to make those plans, to assess the results of activity conducted and to be informed on Party matters, are infinitely more important than a report on the debits and credits of a treasury that consists of a few hundred dollars. If a section can fail to meet once a month as the Constitution requires simply because there won't be a financial report, I would say that that section's priorities have gotten out of order and need to be reassessed."

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A number of problems arose this year in connection with the election of delegates to this convention. Several sections made procedural errors that required new elections to be held, or made it incumbent upon the national office to bring them to your attention. You have dealt with them as you believed best.

However, another set of problems related to the election of delegates was not brought to your attention. They fell into a different category, i.e., they were not of a procedural or constitutional nature. What I am referring to is the fact that it was very difficult to convince a sufficient number of national members-at-large to respond to the general letter calling upon them to make themselves available for nomination and election. It was so difficult, in fact, that it eventually proved necessary to bypass nominations completely and to submit the names of those who did make themselves available directly to a vote.

Every national member-at-large received the general letters the national office sent out appealing for a response that would demonstrate their interest and concern for the Party's welfare. Some who failed to respond by making their names available had legitimate reasons for withholding themselves from consideration. While age and health were decisive where several were concerned, that was not the problem with the majority. As I wrote when responding to one member-at-large who wrote to explain why her own health would not permit her to accept nomination or election:

"Your personal circumstances, at least in general, are known here, and I had no expectation that you would find it possible to make your name available as a possible delegate to the 1993 Na-

SOCIALIST LABOR PARTY

tional Convention. I wish it could be otherwise, but I understand and appreciate why it cannot be.

“Still, it would be presumptuous of me to make a decision of that kind for any member, regardless of what I may know about their health and other circumstances. Furthermore, it is incumbent upon me to keep all the national members-at-large informed of matters that affect them generally, or specifically. That’s why you were included when the letter of January 7 was sent out. I only wish that that letter could have been one reporting some positive achievement for the Party, rather than one admonishing the members-at-large as a body for their seeming indifference.

“There are more than enough national members-at-large whose knowledge of the Party, *and whose health and personal circumstances will permit it*, to respond to the letter of January 7, to attend to the Party’s needs and to ensure that the 1993 National Convention is a productive and successful gathering. The large majority certainly are in good enough health at least to respond to that letter, as you did, to explain why they might not be able to make themselves available. Regrettably, only two have responded to date—and you are one of the two. I don’t know if this is explained by a lack of common courtesy, by personal embarrassment among those who are physically and otherwise capable, or simple indifference. If I don’t hear from many more members-at-large within the next six or seven days, it will be a grave disappointment for me. More important, it could have a serious effect on the Party’s interests.

“Let’s hope that more of the members-at-large are moved to respond and, for the Party’s sake, that those who are able come forward”.

A full delegation of national members-at-large was eventually elected. However, it took some doing, and is one more indication of why the problem of drawing this large body of members closer to the organization is a source of increasing concern, and why it should be given serious consideration by this convention.

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The preceding does not exhaust the quarry of organizational problems of various kinds that have arisen since the Party’s last National Convention two years ago. They are only a sampling, and could be added to at considerable length. One reason I have placed them before you (they were chosen at random) is to alert you to the danger they pose to the Party’s capacity to function as a coherent organizational entity, and as a reminder of the importance of what De Leon meant when he said:

41ST NATIONAL CONVENTION

“No organization will inspire the outside masses with respect that will not insist upon and enforce discipline within its own ranks. If you allow your own members to play monkeyshines with the party, the lookers-on, who belong in this camp, will justly believe that you will at some critical moment allow capitalism to play monkeyshines with you; they will not respect you, and their accession to your ranks will be delayed.”

—*Reform or Revolution*

MEMBERSHIP CHANGES (1992)

Sect.	Admit	Died	Drop	Resign	Expel	Transfers		Net
						In	Out	
L.A.	0	3	1	0	0	0	0	-4
Sacto	0	0	0	0	0	1	1	0
SFBA	0	0	2	0	0	2	0	0
St Pete	0	0	0	0	0	0	2	-2
Cook Co	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	+1
Wayne	0	1	0	0	0	1	0	0
Mpls	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	-1
NYC	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	-1
Akron	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	-1
Cleve	1	0	0	0	0	1	0	+2
Portlnd	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	-1
Phila	1	0	0	1	0	0	0	0
Seattle	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	-1
Milw	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	-1
Subtotl	2	7	6	1	0	6	3	-9
MAL	12	1	4	0	0	2	5	+4
TOTALS	14	8	10	1	0	8	8	-5

On motion, the report was referred to an appropriate committee when elected.

A 10-minute recess was declared at 12:40 p.m. Reconvened at 12:55 p.m.

The National Secretary proceeded to read the following section of his report:

1992 Campaign for Socialism

The *1992 Campaign for Socialism* was a success. Getting it started was something like trying to get a teenager out of bed a little too early in the day to suit his fancy. But, once we got the SLP going, it did just fine.

However, the *1992 Campaign for Socialism* was not the 1932, or the 1952, or even the 1972 national campaign—and members who allow themselves to fall into the trap of making the comparison are doing themselves, and the Party, a disservice. For, in spite of the illustration used to open the door on this subject, the SLP is not made up *entirely* of blushing young faces with the gleam of *innocent* enthusiasm still sparkling in their eyes. A large percentage of the membership—and I'm not betraying any secret here—are seasoned veterans of the movement. I say a large percentage, and not a majority, because that is the fact. Unfortunately, however, many of the younger members, and many national members-at-large of all ages, did not participate as much as they should have, and the *1992 Campaign for Socialism* suffered for it. Much more could have been accomplished had more of the younger members and members-at-large roused themselves to get involved—and that's a shame.

So as not to be misunderstood, however, it should be added that the Party also has younger members and members-at-large who are as devoted and clear in their understanding of what's at stake as do the seasoned veterans and those who have the advantage of belonging to a section. Some are active, and where they are they often do good work. Too many are not active, however, and while this is not a new problem, it is one that will eventually have to be dealt with if we are to build on the momentum we succeeded in building up during the campaign.

The *1992 Campaign for Socialism* was a successful undertaking for the SLP because we accomplished most of what we set out to accomplish. We set specific goals for the national office, *The People* and the membership—and we achieved most of them. We did not set what we knew would be unattainable goals, because we knew that failure would only dampen our spirits and compound our problems. However, neither did we set goals that were below our potential, that wouldn't require an effort, or would be greeted with "ho-hum" derision. Had we done that there would have been no risk of failure, and without that element of risk there would be no

chance to reap the reward of a success that had to be striven for and, if successfully striven for, yield the greater dividend we were after—a Partywide sense of accomplishment; a building of our confidence; a lasting enthusiasm to propel us on after the campaign was over and done with. We set what we believed were realistic goals, worthy of our potential, yet tempered by the realization that there was some stiffness in the Party’s joints and some cotton in its mind. We needed to stretch those muscles and exercise that mind to prove to ourselves that we still know how to do things and how to do them right. And we did.

Six years ago, in my report to the 38th National Convention, I said:

“It should be self-evident that if the SLP is not available on the local level to discuss its views and policies, or to teach its program and principles to those who exhibit an interest we will not attract enough new members to rebuild our sections.”

That was not a new or particularly profound thought, but it was and remains true. It was prompted in large part by the fact that the number and frequency of SLP public meetings had been declining steadily for a number of years, and by the fear that if we failed to stop and reverse that trend the organization would soon go the way of the Shakers.

It was that same concern that prompted me to repeat the same message in my report to the 39th National Convention held four years ago.

“Why sections don’t hold more study classes, and what can be done to reverse the trend before they vanish entirely, is something this convention should consider. No doubt any number of possible reasons can be suggested to explain their virtual disappearance—from lack of attendance, to lack of appropriate and up-to-date materials, lack of competent instructors, inadequate publicity, etc., etc. Whether these obstacles are as real and difficult to contend with as the numbers seem to suggest should...receive a share of this convention’s attention. If the obstacles can be met and overcome, at least by some of the larger sections, the effect could only be a positive one.

* * * *

“If, as is often suggested, the indoor lecture is doomed to follow the outdoor meeting into extinction, there may not be much to gain by mourning over its demise. But, there is a great deal to lose if this also means that the SLP is to be rendered entirely

SOCIALIST LABOR PARTY

mute on the local level. Without lectures, study classes and discussion groups—or their equivalent—some new medium will have to be developed. The first thing that pops to mind, of course, is the videotape. Yet, whatever potential this may have for spreading the SLP message, it can hardly be expected to provide the same training ground for SLP speakers and instructors that lectures, study classes and discussion groups provide.

“New devices like videotape should be added to the SLP arsenal for whatever real potential they have. However, it is a fact that people in appreciable and even large numbers do participate in political events, such as demonstrations, conferences, etc., that require them to leave TV and VCR behind. Why we fail to attract our ‘fair share’ of what are presumably politically motivated people is another question that should be discussed by this convention. If our methods are at fault, then new methods should be decided on. If we are at fault, then we must do better. What we cannot afford, however, is to ignore the problem.”

Two years ago, at the 40th National Convention, it was necessary to return to the same subject again.

“Sections and national members-at-large conducted 198 public meetings of various kinds in 1989–1990, including study class and discussion group sessions, lectures, and...social gatherings... This figure represents a 20 percent decline from the 248 similar gatherings conducted during the preceding two years.

* * * *

“This decline in the number and frequency of regularly scheduled public meetings is not of recent origin, of course, and delegates to previous conventions could generally anticipate being told that the trend must be reversed if the Party is to remain visible and accessible on the local level. No one can argue that SLP sections are apt to succeed in attracting new membership if they are not visible and accessible to the workers who respond to our leaflets and to our official organ.

“However, if study classes, discussion groups and public lectures held to teach SLP principles or demonstrate their application cannot be conducted on a regular basis by a majority of sections, which the evidence suggests to be the case, some substitute that a majority can engage in on a regular basis must be devised or settled on. We cannot afford to simply let things drift, or stand by watching as members become discouraged after attempts to conduct study classes, discussion groups or public lectures that fail to attract the kind of attendance that would have the opposite effect.”

41ST NATIONAL CONVENTION

It is only against this background that we can fully appreciate why the *1992 Campaign for Socialism* was a success, and why the membership can take pride in what was accomplished.

In January 1992, I wrote the NEC saying, in effect, that the time had come to take the bull by the horns.

“Though there will be no SLP ticket in this year’s presidential election campaign, it was felt that a concerted effort must be made to take full advantage of the campaign in every other way open to us. Among other things, we aim to prepare a number of new leaflets on campaign ‘issues’—with special emphasis on the economy—and to stimulate their widespread circulation by the membership, readers of *The People*, and all others who are concerned enough to lend a hand. The idea is to promote the program, as distinct from candidates, and to engage as many of the Party’s friends and supporters as possible in the effort. Our recent experience with the *War in the Gulf!* leaflet encourages us in the belief that a similar ‘push’ during the election campaign will generate as great, if not a greater, response.”

When the NEC met in Session last May, it responded by adopting a resolution calling upon the Party to conduct the *1992 Campaign for Socialism*, and by setting certain goals for it. What the NEC said, in part, was this:

“This is a time of political turbulence in the United States, of massive unemployment, of widespread apathy and distrust towards capitalism’s politicians and politics. It is a time that offers a unique opportunity for the Party to acquaint millions of our working class with the SLP alternative.

“This being a presidential election year, the opportunity can be meaningfully pursued by a coordinated effort on the part of all elements of the Party and with assistance from SLP friends to meet the challenge and get good results.”

The NEC then went on to adopt a program of activities for the campaign, and to resolve that:

“1. The sections and national members-at-large be notified that special Campaign for Socialism leaflets are in preparation and are intended for mass distribution.

“2. The sections and national members-at-large are called upon to pledge to distribute each month a specific number of new campaign leaflets.

“3. *The People*’s first issues in August, September and October be designated as special campaign issues to feature a special

SOCIALIST LABOR PARTY

campaign theme.

“4. The sections are called upon to conduct monthly public campaign meetings in conjunction with *The People's* special campaign issues; the subjects of the public meetings to coincide with that issue's special theme.

“5. The sections be informed that the national office stands ready to conduct the necessary publicity associated with their public meetings.

“6. *The People* give prominent display to the local campaign meetings.

“7. *The People* give prominent display to each new campaign leaflet.”

All of this was conveyed to the sections and members of the SLP by means of the general letter of June 29, 1992, a portion of which read as follows:

“While it may not actually be possible to reach millions of workers during the campaign, there is no question that millions are searching for answers to questions the major parties cannot answer. For that very reason, I am convinced that a concerted and well-coordinated effort by the sections and members of the SLP could bring the Party and its Socialist Industrial Union program to the attention of tens of thousands of workers across the country. Such an effort would yield hundreds of new contacts and friends for the SLP, help to increase the readership of *The People*, and bring us into touch with many new prospects for membership. These are goals worth striving for, and they are goals that can be attained if every section and every able-bodied member does their part.

* * * *

“The intention of the NEC is that the public meetings, the new leaflets and the campaign issues of *The People* all be part of a single, coordinated effort involving the entire Party. Accordingly, the local meetings, the leaflets and the special campaign issues of *The People* are all to concentrate on the same general themes. The three themes or topics that have been decided on are the following:

“•**Unemployment:** *The People's* first special issue of the campaign will be dated August 8. That issue will focus on unemployment and directly related topics. It will feature the text of the campaign leaflet on unemployment, which has almost been completed and should soon be available for distribution....Your August campaign meetings should also focus on the cause, effects, and, of course, the SLP's solution for, unemployment.

“•**High Cost of Living:** The second special issue of the cam-

paign will be dated September 5 and will concentrate on declining wages and rising prices, etc. A leaflet on that subject is also being prepared and will be available in ample time to put into circulation before your September meetings are held.

“•**The Time’s Come for a REAL Change:** The third campaign issue will focus on the reasons the major political parties, the unions, and other capitalist institutions have failed and are incapable of resolving the problems and contradictions the system creates, and stress the SLP’s program. A leaflet on that subject has been written, is in the printer’s hands, and should be available for shipment by the time this letter reaches you.

“A few sections have taken the initiative and informed the national office that their plans for holding campaign meetings are or have been made. I urge all the sections and SLP Groups who haven’t done the same to move quickly. As soon as the details have been settled all pertinent information should be conveyed to the national office. Be certain to include the date, time, place and nature of the meeting planned, i.e., lecture, discussion, etc. If there is to be a speaker, his or her name should also be reported. All this information will be published in *The People*.

“In addition, the national office is prepared to design fliers and/or mailing pieces to publicize campaign meetings for any section or SLP Group that requests such assistance. Plans are also being made to conduct three national mailings urging readers of *The People* to distribute the Party’s campaign leaflets and to attend the local campaign meetings where they are being held.

* * * *

“...The plan adopted by the NEC for the 1992 Campaign for *Socialism* is the least important combination of ingredients needed for the effort to be the success it can be. Far more important is the resolute spirit, drive and determination that each individual member brings to bear. Hard work is what’s called for.

“We cannot guarantee ourselves the full measure of success the present social, political and economic atmosphere suggests is possible. But we can accomplish a lot if we act promptly in implementing the plans the NEC has made. The SLP has everything it takes to make the most of the 1992 election campaign. We have a membership who knows the Party’s program, who knows what’s wrong with capitalism, and who knows how to explain the Party’s views and the principles on which those views are based. We know the SLP is right, and we know how to get our message across when we have the opportunity. But, we have to make our own opportunities, and there is no better time for making them than during a national election campaign.

“Good luck in your efforts, and don’t forget to keep the national office informed of your plans and schedules as soon as

they are finalized.”

The national headquarters staff achieved all of the goals the NEC had set for it. The leaflets were printed and the special issues were published. In addition, the three special mailings urging readers of *The People* to order quantities of the new campaign leaflets were successful. And we also managed to slip in an *SLP Campaign Bulletin*.

I regret very much that I cannot go on to provide you with a detailed commentary on what was accomplished in the “field,” particularly since I asked for and received post-campaign reports from a number of sections and members across the country. Unfortunately, there are other important matters that I must bring before the convention that make it necessary for me to move on. The reports that were requested and received are available to the convention, however, and they should be taken into account in your planning of the Party’s activities and goals for the next two years. However, many of the facts and figures that could have been included in that commentary are summed up in the following section of this report on “General Activities.”

Before I move on to those facts and figures, however, there is one other matter that should be inserted for your consideration. It begins with a letter I received from one of the NEC members last January, after the campaign was over and the results were known. The following is taken from that letter:

“There is no doubt that the Party’s membership is capable of conducting agitation. The Party’s recently concluded Campaign for Socialism effort amply proves that. I think that that campaign effort demonstrated something else, too: It demonstrated that the membership needs structure, i.e., a ‘plan of action.’

“The campaign effort was a very simple effort, and one structured on what has been the Party’s basic agitational effort for years: distribute Party literature and hold a public meeting that readers of *The People* and contacts can attend. (If the sections were able to do contact work in conjunction with its public meetings, so much the better.) To that was added the national office’s assistance in providing publicity. An appeal to *The People* readers to help in distributing the campaign literature was also made, which I thought made good use of this resource.

“I think that a similar planned structure is what we should try and come up with for 1993. The 1992 campaign provided a ready-made theme for the Party’s agitational effort. I can’t think of what ‘theme’ the membership may work with in 1993,

however, unless the national office were to produce new literature (leaflets), and instruct the sections to conduct public meetings around the theme of the leaflet. For example, we are badly in need of leaflets dealing with the environment, racism, homelessness, etc. And if a capitalist crisis comes our way—which is bound to happen—the national office could possibly get out a ‘one-shot’ leaflet and instruct the members to hold public meetings on the subject. The national office’s assistance in providing the publicity for some sections was a crucial ingredient in their ability to hold public meetings, and I think the same assistance should be offered again by the national office.

“Admittedly, the above is ‘bare-bones’ agitation. But I think it important to ‘bite off what we can chew,’ and from what I can tell, this is what we can handle overall as an organization. (As we grow as an organization, we will be able to take on more activity.) Hand in hand with this is careful follow-up by the national office to encourage as full a participation as possible by the membership.

“There is another idea that I think our sections may benefit from: My own section, Section San Francisco Bay Area, has for a number of years now worked up a schedule of activities for the year. The section’s Agitation and Fund Raising Committees meet toward the end of one year to plan together activities for the coming year. The activities schedule is based on as practical and realistic an assessment of our circumstances as possible. We do not have a ‘super schedule’ of activities, but we do try, if possible, to schedule something every month, whether it’s a fund-raising social, leaflet distribution, a discussion meeting or study class, or even a house affair at a member’s home. In short, we have given ourselves structure. I might add that some years are better than others, but every year we have planned activities—we haven’t left it to chance.

“Incidentally, the Campaign for Socialism project did not conflict in any major way with our schedule last year. The section simply made a few adjustments in what had already been planned.

“I believe that if all our sections were encouraged to do the same, they would see an increase in their level of activity and would also have a sense of accomplishment.

“To sum up, I think that what the organization needs is a plan of activity from the national level. At the same time, the sections should assess their strengths and weaknesses and come up with their own activities schedule.”

In response to this, another member of the NEC wrote to say:

“I think the idea of getting more planning and structure in our sections’ schedule[s] is an excellent one.

SOCIALIST LABOR PARTY

“Last year the Campaign for Socialism did not conflict with our already planned summer activity schedule and we also made a few adjustments in order to carry it out.

“What I especially like is the idea of a planning session, sort of a rap session, where the section realistically discusses an activity schedule covering all basic activities.

“So far, except for plans for public meetings, talks, discussion or study classes, we have haphazardly done our other activities usually in response to N.O. mailings about important *People* issues that need to be distributed.

“I think an activity planning session on a 6 mos. or yearly basis would be helpful for the sections.”

When acknowledging this I felt it necessary to clarify an important distinction between what was stated by the first NEC member and how it was interpreted or misunderstood by the second so there would be no confusion on how Section San Francisco Bay Area goes about planning its activities. I believe it is important enough to insert a portion of what I replied here. It is important because it helps to focus attention on the distinction between what is “haphazard” and what constitutes genuine planning. As I explained in my response:

“The annual schedule of activities adopted by the Bay Area section does not result from a ‘rap session.’ Two of the section’s committees—agitation and fund-raising—confer in developing a coordinated schedule before submitting it to the section for approval. There the committees’ proposals are discussed under the proper order of business, and in keeping with the usual parliamentary rules of procedure. The planning and the final schedule result from the committees’ best efforts to determine what the section’s physical and financial resources are, and how those resources can be utilized most effectively during the year. After the schedule has been approved it is typed up to provide copies to all section members so they may schedule their own time in advance. Presumably decisions arrived at in this way are subject to later adjustments by the section as unexpected developments and opportunities arise.

“The point is that the schedule is developed by the appropriate committees before the section takes it up at a business meeting for review, discussion, amendment, etc.”

Shortly thereafter, Section San Francisco Bay Area, acting on the initiative of another member, adopted a motion calling upon the national office “to write all the sections and ask them to report on their members’ ability to carry on” certain activities with a view

to the information gathered being “turned over to the delegates, digested and discussed at the convention.” In a covering letter, the organizer expanded on the intent of the section’s initiative, as follows:

“It will...come as no surprise to you that Section San Francisco Bay Area is deeply concerned about the state of our Party and the problems besetting it. The matter came up for consideration at the section’s January and February business meetings. That led to the section passing a motion that a letter be addressed to the national office suggesting that it initiate a survey of both the section and at-large membership with a view to ascertaining, as far as it may prove practical and possible, specifically how and to what extent each member may be willing and able to participate in an all-out effort to build the Party. That information could then be made available to the upcoming National Convention and used by the delegates, with the assistance and cooperation of the Party’s national administration, as the basis for planning an all-out effort.

“In passing this motion, the section was not...unmindful of the fact that the national office very likely has a pretty good idea of the Party’s human and material resources. However, the section acted on the theory that a pre-convention effort to get a more precise picture and some specific responses might have a two-fold positive result. One, it could provide a material basis for the convention to plan and initiate a program of action. Two, the very effort to ascertain the human and material resources still available to the Party may focus members’ attention on the Party’s problems and lead to some ideas and suggestions for meeting them.

“We are confident that the national office has given, and continues to give, much thought to the problems confronting the Party and to what might be done to alleviate and/or solve them. We believe it important to try to get every member of the Party also to do so. Perhaps, the suggestion conveyed in this letter will serve in some small measure to promote that result.”

By the time I received this I was already on pins and needles waiting for developments to unfold in the editorial department. I wasn’t able to respond for several weeks. However, when I did it was as follows:

“The national office would be very surprised, indeed, if the members of Section San Francisco Bay Area were not deeply concerned about the state of the Party and the problems confronting it. The active concern and unqualified dedication of the membership in the Bay Area, and across the country, has been

SOCIALIST LABOR PARTY

an indispensable factor among the sustaining forces that have bolstered the national headquarters staff during some very difficult years. The staff will be depending on that support more than ever in the future.

“The section’s recommendation is similar to one that has been under consideration for sometime. However, before calling upon the membership for any all-out effort to build the Party, I believe it is necessary to come to some decision on what kind of effort is required. There are many possibilities, or combinations of possibilities, that could be considered. The section’s motion, for example, calls upon the national office to canvass the sections regarding their capacity to distribute leaflets, hold public lectures, conduct electoral campaigns and to raise funds. Toss in contact work, regular discussion groups and formal study classes, and you have virtually the entire spectrum of traditional SLP activities to choose from.

“This spectrum of activities is, of course, more than simply traditional. Wherever the sections have been able to conduct them on an ongoing basis they have produced results. They are proven methods that attract new contacts, new readers for *The People*, new students for our literature, and new members. More important, the rewards of these efforts nurture and sustain the Party’s morale.

“All these methods, when taken together, add up to something more than the sum of the Party’s activity. When all the components are pieced together, then set into motion with a definite purpose and goal in mind, they add up to precisely what the section has called it: a *program* of activity.

“The problem, as I see it, lies in defining that program and setting it into motion on a national scale. But what are the components of a program that the SLP can set into motion today that would be sufficient to lead us to the goal of attracting new membership to strengthen the sections?

“A factual assessment of the Party’s human and financial resources is clearly essential for reaching any determination. But that is not the only consideration. For a program to be a program, all of its components must be implemented by all of the sections. There is a fundamental difference between 15 separate and sustainable programs of activity tailored by each section on the basis of its own resources, and a single national program of activity sustainable by all the sections acting together. The one doesn’t necessarily preclude the other, at least not entirely: but any Partywide program that might be possible would almost certainly comprise a smaller, rather than a larger, number of components.

“It was my intention to call upon the sections to instruct their delegates to report to the National Convention on the state of their local organizations. Unfortunately, however, a recent de-

velopment has compelled me to postpone that plan for reasons that I am not at liberty to disclose to you at present, but concerning which I fully expect to inform you of by the time your section meets again on April 2.

“In the meantime, I thank the section for all the thought and consideration it has given to the Party’s problems and what might be done to come to grips with them.”

The “recent development” that “compelled me to postpone that plan,” and eventually to abandon it entirely, is known to you. However, the delegates elected to this convention by the sections should have enough knowledge of conditions within their respective sections to provide a basis on which to assess “the Party’s human and material resources,” and to plan accordingly.

On motion, the report was referred to an appropriate committee when elected.

At 1:30 p.m. a motion was made to recess until 3 p.m. An amendment was adopted to reconvene at 2:30 p.m. The motion as amended was passed.

AFTERNOON SESSION, SATURDAY, MAY 1, 1993

The session was called to order at 2:30 p.m.

On roll call, all present.

The sergeant at arms reported nine members present.

The National Secretary read the following section of his report:

General Activities

Leaflets—The reported distribution of SLP leaflets in 1992—including all 1992 *Campaign for Socialism* leaflets—totaled 212,333. Sections accounted for 179,094 of the reported distribution, while national members-at-large reported a distribution of 33,239. While the reported distribution represents an improvement of 21,900 over 1991,¹ it was not as much of an improvement as I had hoped for.

In addition to the distribution reported by the sections and members-at-large, however, 46,851 campaign leaflets were shipped to readers of *The People* who responded to several special mailings

¹ Reported distribution figures are less than the number of leaflets ordered and shipped. Sections ordered 122,500 campaign leaflets, and national members-at-large ordered 46,851.

SOCIALIST LABOR PARTY

by the national office during the campaign. If we can assume that all of these leaflets ordered by and shipped to readers were actually distributed, the total distribution for 1992 was 259,184.

One source of considerable disappointment in this regard was the national members-at-large. While there are a number of very active and determined members-at-large scattered around the country, as a body much needs to be done to stimulate their potential as a valuable asset to the organization. This has been evident for a long time, but the special effort the SLP put into its *1992 Campaign for Socialism* served to underscore the problem. As I had to respond to one NEC member who asked, "how much did the Campaign for Socialism motivate the members-at-large?"

"There is little evidence that the *1992 Campaign for Socialism* did much to motivate the majority of national members-at-large. For example: If you look at the number of campaign leaflets shipped to sections, members-at-large and nonmember readers of *The People*, as reported in the third Campaign Bulletin, i.e., through October 1992, you'll find the following figures:

1992 Campaign Leaflets Shipped

Sections =	122,500
MALs =	41,026
Readers =	47,051
Total =	210,377

"The members-at-large, who now comprise about 44 percent of the total membership, ordered less than 20 percent of the leaflets shipped, while the sections, representing 56 percent of the membership, accounted for more than 58 percent. This breaks down to about 373 leaflets for each member-at-large and 863 for each section member. In 1990 the members-at-large ordered 28 percent of all leaflets shipped.

"What can be done to stimulate and encourage this growing section of the membership? What can the national office do to assist the members-at-large? I've posed questions similar to these at past National Conventions in the belief that the seven or eight at-large delegates present would be able to offer some insights and suggestions based on their own experiences, sense of isolation, etc. Nothing has ever come of it. But there's no choice except to raise it again this year. The Party is too small to limp along on one leg."

Hopefully, this will suffice to place this particular source of concern before the convention, and to encourage the delegates elected by the members-at-large to assist the Party in developing ways in

which to contend with it.

The People—Sections and members also reported a distribution of 94,206 copies of *The People* in 1992. Sections accounted for 88,183 of the total. This figure also represents a small improvement over the 1991 distribution of about 90,000.

Newsstands—Ninety-four self-service newsstands were in operation as of Dec. 31, 1992, compared to 87 on Jan. 1, 1992, and the number of commercial newsstands carrying *The People* was increased from 14 to 22 during the year.

Public Meetings—Although the increased distribution of leaflets in 1992 was something less than the national office had looked for, our expectations were more than matched when it came to the number and variety of public meetings held during the year.

The sections and national members-at-large sponsored 175 public meetings, including study class and discussion group sessions, lectures and fund-raising social affairs. This figure represents an increase of 75 percent over 1991, and was the Party's best overall performance in this regard since 1985, when 162 public meetings were reported.

There can be no question about what accounts for this impressive increase in SLP activity. Without doubt it was a direct product of the *1992 Campaign for Socialism*, and of the enthusiasm most sections and members brought to that effort.

More than 70 percent of all public meetings held in 1992 were lectures or study class and discussion group sessions, compared to 49 percent the year before. Yet, there was no appreciable decline in the number of fund-raising social gatherings. Forty-nine SLP socials were sponsored by sections and members-at-large during the year, compared to 51 in 1991.

Sections and members-at-large conducted 45 public lectures in 1992, compared to only 16 in 1991 and 19 the year before. Similarly, the number of study class sessions increased from the 20 reported two years ago—and only seven in 1990—to 47, and the number of discussion group sessions held shot up from only 13 in 1991 to 34 in 1992.

The spark of enthusiasm that motivated most of the sections during the campaign unfortunately did not catch on with every section or national member-at-large. Two or three sections failed to sponsor a single meeting of any kind during the entire year, and only a few members-at-large ventured into this area. The sections that failed in this regard were definitely in the minority, however,

as will be readily apparent from the chart inserted at the end of this section.

SLP Press Clubs—For decades, the *Weekly People* Clubs sponsored by the sections were an important source of financial support for our Party’s official organ. I don’t know how many of these clubs—we call them Press Clubs today—have come and gone over the years, but I do know that hundreds of men and women, members and nonmembers alike, tirelessly and without complaint devoted themselves to the task of keeping the financial life-blood of the *Weekly People* and *The People* flowing during the past 40 or 50 years.

It is regrettable that two of the last three SLP Press Clubs found it necessary to disband since the 1991 National Convention. Section Wayne Co. reported its decision to disband its Press Club in April 1992. In reporting that decision to the national office, the section’s organizer explained that the club actually had not functioned independently for at least 10 years, and that the section “had kept the name...alive merely as a means of publicity and fund raising, and to pay tribute to those involved in the preparations of socials and picnics. As matters . . . now exist, the section alone plans and organizes these events.” In reply, I expressed my regret at the decision, and added:

“I do not know . . . when the Wayne County *Weekly People* Club was established, though I do know it was many, many years ago, and I suspect it was among the earliest organized during the 1930s. The earliest mention I have come across is in the published proceedings of the 1944 National Convention where, in fact, it was reported that there were two such clubs in Wayne County—the Highland Park Club and the West Side Club.

“I am surely on safe ground in saying that over those many years the Wayne County Clubs were responsible for raising thousands upon thousands of dollars to ensure the continued publication of our Party’s official organ. For that, the Party owes a deep debt of gratitude to all those who contributed to the clubs’ activities. The best tribute that can be paid to them, and the indisputable sign of their success over the years, is the ongoing existence of the very thing they worked so hard for—*The People*.

“Therefore, it is with mixed feelings of pride and regret that I offer a final salute in behalf of the national organization to all those who shared in the club’s many successes over the years.”

Last January, the organizer of Section Los Angeles wrote to in-

form me that serious consideration was being given to disbanding the SLP Press Club of Los Angeles for reasons of poor health among the remaining five members. "This is just a personal reflection on the status of the . . . Club in view of the present circumstances," she wrote, adding that she and the other active member felt "we can still collect funds through the section . . . without conflicting with other funds needed by national headquarters." She was seeking advice on what to do. "This is a difficult decision to make as I have been a WPC [*Weekly People Club*] member since its inception so many years ago, . . ." I responded, in part, as follows:

"I can easily understand why you . . . have been giving serious consideration to disbanding the SLP Press Club of Los Angeles. I can also appreciate why it is not an easy decision to make. However, no organization can survive without a membership, and none should be made to continue after having successfully completed its mission.

"The SLP Press Club of Los Angeles performed its mission splendidly for many, many years. It never failed in its assignment of raising funds for *The People*, and the proof of its success is *The People* itself. But the club was always a means to an end. And now, apparently, the time has come to move on.

"If the choice is between one of allowing the club to fade out of existence and one of formally disbanding it, I would much prefer to see the latter. Because so many SLP members and friends devoted so much of their time and energy to the club, and were such an important source of income for *The People* over the years, I think something should be done to sum up its affairs and terminate its existence in a deliberate and dignified manner.

"I know there is much more involved here than a formality. But if that formality will ease the burden the club's remaining functions place on you . . ., it will be a positive gain for the Party. The many generous and hardworking people who were associated with the club over the years almost certainly would agree."

Not long afterwards, the organizer wrote again to inform me that it had been decided to disband the club. As she put it:

"Your fine tribute to the SLP Press Club and its achievement during the last 48 years in Los Angeles is deeply appreciated. Your logical analysis of the present circumstances of the club reinforced our thoughts of the necessity of terminating its existence. Therefore, the SLP Press Club was officially disbanded on February 7, 1993."

SOCIALIST LABOR PARTY

While acknowledging what appeared to be a necessity in disbanding the two Press Clubs, I did so with mixed feelings and considerable reluctance. The organizers of both sections were unquestionably sincere in stating that their respective sections' abilities to continue raising funds for *The People* would not be adversely affected. However, the fact remains that whatever opportunity the unique purpose of the clubs served in stressing the special importance of financial support specifically intended for *The People* is gone and really cannot be substituted.

In the meantime, however, the SLP Press Club of Section San Francisco Bay Area—now the last—continues to do good work in raising funds for *The People*. It is to be hoped that it will continue to carry on its important work for many years to come.

Contacts—In 1991, the national office received 521 first-time inquiries. Last year, 628 first-time inquiries were received from the following sources: leaflets, 216; miscellaneous, 119; coupons from *The People*, 70; ads in other publications, 30; requests for campaign literature, 22; local fliers, 2; students and teachers, 120; sign-up sheets (from SLP literature tables), 36; National office mailings to contacts and former subscribers, 13. These inquiries also resulted in 175 new subscriptions for *The People*, 137 of which came from leaflet coupons.

Membership Information Packets—The national office took the initiative in offering information on membership in the SLP to 250 renewing subscribers last year. A total of 48 information packets were mailed to responding subscribers, and to several others who inquired about membership on their own initiative. Three of the membership applications received in response to these mailings were eventually accepted.

41ST NATIONAL CONVENTION

LEAFLET DISTRIBUTION (1991–1992)

<u>Sections</u>	<u>1991</u>	<u>1992</u>	<u>Totals</u>
Los Angeles	17,805	12,999	30,804
Sacramento	18,190	16,028	34,218
S.F. Bay Area	21,419	14,635	36,054
Denver	2,800	0	2,800
St. Petersburg	8,742	15,000	23,742
Cook Co.	13,100	19,550	32,650
Wayne Co.	10,055	5,871	15,926
Minneapolis	11,955	10,320	22,275
New York City	1,850	0	1,850
Akron	3,510	12,975	16,485
Cleveland	4,375	10,455	14,830
Portland	1,320	4,362	5,682
Philadelphia	36,835	50,025	86,860
Seattle	680	885	1,565
Milwaukee	4,108	5,989	10,097
<u>Members-at-Large</u>	<u>33,680</u>	<u>33,239</u>	<u>66,919</u>
Totals	190,424	212,333	402,757

SOCIALIST LABOR PARTY

DISTRIBUTION OF *THE PEOPLE* (1991–1992)

<u>Sections</u>	<u>1991</u>	<u>1992</u>	<u>Totals</u>
Los Angeles	1,614	1,946	3,560
Sacramento	3,835	2,890	6,725
S.F. Bay Area	25,679	19,794	45,473
Denver, Colo.	822	0	822
St. Petersburg	3,688	7,661	11,349
Cook Co.	12,581	13,778	26,359
Wayne Co.	1,500	2,500	4,000
Minneapolis	6,035	6,767	12,802
New York City	0	0	0
Akron	9,540	15,825	25,365
Cleveland	4,110	5,735	9,845
Portland	2,050	1,780	3,830
Philadelphia	5,660	4,507	10,167
Seattle	1,500	1,150	2,650
Milwaukee	3,269	3,850	7,119
<u>Members-at-Large</u>	<u>8,080</u>	<u>6,023</u>	<u>14,103</u>
Totals	89,963	94,206	184,169

41ST NATIONAL CONVENTION

1992

<u>SECTIONS</u>	PUBLIC &			
	<u>FUND-RAISERS</u>	<u>SCHOOL LECTURES</u>	<u>STUDY CLASSES</u>	<u>DISC GROUPS</u>
Los Angeles	4	2	0	0
Sacramento	1	6	0	0
SF Bay Area	6	4	0	2
Sacramento/SFBA	2	0	0	0
Miami SLP Group	0	5	0	6
St. Petersburg	0	4	7	4
Cook Co.	0	5	0	0
Wayne Co.	11	0	0	0
Duluth SLP Group	1	1	0	0
Minneapolis	2	3	0	0
Mpls/Duluth	2	0	0	0
New York City	0	0	0	1
Akron	0	0	0	0
Cleveland	2	0	36	12
Akron/Cleveland	6	3	0	0
Portland	1	4	0	0
Philadelphia	4	3	4	5
Seattle	0	0	0	0
Milwaukee	0	1	0	4
<u>Mbrs-at-Large</u>	<u>0</u>	<u>4</u>	<u>0</u>	<u>0</u>
TOTALS	42	45	47	34

SOCIALIST LABOR PARTY

CONTACTS

<u>Sources</u>	<u>1991</u>	<u>1992</u>	<u>Totals</u>
Leaflets	228	216	444
Miscellaneous	109	119	228
Ads in <i>The People</i>	51	70	121
Ads in Other Publications	30	30	60
Requests for Campaign Literature	1	22	23
Local Fliers	0	2	2
Students/Teachers	62	120	182
Sign-up Sheets (From SLP Literature Tables)	40	36	76
Radio/TV	0	0	0
N.O. Mailing to Contacts & Former Subs	0	13	13
TOTALS	521	628	1,149

41ST NATIONAL CONVENTION

SUBSCRIPTIONS FROM CONTACTS

	<u>1991</u>	<u>1992</u>	<u>Totals</u>
Four months	182	140	322
One Year	29	30	59
Two Years	2	2	4
Three Years	5	3	8
<u>Bundle Subs</u>	<u>1</u>	<u>0</u>	<u>1</u>
TOTALS	219	175	394
Subs from Leaflet Coupons	162	137	299
Leaflet Orders from Leaflet Coupons	0	14	14

On motion, the report was referred to an appropriate committee when elected.

The National Secretary read the following section of his report:

Interferences

San Francisco Newsrack Ordinance Revision—At last year's NEC Session, I reported that a revision of the San Francisco newsstand ordinance was being drafted by the City Attorney's office, and that what we knew of the proposed amendments made it clear that they posed a major threat to the Party's largest self-service newsstand operation. I also reported that the SLP, as publisher of *The People*, responded with a formal statement expressing our concerns over the proposed amendments.

At that point, a formal draft of the revision had not been issued. Since then, however, a formal draft of the new ordinance being proposed has been issued—not by the City Attorney, but by the Department of Public Works.

This proposal for revising the newsrack ordinance was mailed out by the Department on Dec. 23, 1992, and received by the organizer of Section San Francisco Bay Area on Dec. 28. A covering letter "asking for public comments" required those "comments in writing prior to January 7, 1993." "Typically," as I stated to the organizer in acknowledging receipt, "these people who took months to come up with this closely typed 24-page document, and the additional three-page summary, now call upon all those who have an interest to respond with lightning speed. Having just received the thing, I have had no time to go through it, much less decide how it affects the Party's interests or what can be done with it by January 7!"

In spite of having only a few days in which to act, the national office managed to submit a detailed and well-documented response under date of January 5, 1993. The essence of that response is contained in the following excerpted portions:

"We have now reviewed the 'Draft...' as carefully as the limited time available to us permits. Having done so, it is our considered view that much of the proposed Newsrack Ordinance as submitted is in conflict in several important respects with the First Amendment of the U.S. Constitution, Article 1, Section 2 of the California Constitution and the many decisions of the United States Supreme Court upholding and reaffirming the rights of speech, press and assembly as inviolable....

* * * *

“We frankly admit that we are deeply concerned about the many references in the ‘Draft...’ to such matters as ‘newsrack permits,’ ‘newsrack stickers,’ ‘permit applications,’ ‘permit amendments,’ fees, penalties, the ‘placement, size, construction and appearance of newsracks,’ ‘aesthetics,’ ‘design,’ and more. Moreover, our concern grows with the realization that the promulgation of the specific procedures, rules and regulations that will govern these matters, and more, is left to one individual—the Director... And there is nothing in the ‘Draft...’ that offers any assurance whatsoever that the provisions to be promulgated by the Director will be subjected to what has been described as the ‘strict scrutiny’ standard to assure that they will include nothing that may tend to abridge a fundamental right ‘because the free dissemination of ideas may be the loser,’ to use the language of the U.S. Supreme Court in the case of *Smith v. California*, 361, U.S. 147, 1959.

“We are not at all reassured by the rather bland admonitions to ‘the Director of the Department of Public Works, the General Manager of the Municipal Railway, and other appropriate City officials to interpret and apply this Article, and to exercise their powers and duties, in a manner that does not violate the constitutional rights of citizens or the regulated community.’ In fact, our concern is intensified by the language that appears to equate the constitutional rights of individuals [citizens or non-citizens alike] with some vague and undefined ‘regulated community.’

“Despite the apparent effort and intent of those who prepared the ‘Draft...’ to set standards that would permit the regulation of commercial activities on the streets and other public places without interfering with the legitimate exercise of First Amendment rights, the ‘Definitions’ it establishes for ‘commercial’ and ‘noncommercial’ publications are not merely inadequate they are contrary to fact.

“The publications that the two ‘Draft...’ definitions embrace are all commercial publications. They are published and distributed not because their objective is the dissemination of news—though in the process they do disseminate what they consider news—they are published by entrepreneurs and offered for sale by whatever means are available for the sole purpose of realizing profits... And this is the reality regardless of the percentage of news, editorials, commentaries or advertisements that make up their contents. They are businesses, that is, commercial enterprises, pure and simple, and as such are subject to licensing, licensing fees and other forms of rules and regulations.

“On the other hand, *The People*, official journal of the Socialist Labor Party of America, is published and distributed for the sole

SOCIALIST LABOR PARTY

purpose of presenting and disseminating the political, economic and social views of that Party. In short, it is not a commercial enterprise undertaken for the purpose of seeking and realizing a profit. * * * It is a noncommercial, nonprofit publication. It is an exercise of the freedom of speech and press that is clearly protected by the First Amendment of the United States Constitution as well as by specific provisions of the Constitution of the State of California.

“Accordingly, *The People* does not fall into either the ‘commercial’ or ‘noncommercial’ categories as defined in the ‘Draft...’ Yet despite the brief references to constitutionally protected rights it is clearly implied in the definitions cited above, as well as by the overall content of the language throughout the ‘Draft...’ that there are no clear distinctions made in the proposed ordinance between the clearly commercial and profit-motivated publishing enterprises that may be subjected to licenses, permits, fees, etc., and those publications that are clearly exercises of freedom of the press which may not be subjected to licensing and/or permit fees or otherwise interfered with or abridged.

“U.S. Supreme Court Justice Harlan Stone once observed that the freedoms guaranteed by the First Amendment are so important to the democratic process that they must be given preferred consideration. A clear recognition of that fact was spelled out by U.S. Supreme Court Justice Wiley Rutledge. Writing for the court majority in the case of *Thomas v. Collins* (323, U.S. 516, 1945) he said: ‘The case confronts us again with the duty our system places on this Court to say where the individual’s freedom ends and the State’s power begins. Choice on that border, now as always delicate, is perhaps more so where the usual presumption supporting legislation is balanced by the preferred place given in our scheme to the great, the indispensable democratic freedoms secured by the First Amendment... That priority gives these liberties a sanctity and a sanction not permitting dubious intrusions. And it is the character of the right, not of the limitation, which determines what standard governs the choice....’

“Lest there be some misunderstanding of our position, we point out that we recognize that a newsrack may be subjected to such practical considerations as safety concerns, traffic control and unhindered access to public transportation. But the rules and regulations that those considerations may dictate must not become justifications or rationalizations for demanding licenses, fees, permits, etc., from those who are legitimately exercising their constitutionally guaranteed right of freedom of the press.

* * * *

“It cannot be emphasized too strongly or too often that whatever regulations and/or standards may finally be promulgated

they must be specifically and explicitly worded so that they do not impinge on the exercise of civil liberties generally and freedom of speech and press in particular. What has been called the 'void for vagueness' test applies with special force to laws and regulations that involve the all-important areas of free speech, free assembly and free press, as decisions of the U.S. Supreme Court have repeatedly emphasized.

"Of particular relevance in this connection is the U.S. Supreme Court's concise admonition in *Schneider v. State* (New Jersey) that 'Mere legislative preferences or beliefs respecting matters of public convenience may well support legislation directed at other personal activities but be insufficient to justify such as diminishes the exercise of rights so vital to the maintenance of democratic institutions.'

"The Court was equally clear and succinct in *Shelton v. Tucker*, 364, U.S. 479, 1960, stating, 'Even though the governmental purpose be legitimate, that purpose cannot be pursued by means that broadly stifle fundamental liberties.'

* * * *

"... We note that after all the comments that may be submitted to you have been reviewed a public hearing will be held at which we will have the opportunity to give 'public testimony.' Presumably, at that time the new ordinance, including all the 'guidelines,' 'regulations,' 'procedures,' etc., promulgated by the Director, will be presented in their intended final form. If that public hearing is to serve any practical, and to us useful, purpose, we hope and expect that the responsible City officials will see to it that copies of the intended final form of the proposed news ordinance are submitted to the interested and affected parties sufficiently in advance of such public hearing to enable them to study it and prepare their 'public testimony.'"

Nothing more has been heard on this matter since the national office response was mailed on January 5. The ACLU in San Francisco was contacted and has expressed some interest, though the extent to which it might involve itself if the city proceeds with its proposed Revised Newsrack Ordinance is not clear. Unfortunately, recent developments at national headquarters have made it impossible to stay on top of this matter.

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Airport Terminals—Since last June, when the U.S. Supreme Court upheld the right to distribute (and sell) literature in government complexes such as airports that are generally "open to travelers and nontravelers alike," there have been two reported cases of interference with members attempting to distribute SLP

SOCIALIST LABOR PARTY

literature inside airport terminals. Both of these incidents occurred last August. One resulted in a member being arrested and brought to trial.

The first of these two incidents occurred last August 11 at the Cleveland-Hopkins International Airport, where Comrade Peter Kapitz of Section Akron went to distribute copies of *The People*. A summary of what took place on that occasion was included in a national office letter to the Cleveland Port Authority, as follows:

“Shortly after starting his distribution, Mr. Kapitz was approached by an airport security officer who asked if Mr. Kapitz had a permit. Mr. Kapitz did not have any permit, since the exercise of the rights guaranteed by the First Amendment of the United States Constitution are not subject to licensing. Mr. Kapitz did, however, have a copy of several relevant excerpts from the June 26, 1992, U.S. Supreme Court decision (No. 91-339) reaffirming and upholding the right to distribute literature in airports. He showed those excerpts to the security officer who, upon reading them, stated he would have to check with his superior.

“Mr. Kapitz was then taken to see Sergeant Higgins, who was given a copy of *The People* and shown the excerpts from the U.S. Supreme Court decision. Sergeant Higgins examined both and then told Mr. Kapitz that he could continue his distribution until he (Sergeant Higgins) got back to him.

“A while later, Sergeant Higgins returned and handed Mr. Kapitz a note to call Candace McGraw, (216) 265-6137, Port Authority, and in the meantime to stop distributing until he had secured a permit. Mr. Kapitz promptly discontinued his distribution, went to call the number given him and asked to speak to you. He was told to call later because you were in conference and could not be disturbed. He did call later, again without success in reaching you. Since your secretary then took his name, telephone number and the reason for his calls, Mr. Kapitz assumed you would return his calls when your circumstances permitted. Not having heard from you or your office to date, Mr. Kapitz referred the matter to our party’s national office for follow-up.”

In response to this, the Properties Manager of the Dept. of Port Authority of the City of Cleveland sent the national office a permit that “must be completed by any organization seeking to distribute literature at the Airport.” This official went on to state that the “Port Control has established three ‘freedom of information’ booths . . . available on a first-come, first-serve basis,” and added:

41ST NATIONAL CONVENTION

“The Department of Port Control is aware of the recent Supreme Court ruling concerning the dissemination of literature involving the New York/New Jersey Port Authority. The City’s Law Department is currently reviewing that decision to determine whether, in light of that ruling, the Department of Port Control should alter its current permitting procedure.”

After reviewing this response, the national office replied in part as follows:

“In our view, the rules and regulations spelled out on that form are in several respects in conflict with both the rights guaranteed the people in the First Amendment of the United States Constitution and the rulings of the United States Supreme Court upholding those rights as inviolable. In the words of United States Supreme Court Justice Kennedy, “The First Amendment is a limitation of government not a granting of power.””

The national office also sent a detailed statement to the Director of Port Control for the City of Cleveland citing a number of First Amendment rulings by the U.S. Supreme Court, which, among other things, refuted the permit requirement and challenged the constitutionality of the Port Control’s “freedom of information” booth policy.

“However,” we added, “since you stated in your letter of August 26 . . . that the city’s Law Department is currently reviewing the recent U.S. Supreme Court’s decision in the case involving the New York/New Jersey Port Authority and the Krishna Society . . . we are instructing our local members, for the time being, to comply with the Department’s current permit and other requirements; at the same time indicating in a brief statement attached to their permit application that they are doing so under protest, while the city’s Law Department reviews the matter.”

The sections affected were so instructed. Section Cleveland applied for and was granted a permit to use one of the “freedom of information” booths. For a number of reasons, however, the section was not able to utilize the permit and has made no further attempt to distribute at the Cleveland-Hopkins International Airport. In the meantime, the national office has not been free to pursue the matter further.

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SOCIALIST LABOR PARTY

The second incident occurred at the Southwest Florida Regional Airport on Aug. 31, 1992, when Comrades John Carlson and John Morris were stopped by airport police while distributing leaflets inside the airport's terminal. Like Comrade Kapitz, these members produced the national office's summary of the U.S. Supreme Court's ruling in the New York/New Jersey v. Krishna case in the attempt to establish their right to distribute, and as happened at the Cleveland-Hopkins Airport, the interfering officer went off to consult with a higher authority. However, unlike Comrade Kapitz, and in spite of the specific instructions on how members should conduct themselves at such times contained in the *SLP Civil Liberties Guide*, Comrade Morris defied the policeman who returned and instructed him to stop his distribution. Comrade Morris was arrested and eventually brought to trial. As it was stated in a national office letter to the organizer of Section St. Petersburg several days after the arrest:

“First, I wish to state and emphasize that I fully appreciate the SLP dedication and initiative that induced Comrade Morris to seek to take prompt advantage of the recent U.S. Supreme Court decision affirming the right to distribute leaflets in airports. He is to be commended for that, as well as for arming himself with a copy of the Supreme Court decision and for his initial efforts to convince the airport authorities of his constitutional rights, as outlined in the recently published *SLP Civil Liberties Guide*.

“Having said that, I now have the responsibility of calling the attention of both Comrade Morris and the section to several very important cautions and instructions conveyed in the guide, to wit:

“1. On page 7, under II-A, the guide states: ‘*Only the national organization can decide to “invite” arrest in order to make a test case.*’ And the paragraph goes on to state: ‘(In this connection, see the bold-faced paragraph on page five. . . . If you have any question about this provision, *contact the national office before taking any irrevocable steps.*’) (All underscoring added here for emphasis.)

“2. The bold-faced paragraph on page 5 reads in part: ‘Note carefully: With regard to shopping center regulations and LOCAL ORDINANCES that prohibit the exercise of First Amendment rights, **ONLY THE NATIONAL OFFICE CAN DECIDE TO MAKE A TEST CASE** challenging such regulations and/or ordinances in the Courts. . . .’ (Caps added here.)

“3. On page 8, item IV-B reads: ‘Defend your rights without being belligerent. Be firm but courteous. **DO NOT INVITE**

ARREST.’ (Caps added here.)

“4. On page 9, item VI-B clearly instructs the arrested distributor to: ‘Request and obtain a copy of the ordinance, statute or law that you are charged with violating.’ And sub-paragraphs 1 and 2 explain what one should do if the police ‘will not or cannot’ or ‘refuse’ to provide such copy.

“5. On page 10, item VIII calls for a ‘written report’ including ‘all the essentials in detail’ to be submitted ‘as soon as possible.’

“All of the above-indicated guidelines and/or instructions were ignored. If the ‘Arrest/Notice...’ is correct (and we have not received anything that would indicate otherwise) it appears that Comrade Morris deliberately invited arrest after having been warned twice by three airport officials that he would be arrested ‘if he handed out anymore literature.’ According to the ‘Arrest/Notice...’ Comrade Morris ‘promptly handed out another’ and was then arrested. In fact, the ‘Arrest/Notice . . .’ alleges that prior to the second warning, Comrade Morris said that the airport officials ‘would have to take action to stop him.’ If Comrade Morris did in fact act as alleged, he totally ignored the Party’s instructions as to how to conduct himself in a situation such as he found himself in and deliberately invited arrest.”

Although the trial ended in the Party’s favor, and the local ordinance under which Comrade Morris was arrested was declared to be unconstitutional, it was a costly experience in more ways than one. As I informed the organizer of Section St. Petersburg at one point:

“... While the national office is doing everything possible to assist him [Comrade Morris], it is to be hoped that a lesson will be learned by all. The rules and regulations the Party has developed in order to protect itself, its individual members and its supporters are to be taken seriously. When they are not the consequences can be very serious and have an adverse effect on the Party, not to mention the individual members who forget to remember when it counts. While hoping that the damage done in this particular case can be kept to a minimum, it has already proven costly in a financial sense. Let us hope it does not also prove costly in other ways.”

It did prove costly in other ways. Among other things, it required several days and numerous telephone calls before the national office was able to locate an attorney who was willing to defend Comrade Morris in court. The national office was under considerable pressure to locate an attorney quickly for the reason that the original trial date was set for within three weeks of the

SOCIALIST LABOR PARTY

arrest. As it developed, the case actually did not come to trial for months; but there was no way of knowing at the time that it would prove to be a protracted process.

It also proved difficult to maintain contact with the attorney that was hired, and it became necessary to have the Party's regular attorney intervene on two separate occasions simply to keep abreast of developments in what proved to be not only a protracted, but at times also an extremely puzzling, process.

Comrade Morris has a greater appreciation today of why it is important to be governed by the instructions contained in the *SLP Civil Liberties Guide* than he had at the outset, and that is all to the good. Attesting to this was a letter from the organizer of the section in which it was reported that:

“Our dear Comrade . . . admitted his ‘guilt’ and asked if [the] Section wishes to punish him? I was profoundly touched and [the] section thought he was more than enough punished by the nasty incident he had to endure.”

It should be noted that one major reason—perhaps the major reason—this case turned out as well as it did was that the national office had prepared a statement and gathered other related materials in connection with the Cleveland-Hopkins International Airport interference matter reported above. Copies of all that material were provided to the attorney the national office retained to defend Comrade Morris, and as we learned later, she built her case almost entirely on that foundation of information and argumentation provided by the national office.

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In addition to the preceding, Comrade Morris has been interfered with while distributing leaflets on a public beach in Manatee Co., Fla., and Comrade Sid Rasmussen has encountered a permit and fee requirement for distributing leaflets in Omaha, Neb. The ACLU is assisting Comrade Morris in the one matter, and Comrade Rasmussen is cooperating with the national office in the other. However, neither of these two problems have matured sufficiently for a detailed report at this time.

On motion, the report was referred to an appropriate committee when elected.

The National Secretary read the following section of his report:

41ST NATIONAL CONVENTION

Party Press and Literature

The People—*The People* is mailed to all 50 states, the District of Columbia, Guam, Puerto Rico, and to readers and libraries in 18 other countries.¹ The paid circulation for each of the last two fiscal reporting periods² may be summed up as follows:

	<u>Subscribers</u>	<u>In Bundles</u>	<u>Paid Circulation</u>
1991	2,971	6,341	9,312
1992	3,152	6,412	9,564

Average press runs for each of the last two fiscal years were 9,888 and 10,215 copies, respectively. Special issues, and the extra number of each printed in 1992, included: Paris Commune, 5,924; May Day, 6,459; Campaign (Aug. 8), 6,059; Campaign/Labor Day, 5,559; Campaign/Youth, 9,750; De Leon, 3,974. These figures are included in the averages shown above.

The most recent circulation figures available as this was in preparation were for the issue of March 6, 1993, and break down as follows:

Domestic Subs	3,076
Foreign Subs	52
Domestic Bundles	5,204
<u>Foreign Bundles</u>	<u>439</u>
Total	8,771

Eighty-five standing bundle orders ranging in size from 10 to more than 1,200 copies are shipped to every section of the Party, and account for more than 4,500 copies of each issue.

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Classified advertisements for *The People* were placed with *Utne Reader*, *Harpers*, *The Nation* and *The Progressive* last year at a

¹ Australia, Brazil, Canada, Denmark, England, France, Germany, Hong Kong, India, Italy, Japan, the Netherlands, Norway, Poland, Scotland, South Africa, Sweden and Switzerland.

² The fiscal year covered by the mandatory annual Statement of Ownership, Management and Circulation runs from Oct. 1 to Sept. 30 of the following year. *The People* publishes its annual statement in the second issue in October.

SOCIALIST LABOR PARTY

cost of \$1,562.80. These were continuations of advertisements placed with those magazines in previous years. Other nationally circulated publications with which classified ads for *The People* were placed during the 1991–1992 period included *The Atlantic*, *College Monthly*, *Environmental Magazine*, *The Guardian*, *The Humanist*, *In These Times*, and *Mother Jones*. Advertising costs for the entire two-year period totaled \$6,291.84, in return for which at least 396 new subscriptions to *The People* were received. However, not all subscriptions received as a direct result of these ads could be identified with a specific publication. The actual number of subscriptions resulting from this source was probably more than the 396 that could be readily identified.

Additional sources of new subscriptions received during the year were free four-month trials that subscribers are entitled to enter with their own renewals (206), national office contacts (165), Christmas and other gift subscriptions (137), a variety of miscellaneous sources (111), *The People's* own subscription coupon (53), and those received through sections and members-at-large (32).

Last year, the subscription department processed a total of 1,033 new and 304 “old/new” subscriptions. “Old/news,” as explained in my report to the 1992 NEC Session, “come from former subscribers who resubscribe after permitting their original subscription to expire.”

In addition, the national office conducted a series of three mailings to former subscribers and contacts in an effort to induce them to take out subscriptions to *The People*. In reporting the results to the NEC, I wrote:

“The first mailing (11,153 pieces) covered the entire list of contacts and former subscribers maintained by the national office. The second and third mailings (totaling 10,014 pieces) went to those who failed to respond to the first and those whose addresses had changed since we last mailed to them.

“The response (242 subscriptions) represents a return of just over one percent from the 21,167 mailing pieces sent, but just over two percent of the names covered. Depending on which figure you focus on—pieces mailed, or names covered—the response would be considered as good to excellent by commercial standards. The fact that our subscription rates are so modest obviously means that mailings of this kind would not be considered as ‘cost effective’ by a commercial outfit; but, that’s the nature of our ‘product,’ and there’s no way around it.

“Incidentally, a similar mailing to these same contacts and

former subscribers is being planned in connection with the *1992 Campaign for Socialism*. That mailing, which will be done out of house, will be similar to previous mailings to subscribers urging them to order a quantity of the new campaign leaflets for distribution. The order form will also provide another opportunity for the recipients to enter a subscription to *The People*, and financial contributions for the campaign fund will be requested. I am hoping that this particular mailing will be completed before September 7.

“As always, any questions or comments you may have will be welcomed.”

The cost of the three mailings—including printing, postage, mailing labels, etc.—came to \$6,692. This prompted one NEC member to wonder if the return was worth the expense, and if it might not be better to spend more on advertising. A portion of my response follows:

“Are mailings to the large list of contacts and former subscribers worthwhile? That’s a difficult question to answer. The difficulty arises from the fact that we don’t do them very often. Infrequent mailings are probably more expensive than frequent ones, at least on a one-to-one basis. You will have noted, for example, that about 40.5 percent of the postage costs were from returns and address corrections, which probably would be less if we mailed on, say, a quarterly basis.

“Apart from that, however, I don’t think the two things—advertising and mass mailings—can be compared, and I don’t believe the \$6,700 spent on the mailing could have been spent more effectively on advertising. That is, I don’t believe we could have gotten the equivalent of 243 additional new subscriptions from expanded advertising. For one thing, I don’t think there are enough publications out there for us to spend that kind of additional money. We could and should increase our advertising, and sometimes I think we act too hastily when we allow an ad to lapse without renewing it because we can’t trace enough new subscriptions directly to it. I think there’s more of a ripple effect to some of those ‘ineffective’ ads than we realize. However, because of the uncertainty about the origin of many of the subscriptions we receive, even if we had stuck with all the publications we’ve placed ads with since 1983 or 1984 we would never be able to draw a true comparison in terms of ‘cost effectiveness.’

“I believe we have to do more mailings to the entire national mailing list; but for them to be effective they must be for the purpose of promoting new leaflets, pamphlets or something else that’s fresh, new, and indicative of activity on our end. Routine subscription pitches should be woven in among those mailings.

SOCIALIST LABOR PARTY

When they become the only thing we mail out, which has been pretty much the case, I don't think we can really judge what the full potential of the mailing list is. It would have been interesting, for example, to see what would have resulted if we were able to do a campaign mailing that listed the dates, times, speakers, etc., of three meetings to be held by each and every section. A one piece, one time mailing with all that information might have been very effective, especially if it could have been followed up by all these new leaflets we've managed to produce."

Leaflets—The following leaflets were printed during the year: *OUT OF WORK! How Safe is YOUR Job?* (campaign), 75,000; *Politicians Promise and Things Get Worse! Why?* 25,000; *Racism and Social Unrest*, 60,000; *Socialism—Its Meaning and Promise*, 25,000; *The Time's Come for a REAL CHANGE: The Campaign for GENUINE Socialism* (campaign), 75,000; *What's Behind Capitalism's Crisis in Education?* (campaign) 50,000; *What's Behind Rising Prices? The truth about the high cost of living!* (campaign) 50,000; *Why America Needs Industrial Democracy* (platform), 25,000.

When these quantities are added up the total comes to 385,000.

Several of the leaflets printed in 1992 were revisions of older ones that were prepared by the national office for distribution during the campaign. It had been hoped to revise two or three of them again to add to our regular stock of leaflets before the convention convened. One of those revisions was completed and approved by the NEC a month or two ago, but other developments at national headquarters reshuffled our priorities. Depending on developments immediately following the convention, I am hopeful that the other revisions can be made and the new versions printed within a reasonable time.

Apparently, at least one member of the Party thought that the statement on *Racism and Social Unrest* adopted by the NEC Session in 1992 was intended to serve as an addition to the regular stock of leaflets. Unfortunately, he also permitted his confusion to get the better of him in other ways when he wrote: "I find your leaflet on Racism, etc., to be incomplete! Your [sic] failed to put in the SLP PROGRAM!"

I am not sure what accounted for this aggressive discourtesy, or for this member's apparent lack of information on the source and purpose of the leaflet. However, on the off chance that others were similarly confused I am inserting the following from my reply:

“Also noted was your comment that ‘I [you] find your [?] leaflet on Racism, etc., to be incomplete! Your [sic] failed to put in the SLP PROGRAM!’

“If by ‘your’ you refer to me, as I suppose, your remarks are misdirected. It is true that I wrote the statement in its original form, but not with any thought of it becoming a leaflet. The statement was written for the sole and simple purpose of calling the 1992 Session of the National Executive Committee to order. Thereafter, the NEC, with some minor modifications, adopted it as a statement expressing and demonstrating the SLP’s capacity to respond quickly and directly to events that were then still unfolding. And when it was decided to put the statement into general circulation in leaflet form it was for that sole and single purpose.

“In other words, it was not conceived and was not meant as a stock leaflet on the subject of racism. It was printed once to serve a specific purpose, and having served that purpose has now been ‘retired.’”

In reference to all this, one member of the NEC wrote:

“[The] Comrade . . . used compulsively strong and insensitive language in what seemed to be an unwarranted attack on your judgment. I presume that he would have the hindsight to reflect on his own poor judgment when the contact statistics are presented to him.

“Personally, I thought your statement on Racism, etc. [to the NEC] was outstanding, and so was your answer to him.”

To which I responded:

“[The] Comrade . . . , who may not be the most tactful or articulate of SLP members, has shown what he no doubt believes to be great patience in awaiting leaflets on children and family issues, the environment, and racism. He was disappointed by *Racism and Social Unrest*, apparently because he mistook it for the long-awaited new leaflet on racism. Still, his bluntness rankles at times because he seems not to appreciate the conditions we’re working under. If all goes well, however, I hope we’ll be able to satisfy him, and the other comrades who have shown more patience and understanding, before too long.”

Again, depending on what transpires at this convention, and on what follows in the weeks and months ahead, I hope to return to the leaflets that are suited for revision and get them back into circulation. What can be done to generate entirely new leaflets on

topics like racism, the environment and many more that could be named, will also have to wait on developments.

Local Leaflets and Fliers—It should be noted that Section Philadelphia printed a localized version of the strike leaflet under the heading of, *We Support Your Strike!* The text was submitted to the national office for review and formatting prior to printing. However, the quantity that was actually printed and distributed has not been reported.

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Occasionally, a section will forget that it should not use non-SLP cartoons, photos or other graphic materials that appear in *The People* without prior approval from the national office. Last July, for example, a section routinely sent the national office copy of a flier gotten up to advertise one of its public meetings. The flier included a cartoon that appeared in *The People*, but was clearly credited to an outside source. The flier also contained a line stating, “Labor Donated.” As I reminded the organizer:

“Please note: The national office has repeatedly cautioned the membership not to use any cartoon, photograph or other graphic matter purchased for use by *The People* without prior clearance by the national office.

“The conditions under which we are entitled to use most of these cartoons, etc., are strictly limited, and using them for any unauthorized purpose could have serious repercussions on the Party. The fact that the proper credit line does not appear on the section’s fliers compounds the problem. The labor that went into producing that cartoon was not donated to the SLP.

“Please do not mail or distribute those fliers in any way.”

It was necessary for the section to remake its flier, with the result that unnecessary time, effort and funds were wasted. Sections, and members-at-large, should take note of this and be guided accordingly.

Books and Pamphlets—Everything that had been planned and that I had hoped to accomplish in this department before this convention convened has been temporarily forced onto a back burner. By now, for example, I had hoped to have the collection of De Leon editorials on racism in print, together with a leaflet on the same subject. I had also hoped to make the necessary preparations for a pamphlet on the centenary of the Homestead Steel Strike that would have included De Leon’s editorials and other interesting,

informative and educational articles and reports from *The People*. Circumstances have denied me the time needed to prepare the introductions that would be needed and to make a final evaluation of the material that would have comprised the pamphlet and the De Leon volume.

Nothing has been undone with regard to the De Leon editorials or any of the other projects mentioned in my report to the 1992 NEC Session, however, and since matters stand at essentially the same point they did then, and since time is at a premium for me, it may serve a useful purpose to repeat some of what I said in that report:

“No SLP books or pamphlets were printed during the year. However, new editions of De Leon’s pamphlets, including several that have been out of print for years, are in preparation. Serious consideration is also being given to publishing new SLP editions of several works by Karl Marx and Frederick Engels. As I informed the NEC in February [1992]:

“... Some standard works of Marx and Engels are becoming increasingly difficult to come by. Our sources for such things as the *Communist Manifesto*, *Socialism: From Utopia to Science*, *Wage-Labor and Capital* and *Value, Price and Profit*, to name a few, have not dried up yet, but that possibility must be kept in mind.

“The national office has already taken the first steps toward preparing new NYLN editions of the works mentioned by hiring some typists to put these and other works on computer. The typists work out of their homes and are being paid by the page.

“Typing the pamphlets mentioned onto computer disks was not why I hired the... women now working on them. The idea was to get them started on the works of Daniel De Leon. A good place to start seemed to be the standard De Leon pamphlets, several of which have already been completed. That led naturally to the Marx and Engels titles mentioned.’

“Since the preceding was written [that is, since the letter of February 1992], *Value, Price and Profit*, *Wage-Labor and Capital*, *Socialism: From Utopia to Science* and *The Gotha Program* have been typed. I am also planning to have *The Paris Commune*, *Class Struggles in France*, *The 18th Brumaire* and, of course, the *Communist Manifesto* redone in this way.

“In addition, I can report that the following De Leon pamphlets have been completed:

“*As to Politics*, *The Burning Question of Trades Unionism*, *Capitalism Means War! Capitalism vs. Socialism* (De Leon-Berry Debate), *ST&LA vs. ‘Pure and Simple’ Trades Unionism* (De Leon-Harriman Debate), *Fifteen Questions About Socialism*,

SOCIALIST LABOR PARTY

Flashlights of the Amsterdam Congress, Marxian Science and the Colleges, Reform or Revolution, Socialist Reconstruction of Society, Two Pages From Roman History, Unity, The Vatican in Politics and What Means This Strike?

“Several other De Leon titles will be typed onto computer in due course, as will Henry Kuhn’s translation of Georgi Plekhanov’s *The Bourgeois Revolution*, Arnold Petersen’s translation of Gustav Bang’s *Crises in European History*, and several others.”

Since then, all of the works mentioned but one have been typed onto computer and could be published at any time; provided, of course, that time could be salvaged to write the introductions, annotate them where necessary and design new covers. As I said to the NEC:

“The advent of the computer . . . has opened up many possibilities for ‘new’ literature from old sources. One such possibility is a one- or two-volumed *Selected Works of Daniel De Leon*, the contents for which have already been mapped out. What computers cannot do, however, is develop *new* literature from *new* sources. . . .”

Works of Daniel De Leon—As some of you know, I have what I consider to be a hobby that helps divert my attention from Party business and serves me as, among other things, a form of relaxation. At any rate, I regard it as a diversion, though I have had a bit of trouble convincing my comrade wife that it really serves me in that way—but it does. My hobby is identifying, collecting and preparing the works of Daniel De Leon for publication.

Last December, I wrote to my volunteer “research assistant,” Comrade Barbara Graymont, to inform her on the progress that had been made since the NEC Session, and of a little discovery we had made at national headquarters. Since I have no time in which to prepare a separate report on this for the convention, I am inserting a portion of that letter here:

“Last August, Comrade Karl Heck of Section Minneapolis spent some time with us cleaning, laying new tile and painting the front office. It was necessary to move desks and cabinets around so he could have unobstructed access to the floor. All that shuffling allowed Comrade Donna Bills to gain access to an old filing cabinet that had been sandwiched between two desks since we set up shop here in 1974. Among other things, that cabinet happened to contain Kuhn’s ‘missing’ manuscript for

what he planned as the seventh volume of De Leon's works. The subject of that volume was the political state, and the manuscript consists of 146 editorials published between 1893 and 1913. The list of titles probably wouldn't mean much to you, so I haven't bothered to enclose it. However, this little discovery now gives me a complete picture of what Kuhn had in mind, i.e., I now have the complete list of titles for all seven of the volumes he completed before his death in 1930. The seven manuscripts consumed 1,115 of the 3,650 he included in his index, which is close enough to half the total to confirm what he once wrote about having assembled texts for half the volumes he had in mind. (Somewhere he also indicated that he had started on an eighth volume, but there's no way of telling how far he got with it.) However, the more time I spend on this the more I'm convinced that he left out too much, at least where *The People* is concerned.

"To date I have managed to copy-edit most of what I think belongs to De Leon through the end of March 1896, and the typist has completed everything I have given her from 1879 . . . through the end of the 1893 calendar year.¹ Based on what's been done so far, I estimate that everything we would want for the Collected Works from the period preceding the *Daily People* could be published in six volumes. This estimate is based on some amateur formatting I have done with the computer. Obviously, it excludes anything more from the earlier period that you might be able to supply me with, e.g., the lecture notes you mentioned during our last conversation, articles and letters from the *Dawn*, more than I have from *The Nationalist*, etc., etc.

"I, too, have left out a lot of things, including most of the brief editorial items that weren't fitted with a headline and seem to have served primarily to fill out the editorial columns. I've also skipped over 'Political and Economic,' which was a regular feature in *The People* from 1891 until the daily was launched. The column was made up mostly of squibs and quotations from other publications, usually introduced or followed by some thumbs-up or thumbs-down observation. I intend to go through all of this additional material again to isolate what seems valuable before making my recommendation on what to print.

* * * *

"Incidentally, I haven't abandoned my original idea of leaving all this pre-SLP material aside until after everything from *The People* and the *Daily People* has been published. But, I would set that idea aside on a dime if I was confident I had access to

¹ Since this was written selection and copy-editing has progressed through February 1897, and the typist has completed everything through March 1894.

SOCIALIST LABOR PARTY

everything worthy of consideration from, say, 1872 through the first quarter of 1891. I'm also giving thought to the possibility of separating out all of De Leon's speeches and debates to place at the rear of each volume, or to make up separate volumes. That kind of separation will be necessary, at least where his letters and certain other works (such as his 1902 statement on problems of the *Daily People*, etc.) are concerned."

I also used this letter to inform the NEC of my progress, and added:

"I have promised to submit a plan for publishing De Leon's works to the 1993 National Convention. Based on what's been accomplished so far, I believe I will be able to keep that promise, or at least a part of it. That is, I should be able to make a proposal for publishing matter taken from *The People* (1891–1900) and his earlier works from the period preceding his joining the SLP."

It is with considerable regret that I must state that I am unable to keep that promise. I have several possible approaches in mind, as indicated by my letter to Comrade Graymont, but have not been free to think it through to a conclusion. The only thing I can add at this time is that the work of identifying and having De Leon's works typed onto computer is proceeding, and that the work will not be abandoned. Incidentally, some indication of the scope of the problem may be suggested by the following extract from a letter I wrote to an NEC member after the manuscript on the political state had been uncovered:

"While I was pleased when we came across Henry Kuhn's seventh manuscript of De Leon editorials, the pleasure was primarily one of satisfying a desire to know exactly what he had in mind for the volume on the Political State. It was a missing piece, but only one of another seven or eight that will never be found for the reason that Kuhn never completed what he was aiming at. What he was aiming at was a total of 15 volumes on specific subjects (industrial unionism, trades unionism, the state, etc.). We have a list or bibliographical index of some 3,600 editorials that he compiled; but his work of sorting them out into the volumes he had in mind was only half completed when he died.

"Even if he had finished what he started, however, there are some subjects on which there is no evidence that he planned anything at all. For example: Though some of the editorials on racism that were run in *The People* a year or so ago are included

41ST NATIONAL CONVENTION

in the index, there is nothing to indicate that a separate volume on that subject was being contemplated, or how they would be integrated into volumes on other subjects. Also, while he selected only about 480 editorials from *The People*, his index includes almost every editorial from the *Daily People* that can be attributed to De Leon—well over 3,100 of them. I have trouble envisioning all that material crammed into 15 volumes, particularly if they were all to be about the same size—which they were—and not much larger than the collection of Uncle Sam & Brother Jonathan columns that were published as *Socialist Economics in Dialogue*.”

On motion, the report was referred to an appropriate committee when elected.

At 3:55 p.m., a motion was passed to adjourn until 9 a.m., Sunday morning, May 2.

SUNDAY MORNING SESSION, MAY 2, 1993

The session was called to order at 9:05 a.m.

On roll call, all present except E. Leader, G.S. Taylor and A. Haber. E. Leader and G.S. Taylor arrived shortly. A. Haber arrived at 9:30 a.m.

The sergeant at arms reported nine members and one visitor present.

Continuation of Report of National Secretary

The National Secretary presented the following section of his report:

NEC and National Officers

Under date of February 16, the following general letter was mailed to the sections of the SLP:

“Dear Comrades:

“CANVASS FOR MEMBERS TO SERVE ON THE
NATIONAL EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE
1993–1995 TERM OF OFFICE

“Article V, Section 3(a), of the Party’s Constitution provides as follows:

“‘The NEC shall be elected for a two-year term by the National Convention, each of those elected to be specifically approved by a general vote of the whole Party.’

“This provision enables the National Convention to elect a National Executive Committee of seven members from among

SOCIALIST LABOR PARTY

the membership as a whole. Any member of the Party who meets the eligibility requirements, regardless of where that member happens to live, may be elected. The intent, of course, is to provide the National Convention with the widest latitude possible in electing the NEC from among those who are both eligible and willing to serve.

“For the National Convention to exercise its best judgment in this regard, however, it should be informed in advance of all eligible members who would be willing to serve, if elected. Accordingly, your sections are hereby called upon to submit the names of all such eligible members who are prepared to accept the commitment associated with membership on the NEC for the 1993–1995 term of office.

“Please Note: The sections are not being called upon to nominate candidates for the NEC. They are simply being asked to submit the names of the eligible members who are prepared to accept election. The sections, however, are under no obligation to submit the name of any member who, in its judgment, is not qualified for membership on the NEC.

“The names of all members submitted in response to this inquiry will be presented to the National Convention, and those who, in the convention’s judgment, should be considered will be referred to a committee. The committee will nominate the seven it believes are best qualified to serve. The convention will elect the NEC for the 1993–1995 term of office, subject to approval by a general vote of the Party as a whole.

“Please do not submit the name of any member who is not prepared to accept the commitment to serve if elected by the convention.

“Your section’s response to this letter must be received by **Friday, April 30, 1993**. Please use the enclosed form when responding.

“Fraternally yours, etc.”

A similar letter was mailed to all national members-at-large, and all the response forms the national office received in return are available to the convention.

In addition, of course, the National Convention has the responsibility of electing an Editor for *The People*, a Financial Secretary and a National Secretary for the 1993–1995 term of office.

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I don’t know how many names have been submitted for your consideration in deciding on the composition of the NEC for the next two years because this is being written before the April 30 deadline. Regardless of the number, it is important to understand

that the election of an NEC and of national officers is not a routine matter. It is not a matter of electing seven members to the NEC and three others to fill the national offices who just happen to be eligible under the minimum requirements provided by the Constitution and have expressed a willingness to serve if elected. On the contrary, together with what you decide with regard to the national headquarters situation, your decision in determining the composition of the NEC and the entire national administration of the Party for the next two years is the most important you will be called upon to make.

Eligibility under the Constitution, and a willingness to serve, are two indispensable considerations, and every member who has come forward in response to the general letters of February 16 is to be commended for their willingness to take on the duties and responsibilities of membership on the NEC—particularly at this difficult juncture. At the same time, however, the eligibility requirements provided by the Constitution are only the starting point from which you must determine which among those who are eligible and willing are the most qualified to administer the Party's affairs. What you decide in that regard will set the standard for the next two years—years that could easily be crucial in determining the Party's future. Accordingly, it seems appropriate to summarize at least some of the important matters that have come before the NEC in recent months to provide you with some insight into how the first NEC elected under the Party's new executive structure has performed.

Since the NEC Session in May 1992, a number of important matters have come up for discussion within the NEC. One involved the application of certain provisions of the Party's Constitution in connection with the election of a delegate to the 41st National Convention. Another involved the initiative the national office took last August in attempting to stimulate an NEC discussion on the state of organization. Last October, the national office took a similar initiative to stimulate discussion on the Party's finances. A fourth matter that came up for discussion needed no stimulation from the national office or from within the NEC. That discussion was brought on by developments within the editorial department.

Presumably your Financial Secretary will have occasion to refer to the NEC's discussion on Party finances and to cite some of the correspondence that was exchanged on that question. Accordingly,

SOCIALIST LABOR PARTY

I will limit myself to the other matters mentioned. Because time is running short, however, I cannot be as thorough in going over this ground as I would like.

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Last December, a section of the Party nominated a member for delegate to this convention who, according to the section's year-end membership report, was three months in arrears, and, accordingly, ineligible by virtue of being suspended. Even though the section corroborated the accuracy of the year-end report, it proceeded to elect the member at its January meeting. It also turned out that one of the section's members who was excused from the meeting where the election took place had not been provided with a ballot. In view of all this, it became necessary for the national office to nullify the election. In doing so, however, the section was advised that if it disagreed with that decision it should promptly appeal to the NEC or be prepared to risk the possibility that the member elected would not be seated by the convention.

It was in connection with that decision that one member of the NEC wrote the following:

“Dear Comrade Bills

“I know that as National Sec your job requires that you see the Constitution is adhered to, but sometimes as in the case of Comrade [A] . . . , I believe this strictly sticking to the ‘letter of the law’ goes beyond common sense, and is not beneficial to the Party.

“As [the] Section . . . explained, [A] . . . was not quite 3 mos behind when he was nominated for Delegate. Had the Section explained to this relatively new member what his situation was re his standing, he could have asked for 1 month's exemption and not have gone over the deadline.

“It appears before the election on the following month, he paid his dues. In this case I am totally against throwing this back to another election. Obviously, I realize this is only my opinion as an NEC member, but in this case, I feel we are allowing ourselves to be entangled by legalities.

“Fraternally, etc.”

I responded to the NEC member with the following:

“Dear Comrade . . .

“This will acknowledge receipt of your letter of February 11, with enclosure. Thank you.

“I agree in principle that situations will arise where ‘strictly

sticking to the "letter of the law" goes beyond common sense, and is not beneficial to the Party,' and I have always tried to be alert to them. However, I do not believe the present situation falls into that category of anomalies.

"You are wrong when you say that '[A]... was not quite 3 mos. behind when he was nominated for Delegate.' He was paid through September and didn't pay again until January. Even if his status as of the December meeting could be overlooked, he was four months behind by the January meeting where he was elected.

"Furthermore, Comrade [A]... knew he was three months in arrears, and chose to do nothing about it until January. The section also knew he was three months in arrears, and would be suspended if he left the December meeting without paying up, and did nothing about it.

"You are also wrong when you say that Comrade [A]... 'could have asked for one month's exemption, ...' Comrade [A]... is employed and in good health, and, therefore, not eligible for exemption. Granting him, or any member, exemption as a matter of expediency would only make a mockery of all those who are forced to request or accept such exemption because of hardship or sickness. Carelessness and negligence do not entitle a member to the same consideration as do genuine financial hardships and serious ailments.

"Incidentally, Comrade [A]... might easily have borrowed a dollar from someone at the December meeting; but he didn't, and in spite of the section being aware of the situation, no one thought to make the offer.

"In addition, it should not be forgotten that there is more involved in this matter than Comrade [A's]... eligibility. There is also the question of Comrade [B]...and her right to vote.

"I cannot agree that these are instances of 'allowing ourselves to become entangled in legalities.' Just the opposite. I can think of very few breaches of the Constitution that would be more serious or detrimental to the Party's interests than those of extending rights to suspended members who are not entitled to them, while depriving members in good standing of rights to which they are entitled.

"As for opinions on what may and may not be done where Party rules and regulations are concerned, what De Leon had to say about this on another occasion fits the present situation to a 't.' What he said was that, 'Private opinion on the qualification of candidates for office may not be given greater force than the Party's opinion expressly stated in its Constitution.'

"It is the Party's opinion that Comrade [A]... is ineligible to be a representative to its highest body for the reason that he allowed himself to be suspended. It is also the Party's opinion that Comrade [B]...was entitled to vote on who should be the

SOCIALIST LABOR PARTY

delegate. There are no extenuating circumstances in either of these matters that the national office knows about.

“If these are examples of what you meant by becoming ‘entangled in legalities,’ then I cannot agree with you. It is one thing to stick to a rule that experience proves to be inadequate or harmful, or to distinguish between the letter and spirit of the law when the two come into conflict. It is something else entirely to ignore or disregard a rule that experience proves to be of benefit. In the former case, common sense should tell us when the time has come to amend, repeal or replace the old rule, or to draw a distinction between the letter and the intent of a particular rule. In the latter case, however, nothing but harm can come from disregarding a rule where the spirit and the intent are identical, and where it is of proven benefit to the Party. If the alternative to becoming ‘entangled in legalities’ is one of becoming entangled in *illegalities*, I confess to preferring the former. I fail to see how the Party can be harmed by obeying its own laws, or how it can be benefited by consciously ignoring them.

“It should also be noted that the responsibility for enforcing the Party’s Constitution, etc., is not one that falls exclusively onto the shoulders of the National Secretary. It is a shared responsibility. Every officer and member of the Party, including NEC members and, by the way, delegates to National Conventions, share in that responsibility. The Party adopts its rules and regulations with a purpose. That purpose is to enable its subdivisions and members to conduct the Party’s affairs in orderly and harmonious ways, and to guarantee the rights of membership to those who are entitled to exercise them. Without those rules and guarantees, we would disable and cripple ourselves as an organization. We would also reduce our boast of being a democratic organization to a sham. Without these rules and guarantees, without the will to enforce the former and to act as jealous guardians of the latter, the SLP would have gone to ruination long ago—and deservedly so.

“If [the] Section . . . has to conduct a new election to comply with these rules and regulations, I believe it is a small price to pay in exchange for the integrity of the Party’s institutions.

“With best wishes, etc.”

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Last August, I wrote the following letter to the NEC with a view to stimulating a discussion on the state of organization:

“To the Members of the NEC

“Dear Comrades:

“As you know from my report to the 1991 National Convention, several sections have been experiencing problems holding

41ST NATIONAL CONVENTION

regular monthly business meetings with a quorum, or even with the minimum of three members present, for sometime. Section Los Angeles is one among this group of sections.

“Recently, the national office wrote the section to determine precisely what a quorum was as there was some uncertainty on this end. Comrade [Elizabeth] Stanich, the organizer, responded under date of August 3. A copy of that letter is being enclosed for your information.

“The situation in Los Angeles is not unique, of course, but that does not make it any the less worrisome to me. Los Angeles, the second largest city in the country, is one where the SLP *must* keep a toehold, regardless of what might become of some of the sections in smaller cities around the country. The same may be said for New York, where, if anything, matters are worse than in Los Angeles. Chicago, Philadelphia, the San Francisco Bay Area, and, perhaps, Detroit, are, in addition to those mentioned, other pivotal cities and metropolitan areas where everything possible must be done to keep our struggling sections afloat.

“What that ‘something’ might be is clearly the \$64 question. Comrade Stanich’s letter provides me an opportunity to raise that question with the NEC for discussion.

“Hopefully, the extra effort almost every section is trying to make in connection with the *1992 Campaign for Socialism* will pan out, if not immediately, at least not too much farther down the road, with new contacts, new readers and, in the end, new members. Yet, the number of leaflets pledged for distribution by the sections in these key areas is not likely to yield returns in the form of new contacts and readers in anything like the numbers that will be needed to build those sections back up. And if efforts are not made to fan the initial spark of interest shown by those campaign contacts that do come in, the Party may simply lose whatever momentum it has derived from the campaign.

“The campaign, and the heightened interest that comes with it, will soon be over. However, we have to keep up the momentum we have got going now on a permanent basis. Where our time, effort and resources should be turned after Election Day is something I believe the NEC should begin giving its attention to now.

“Your thoughts on all this would be welcomed.

“Fraternally yours, etc.”

Portions of some of the responses that were received to this have been used elsewhere in this report. However, the following from one NEC member, received under date of December 22, is what is most relevant here:

SOCIALIST LABOR PARTY

“I am at a loss of what to say about the whole state of the Party.

“It seems to me that ever since I joined in 1969, we have gone from one crisis to another.

“If we could have seen the future condition of the Party in 1992 back when we were fighting to revitalize ourselves in the 1970’s what would we have done? Quit right there?

“1) First, I don’t know if anything will revitalize or help to rebuild us at this stage.

“2) At the moment, I have no suggestions.

“3) I have hesitated to write in answers to the Nat. Sec. appeal for discussion and or suggestions/solutions to the state of organization, because I don’t want to be negative, but I can hardly be otherwise.

“Look at the staffing problems. No one in the country puts out as great a Marxist paper as *The People* with 1-1/2 staff members and occasional contributions from the field. But this cannot last. We saw writers . . . burn out when the Party was twice the size it is now.

“Look at our membership list—23 delegates representing about 5 members each.

“You would think if ever there was a time to build, now would be. I can’t see the country getting much worse without a turn to the socialist message but so far, it doesn’t seem so.

“What more can I say? I am awaiting creative answers from the rest of the NEC.”

I will readily confess that this letter from a member of the NEC disturbed me greatly. Nevertheless, the letter required a response, and the following is the answer it received under date of December 31:

“There is no doubt about the Socialist Labor Party being in bad shape, and I agree that it is difficult to see how we can extricate ourselves from our present predicament with the financial and human resources still available to us. However, the most difficult to overcome of all our problems may be our outlook.

“The decline in the Party’s membership, etc., is bound to have a negative impact on our outlook. That’s human nature. But we have to learn to keep it in perspective. There is nothing to be gained by dwelling on these negative facts, unless it is for the purpose of making a realistic assessment of what can be done with what we have left. How to use those limited financial and human resources effectively is the question we have to confront. That’s our responsibility as officers of the Party.

“The negative side of the equation needs no assistance from

us. There's plenty of it among the membership to go around. It's the positive side that needs our attention. As small as the Party is, and as limited as its resources are, there are still constructive things that can be done. We have to decide what they are and do them. At any rate, we have to do our best to identify them and put them to work. We may make the wrong choices, but we have to make them—and soon.

“Would we have quit if we could have foreseen where the Party would be today ‘when we were fighting to revitalize ourselves in the 1970s’? It seems to me that the question answers itself. Men and women who are devoted to a *principle* don't quit because there will be rough times ahead. They don't even ask if the organizations they form to advance the principle will succeed. At any rate, they don't ask for guarantees. History is filled with examples where men and women have sacrificed considerably more than has ever been asked or expected of the membership of the SLP—and not always for what you or I would consider to be a ‘good cause.’ If many deserted the Continental Army during the darkest days of the American Revolution, others stayed with it. The last remnants of Lee's Army of Northern Virginia are said to have been ready to fling themselves against Grant's overwhelming force at Appomattox—to sacrifice their lives in a cause they knew to be doomed. Surely there are men and women in the SLP who are willing to give something less than the ‘last measure of devotion’ to a principle they know to be correct. As for the Party itself, De Leon summed it up for me when he wrote:

“We know not, and care not whether the SLP will be THE party or not,’ said De Leon. ‘This much, however, is certain. If another party will be necessary, then the birth, vigor and efficiency of that party will depend upon the good work put in now upon the only party that holds and lives up to, practices and preaches, the principles essential to the emancipation of the working class. As the lightening that goes up in the east is immediately seen in the west, so also, should the necessity for such another party rise above the horizon, that necessity will find none to dispute it. Until such time, however, . . . Work in the living present.’

“The staffing problems at national headquarters are among the biggest obstacles we have to overcome. Filling the existing vacancies with warm bodies may no longer be a viable possibility. Every member who has been a member for any length of time is aware of the problems. It is my duty to remind the membership of what those problems are from time-to-time, but it is *their* responsibility to solve them. If the two or three additional members we need won't come forward we will simply have to experiment with other ways to cope. That is our responsibility.

SOCIALIST LABOR PARTY

“Thirteen years ago we dealt with one facet of the staffing problem by reducing the frequency of *The People* by one-half. That was a major setback, and we lost readership. Later on, however, we found it possible to increase the size of the biweekly tabloid from eight to 12 pages—and we kept it up for three or four years. We combined that with an advertising program. The two things together paid off. We increased the size of the readership from 3,000 to 3,700—and we got new members. We had to cut back to eight pages and abandon the advertising program when the financial crisis of 1985–1986 hit, and though we weathered that storm we have not been able to put a similar ‘winning combination’ back together.

“The point is that the 100-year history of the SLP has been one of successive and unrelenting crises, all of which we have survived. All the groups and organizations that were so confident that the SLP was dead and buried are now dead and buried themselves, or nearly so. We have survived the ‘competition,’ so to speak, and have almost a clear field in front of us. It shouldn’t surprise us that we are battered and torn, worn down and, in some quarters, worn out. But we’re still here, with our principles intact—and that is *something!* I don’t think we fully appreciate the significance of this fact, or what a tremendous accomplishment it is. We should take some satisfaction from it, feel good about it, and get on with our work.

“With best wishes,

“Fraternally yours, etc.”

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The third matter I wish to bring to your attention under this heading has to do with the conduct of several NEC members when voting on the *Statement of the National Executive Committee on Suspension of the Editor*. Before I proceed, however, there are two preliminary points that need to be made.

First: The NEC’s decision to suspend the Editor is not a matter that can properly come before this convention. That decision was taken under Article IX, Section 6(a), of the Party’s Constitution, and the NEC’s recommendation to the membership that the Editor be permanently removed has been submitted to a general vote of the whole Party.

The National Convention is the *second* highest authority within the SLP. The highest, of course, is the membership acting through the referendum. Matters that are before a higher body for its consideration logically should not, and organizationally cannot, be taken up by a lower body. This should be obvious, since the lower body cannot override the higher one, and must await and be bound

by that higher decision. Accordingly, that matter cannot be taken up during your deliberations, as it would undermine the integrity of the referendum process now in motion.

What does fall within this convention's realm of responsibility, however, is election of a national administration, i.e., a National Executive Committee composed of seven members, an Editor for the Party's official organ, a Financial Secretary and a National Secretary. The convention must exercise its best judgment in this, as in all other matters that will come before it and which properly fall within its realm of responsibility.

Second: There is ample room within the confines of any discussion or debate on matters affecting the Party's interests for differences of opinion. However, once a discussion has come to a close and a decision is reached that decision is binding. Members—in this instance, members of the NEC—have no right to prolong discussion over a matter that has been settled after a vote has decided the question at issue. If that were not the case it would be absolutely impossible for the NEC, for a section, for a National Convention, or for the Party as a whole, to bring any debate to a close and to move on to implement the decision of the majority. There would be endless wrangling, and untold damage would be done to the organization. This may seem obvious; yet, it is a problem that arises within the Party from time-to-time, as I am sure it does in other organizations.

The one place where it should never arise, however, is within the NEC, where the Party has a right to expect that a minority will not attempt to frustrate, undermine or obstruct the majority decision. I regret to say that this principle was forgotten by some of the NEC members after the NEC had reached its decision on the Editor and turned its attention to adopting a statement explaining its action to the membership.

With these words of introduction, the following is a consideration that you should bear in mind when deciding on which members shall make up the NEC for the next two years.

The NEC vote on suspending the Editor closed on March 26, with a majority in favor of the proposition. That settled the matter, or should have, and the national office immediately set to work to draft a statement to the membership in the NEC's behalf. This was completed and mailed to all NEC members on April 5. The NEC members were reminded to read the statement with care before marking their ballots. What was expected, of course, is that

SOCIALIST LABOR PARTY

every NEC member would evaluate the proposed statement from the standpoint of accuracy in conveying the decision to suspend the Editor to the membership. In effect, the proposition was: "Does this statement provide the membership with a complete and accurate explanation of why the NEC suspended the Editor?" Any disagreement on the question of the statement's accuracy, etc., would have been legitimate grounds for a negative vote. Any disagreement over the decision to suspend the Editor would not be legitimate grounds for a negative vote.

The NEC vote on the statement closed on April 12. The results of the vote were promptly reported to the NEC, as follows:

"To the Members of the NEC

"Dear Comrades:

"This is to inform you that the NEC has voted to approve the *Statement of the National Executive Committee on Suspension of the Editor* by a vote of four in favor and three against. The NEC Members commented on the Statement, as follows:

"[NEC Member A]... (voting 'yes'): 'I am very pleased by the careful, well-reasoned thoroughness of the statement—and for the socialist lessons it contains. The statement should leave no doubt in the members' minds why the NEC was compelled to take action to suspend the Editor from office, and why we are recommending permanent removal of the Editor. . . .'"

"[NEC Member B]... (voting 'no'): '1—The Editor states the obvious that the party has declined and that we have not been able to reverse that decline. For this statement he has been severely castigated and it is made the basis for charges of incompetence and disloyalty. It has also been called a self-serving justification but it is a fact, and the truth should not be the basis for charges of incompetence and/or disloyalty.

"'2—It is claimed that his spirit of pessimism may have affected *The People*. This was never detected before, simply because he never let it be reflected in *The People*, nor would he. No evidence whatsoever is offered that he is incompetent. Those who espouse this view should examine the last issue of *The People* and indicate just where this is evident. They should also offer concrete examples for the charge that The Editor is incompetent. Certainly many members are pessimistic but continue to work for Socialism. To say that because members are pessimistic they are no longer capable of advocating Socialism is not a reasonable premise.

"'3—Much is made of Comrade Whitney's reference to his family being deprived by his work with the Party. Actually, he was taking his family into consideration. He had two basic options—to continue as editor and perhaps in less than ten years

no longer be employed. In today's Capitalist job market, who would employ him and what would be his qualifications? The other option is to guarantee himself and family a good income well into the future. . . . Why brush aside his assertion that if the Party's prospects were better he would not consider leaving? Why brush aside his statement that he still believes in the Party's Principles? Why make light of his hope to continue studying why the party is in decline?

“4—The implication is that Comrade Whitney is deliberately doing the Party harm by quitting as Editor. The fact is, despite the assertion that his case is different, a number of writers before him have come to the same decision and quit the Party's employ. Had they not done so this would not be such a crisis. Had they even contributed from the field it would not be. To say that the party's future depends on one person is simply “One more indication of a more basic weakness whose nature we have not been able to determine.”

“Other points could be noted, but the fact remains that the Editor is well within his rights to refuse another term. All the rationalizations offered doesn't [sic] change this. No concrete evidence has been offered that he is incompetent or couldn't continue to competently edit the paper until the end of July. The haste in terminating his editorship has not benefited the Party despite the assertions that it would, appears to be based more on emotion than logic. The Editor was denied access to correspondence to NEC members despite Article IX - Section 4 (e) of the Constitution. It states that the Editor should have a voice, but no vote in all its proceedings. Further, the spirit of the constitution is reflected in Article XII, Section 1(e) that states he should have the right to circulate a written reply with the ballot. Common democratic rules would dictate this, plus the right of the membership to hear his side.

“Also, the reflections of the Editor on the decline of the Party deserves [sic] more than a dismissal as self-justification. Something is wrong with what we are doing. Millions of workers are potential members. In the battle for the mind of workers, new tactics must be used when others don't work. Instead of hurling abuse at one another, lets understand that individuals vary in their commitment.

“Fifteen years of dedicated service deserves [sic] more than abuse.’

“**[NEC Member C] . . . (voting ‘yes’):** ‘The NEC statement on suspension of the Editor is correct, and, for the best interests of the SLP, must be approved.

“‘I respect our National Secretary for his integrity and his forthright actions stemming from the Editor's betrayal of the trust placed in him.’

“**[NEC Member D] . . . (voting ‘no’):** ‘If Comrade Whitney

SOCIALIST LABOR PARTY

accepted a new 2-yr. term to serve as editor of the People, he would have been considered loyal and competent. But because he refused [sic] to do so he was branded disloyal and incompetent!

“‘Frankly, I think that he was a good Editor and his pessimistic views about the future of the SLP were never reflected in his writings as Editor of the People.’

“**[NEC Member E]... (voting ‘yes’)**: ‘It is my opinion that the NEC statement on suspension of the editor goes right to the heart of the matter.’

“**[NEC Member F]... (voting ‘no’)**: ‘I am particularly against the Statement to the membership because it does not include the National Secretary’s letter of March 4th. I think it should be included.’

“**[NEC Member G]... (voting ‘yes’)**: ‘I remain convinced that the NEC acted correctly in carrying out its Constitutional mandate and fully support the NEC Statement on suspension of the Editor.’

“The statement has been approved and is being sent to the printer. A general letter and ballot for the membership to use when voting on removal of the Editor will be mailed as soon as the statement has been printed, folded and stitched. You will be kept informed.

“Fraternally yours, etc.”

As of today (April 24), only one member of the NEC has written to comment on the preceding, which is unfortunate. I have no control over that, however, and since it is pertinent I am inserting it here:

“Dear Comrade Bills:

“This will acknowledge receipt of your letter dated April 13, conveying the results of the vote on the NEC Statement on Suspension of Editor. Thank you. I am pleased to see that the statement was approved, but I am disturbed by several NEC members’ comments, as follows:

“Comrade [B’s]... remarks are out of order. They do not address the question that was before the NEC (its statement on suspension). Comrade [B’s]... comments addressed the previous question that has been settled by this committee (the suspension of the Editor). Comrade [B]... had ample opportunity to voice his objections to the previous matter. At the very least, he could have made it a point to participate in the March 16 conference call, and he could have replied to the National Secretary’s March 19 letter addressed to him. He did neither.

* * * *

“Comrade [D’s]... remarks are also out of order. He, too,

commented on the already-settled matter of suspension.

“I’m wondering if these two comrades understand that they are obstructing democratic procedure by their persistence in discussing a matter that has been settled by this committee.

“I also believe that Comrade [F] . . . was obliged to provide reasoning for her vote on such an important matter. Simply stating that the National Secretary’s March 4 letter should have been included in the statement is not an explanation. Now the NEC is left to guess what Comrade [F] . . . saw in the statement that caused to her to vote against it. It may have been important enough for the NEC to act on it, but we’ve been denied that information.

“If my letter sounds a bit impatient, it is because I am. As veteran SLP members we should all know by now how to proceed in discussing and voting on a matter, and to abide by majority rule.

“Fraternally yours, etc.”

On motion, the report was referred to an appropriate committee when elected.

The National Secretary presented the following section of his report:

Recent Developments With Regard to the Suspended Editor

Several days ago, the organizer of Section San Francisco Bay Area received the following letter from Richard Whitney:

“444 Shorewood Lane
“San Jose, CA 95134
“4/19/93

“Donna Bills
“Organizer
“Section San Francisco Bay Area
“P.O. Box 50414
“Palo Alto, CA 94303

“Dear Ms. Bills,

“As you are aware, on Feb. 26 of this year I informed SLP National Secretary Robert Bills and the NEC of my decision not to accept nomination for another term as Editor of *The People*. Under date of March 1, the National Secretary replied, in a letter that criticized me for failing to explicitly state the reasons for my decision, implied that my failure to do so indicated a lack of ‘respect’ for the party and the staff, and maintained that I had an ‘obligation to inform the membership . . . and the staff’ of those reasons.

“Though I had every intention of providing a fuller explanation than was contained in my initial letter, the National Secretary’s efforts to goad me into fully relating my reasons had the desired effect. I replied under date of March 2, with a letter detailing my reasons. Yet in the National Secretary’s response, dated March 3, he disingenuously feigned surprise, stating, ‘I did not expect such a lengthy and involved reply,’ and he *selectively* quoted his earlier letter as if to ‘prove’ that he wasn’t expecting me to actually relate the full reasons for my decision. Any reasonable person reading both his March 1 letter and his March 3 letter in sequence cannot help but notice the manipulative character of the correspondence—first I was taken to task for not ‘telling all,’ then the National Secretary acts ‘surprised’ when I comply!

“Then for the next 23 days, I received not a single piece of NEC correspondence—even though I was still serving in my post as Editor, and thus, according to the party constitution, was entitled to have a ‘voice’ in all NEC ‘proceedings’ (Article IX, Section 4e). One can’t very well have a ‘voice’ in ‘proceedings’ carried out behind one’s back!

“That NEC ‘proceedings’ were indeed being conducted behind my back was made evident in a two-paragraph letter dated March 26, ostensibly from the NEC as a whole, informing me that I had been suspended, due to ‘certain statements and allegations of fact contained’ in my March 2 letter ‘that cannot be reconciled with the standards required for the proper conduct and competent execution of the duties and responsibilities of Editor of the official organ of the Socialist Labor Party.’ There was no explanation of what the purportedly offending ‘statements and allegations’ were. The National Secretary all but insisted that I relate my reasons for not accepting another term as Editor, yet he, and/or the NEC, saw fit to keep the reasons for my suspension a secret. At least, they were kept secret from me.

“I was told that I ‘might’ be given the opportunity to submit a statement along with a forthcoming membership ballot on my suspension, depending on how the NEC interpreted Article XII, Section 2 e of the constitution, but insofar as I was unconstitutionally excluded from the discussion leading to my suspension, and have no knowledge of the basis of the NEC’s ruling, it is, of course, impossible to prepare a rebuttal. In effect, I was ‘tried’ and ‘convicted’ in absentia, with no opportunity to explain or defend my March 2 letter, and without even being informed of the specific charges made against me. Furthermore, my March 26 request for the relevant NEC correspondence pertaining to the decision to suspend me has been ignored by the National Secretary. I haven’t even been given the courtesy of a reply.

“The only constitutional basis for suspending an Editor of the SLP is proof that an Editor has become ‘incompetent or disloyal.’

My March 2 letter contained no evidence, let alone proof, of either condition. Most of the letter explained the personal concerns that led to my decision not to accept nomination for another term; at worst it merely expressed my *doubts* about the organization's survivability—doubts based on the *fact* of its decades-long decline in membership. To regard the expression of such doubts as evidence of incompetence or disloyalty is absurd. Moreover, if my letter did contain such evidence, the concerned party member might well ask why it is that it took the NEC over three weeks to make such a determination—especially considering that the constitution demands that the ‘incompetent or disloyal’ Editor ‘shall be *at once* suspended by that Committee.’ (Emphasis added.) If my letter truly made it self-evident that I was ‘incompetent or disloyal,’ why did the NEC permit such an Editor to produce another issue of *The People*?

“These disgraceful and farcical actions by the National Secretary and the NEC not only violate the SLP's own rules, they also make a mockery of socialist principles. Socialism is the next highest stage of civilization, yet these actions—in denying me any reasonable opportunity to even hear, let alone respond to, the charges against me, and in denying me the right to face my accusers—fall well *below* even bourgeois standards of rights and justice. Far from dispelling my doubts about the ability of the organization to survive and reverse its fortunes, they further testify that it is beset by serious and deep-seated weaknesses.

“I can no longer continue my association with an organization whose top administrator and executive body can so readily flout the organization's rules and principles, and abuse its human resources, without reason.

“Much as I appreciate all that I have learned and gained from the SLP during my long association with it—and I have certainly tried to give something back to it at the same time—I have now come to the conclusion that it is fatally flawed, and I choose not to remain for the funeral. I shall work for socialism through more viable organizations and more promising pathways and methods.

“I hereby resign from the SLP.

“Enclosed is my newsstand report covering from January to the present, and a check covering the funds collected. Also enclosed is the key to the lock on the stand outside the Long's Drug Store on Milpitas Blvd. (near Lucky's supermarket). The lock on the other stand, near Save-Mart on Calaveras Blvd., was evidently removed by a determined and desperate victim of capitalism sometime prior to my last visit.

“Sincerely,
[signed] “RICHARD WHITNEY
“Richard Whitney

“P.S. Please cancel my bundle order.”

Comment seems superfluous. There was nothing in his letter of February 26 to suggest that he had any intention of providing any explanation for his decision, and certainly nothing that “goaded” him into shooting one off within 24 hours. After all, I had learned to wait for the Editor to disclose what was rolling around in his mind for weeks on end. However, when his explanation of March 2 came it came with this:

“...I had every intention of providing a fuller explanation.... It is now clear to me that I should have indicated as much in my Feb. 26 letter, and that that letter does indeed convey a different impression than I intended.”

And it also came with this:

“...I am willing to draft a separate letter for the general membership if you [the National Secretary] like. Otherwise you may quote from this one, but *I don't think it will be appropriate to reproduce it in its entirety.*” (Emphasis added.)

Well, I didn't “like.” Why shouldn't the membership see his letter of March 2? Was there something in it he didn't want the membership to read?

The man had no more right to see NEC correspondence after writing his letter of March 2 than Benedict Arnold had to see George Washington's marching orders.

His ignorance of the Party's Constitution is staggering. As I wrote the NEC on April 8 in regard to another letter from this man:

“It seems to me that our ersatz Editor takes a somewhat pedantic view of the Constitution. His ‘request’ is a bit cheeky, given that he wrote his epistle of March 2 specifically for the ‘benefit’ of the NEC and the National Secretary. To me that means, ‘Here, talk this over, then let me know what you think.’ That's what we did, and that's that, at least as far as I'm concerned.

“At any rate, as a suspended officer of the Party it's not for him to call on the NEC to do this, that or anything else. Accordingly, my only plan for Whitney's hoity-toity homily on his due under the Constitution is to file it.”

Apparently he didn't even know what provision of the Constitution had been invoked to suspend him. No section had submitted a

proposition calling for his removal. He was suspended by the NEC.

Let the latest letter from the former Editor stand as a lesson to all who believed that he deserved any consideration from the Party, the membership or the national headquarters staff. What some who seem to think otherwise have forgotten, or failed to notice, is that it was the Party, and not the Editor, that was injured by all this; that it was not the Party that inflicted an injury on the Editor, but the Editor who inflicted injury on the Party. They forget, ignore or don't want to see that the Editor knew that his action would inflict the injury—and that he did not give a tinker's damn. He decided to do what he believed was in his own best interests, and he decided it long before he made his intentions known.

Now, then, as to who went behind whose back.

Prior to the NEC's action in removing Whitney from office we had reason to believe that he knew what his decision was long before he said he was "wrestling with a difficult decision." We had reason to believe that Whitney had decided to return to college to study law, that he had aspirations for becoming a "labor" lawyer, that he had already taken the entrance examinations, and that what he told me on January 28 was a flat out lie. The only thing Whitney had been wrestling with was the latch on his mailbox. He was waiting to learn if he had been accepted by the college or law school to which he had applied. Apparently, he had either received or knew he would receive what he was waiting for by February 25 when he so readily agreed to give me his decision within 24 hours, even though only two of the three weeks he had asked for to "think things through" had passed.

None of this could be included with the NEC's statement because we had no concrete evidence to prove what we all knew to be true. Then, a few weeks ago, Whitney's father-in-law wrote a statement in defense of our middle-aged college boy in which he gave the game away. As the Editor's father-in-law put it:

"... He [Whitney] is a college graduate, speaks well, writes well [!], and is able to do well in college entrance exams even with a high level of competition. After graduation his family would live much better and his younger children would be certain of attending college, which is becoming more expensive. How many, so quick to condemn him, would not do the same?"

How many? We needn't go any further than the one remaining member of the editorial staff for an answer to that question. Com-

SOCIALIST LABOR PARTY

rade Boettcher and his comrade wife have two children of their own. But if we must go further, we can turn to Comrade Donna Bills and her comrade husband, your National Secretary, who also have two children. And these were among the first to condemn the Editor, and with good cause.

Now we know that the Editor has taken college entrance exams, and passed them. From this we may also surmise that he spent time studying for those examinations—time he took away from his responsibilities as Editor of *The People*. From what his father-in-law has written, we may be certain that all this is true, allowing for what may be some imprecision as to detail.

We first learned of the Editor's plans at the March 10 meeting of the national headquarters staff, where one member of the staff stated that the Editor had told him of what those plans were. He was planning to go to college to study law. He has ambitions to become a lawyer, and not just any kind of lawyer, but a "labor" lawyer. In other words, as one member of the staff remarked on that occasion, the Editor of *The People*, the man who was occupying De Leon's chair, aspires—if that's the word—to become another *Morris Hillquit!*

This disclosure—which, incidentally, the NEC was informed of during the conference call of March 16—coupled with the contents of the letter of March 2, decided the staff that Whitney should be removed from office. He had deceived them, made a mockery of everything they had done to support him in his editorial work, and the faith they and the membership had placed in his integrity as a dedicated SLP man and national officer of the Party.

With the confirmation of all this by the Editor's father-in-law, the following from a memorandum I wrote on March 12, two days after the staff meeting, may be of interest:

"Comrade [A] . . . spent sometime with me late this afternoon. . . . He brought up the subject of the Editor. During our conversation he confirmed what he said during the staff meeting on March 10, namely, that the Editor had applied for and been accepted by a law school. He also said that the Editor had confided that he 'wasn't looking forward to telling' the National Secretary, but thought the National Secretary would 'eventually weasel it out of me,' i.e., 'out of' the Editor. When I asked Comrade [A] . . . if 'weasel' was the word the Editor had used, he said yes, but did not think he meant it in a derogatory sense.

"As our conversation proceeded, Comrade [A] . . . exhibited some interest in how [others] had left the staff, and wanted to

know what difference there was between what they had done and what the Editor was doing. I told him that I was not a member of the staff in 1978 when [the others] decided to leave, so I was not directly involved, and that I had no idea how they made their decision known to the staff or to the National Secretary. However, I also said that I was probably a member of the NEC Subcommittee at the time and may have had some information about it. I went on to say that while I felt fairly certain that these former members of the staff also made arrangements for other jobs while still on the Party's payroll, the situations were not comparable, for the following reasons:

"1. They said and did nothing while members of the staff, or afterwards while they remained members of the Party, about the Party, its policies and principles, or its prospects. They simply left.

"2. That they did not seek employment in a field that was in direct conflict with socialist principles.

"3. That, as far as I know, they did not involve themselves politically until after their ties with the SLP had been completely severed.

"Comrade [A] . . . also noted that [another former member] was a lawyer, and wanted to know if I saw any difference in that. The difference, I explained, was that [the other former member] was already a practicing lawyer before he ever came into contact with the Party, that he never concealed this or made any pretense about the nature of his occupation, and that he did not maintain a private practice. [The other former member], I added, worked for the government defending the down-and-out for a salary, and was probably led into that field by 'liberal inclinations' he had long before he came into contact with the SLP. I continued by saying that this was just the opposite of what the Editor was doing, and that what the Editor was doing was all the more reprehensible because his aim was to become a 'labor lawyer.' I also repeated what Comrade [B] . . . had said during the staff meeting on March 10 about a man occupying De Leon's chair while aspiring to be a Morris Hillquit.

"At one point in our discussion, Comrade [A] . . . stated that he now understood why he shouldn't have 'felt bad' about disclosing the Editor's plans at the staff meeting of March 10. We went over the whole ground, by which I mean I explained why I believed the Editor had been totally dishonest with us, that whatever 'wrestling' the Editor had done with himself was over and done with long before he told me that he was 'considering' the possibility of not making himself available for another term of office, that it was over as soon as he began to think in terms of becoming a lawyer, and that it was definitely over the moment he decided to apply for admission to a law school. I continued by saying that the only reason the Editor concealed his decision

from me and claimed to be ‘wrestling’ with it was that he first wanted to be sure about his being accepted into law school. I added that it was clear to me now that he was ‘only using the Party’ to insure his income until classes began, that this was thoroughly unprincipled, and that it was the Editor, and not Comrade [A] . . . who had ‘betrayed a trust.’ I also told Comrade [A] . . . that I had no intention of asking the Editor what his plans were, much less ‘weasel them out of him,’ but that the Editor’s ‘legalistic precision’ about July 30th being his last day was probably explained by when he expected to start school.

“Comrade [A] . . . noted that the Editor not only knew what his decision was when he applied for law school, but that he took an examination to qualify, that he had been informed that he had passed that examination, and that classes might be starting in August. . . .”

The following day, another member of the staff came into my office for a wide-ranging discussion on certain matters that had been on her mind. During that discussion the subject of the Editor came up, though from a somewhat different angle. A portion of the memo I wrote on that occasion follows:

“Comrade [C] . . . began by asking what the effects might be if we were to suspend publication of *The People* for three months to concentrate on other areas of agitation. I replied by stating that, barring it proving to be physically impossible to continue on the basis of what was decided on March 10, at least until the National Convention—and allowing for the fact that the specifics of how Comrades Boettcher, Karp and I might be able to swing it had yet to be worked out—neither the NEC nor I had any authority to suspend publication. In the meantime, I saw it as my duty to keep the ship afloat until the National Convention, and ultimately the membership, decided where we should devote our energies.

* * * *

“ . . . She said that if we had shown signs of progress perhaps the Editor would not have done what he had chosen to do. She did add, however, that she had absolutely no use for the Editor and that she was thoroughly disgusted with him, particularly because of his ambitions to become a lawyer.

“I replied by saying that the Editor had not chosen his path because the Party was smaller today than it was two years ago, or four years ago: he did what he was doing because he had ‘lost his principles, if he ever had any,’ and because he was now out to look after himself and to hell with the rest of us. I added that there was no level of growth the Party could have shown that would make a principled man out of an unprincipled one, and

that no principled man would ever abandon the Party and hasten it on toward its destruction. . . .”

I have no time left in which to go further into this. However, the lesson is as old as the SLP itself. “The principle and the organization are one.” The two cannot be severed. If the SLP occasionally attracts a man or woman of low character, if he or she succeeds in fooling us for a time, we should at least be alert to the signs of their betrayal when they are thrust in front of us. As De Leon once observed:

“While movements are infinitely above men, no movement can be successful that is carried on on the shoulders of scamps. For this reason a knowledge of persons is essential. He who disregards this may thank his stars, if no worse befall him than to flounder from blunder to blunder.”

—*The People*, July 3, 1898

We made a blunder when we honored this man with the editorial chair once occupied by De Leon. But, if we have learned the lesson there is no need for us to flounder—not even for a moment. Whitney goes off to look for the other party where he belongs, and that is as it should be. He does not belong to us.

“The Socialist Labor Party has no use for trash,” as De Leon put it. “The soundest and most beautiful architectural theory would present but a sorry heap of ruins if executed with unfit material. And so with Socialism. No amount of sound and beautiful Socialist theory alone will raise and uphold the dome of the Socialist Republic. It needs fit material for such structure. The Social Democracy, whether Kangaroo or Debseroo, can neither produce nor attract such material; look at the condoned corruption among them. The Socialist Labor Party alone does that. Underestimate not the space, and time, and effort devoted by the SLP to the ascertaining of the qualities of men in these movements, and to the exposure of the hollow bricks and bricks without straws. The SLP is not a preacher of Socialism merely; it is not a St. John the Baptist, howling in the wilderness; it is a driller of the Revolution. Hence it both teaches and organizes. Either fall in line, or get from under.”

—*Daily People*, March 24, 1901

On motion, the report was referred to an appropriate committee when elected.

At 10:25 a.m., a 10-minute recess was declared. Reconvened at

SOCIALIST LABOR PARTY

10:45 a.m.

The National Secretary presented the following section of his report:

Constitutional Amendments

1. Article V, Section 7 [Section 2]: It is recommended that the section and all its provisions be deleted in their entirety, and that the remaining sections be renumbered accordingly.

Comment: These provisions were adopted two years ago to facilitate the transition from the old to the new NEC setup, and now serve only to clutter up the Constitution.

2. Article VII, Section 5. (b): It is recommended that this provision be amended to read as follows:

(b) Delegates shall be members in good standing of the Party for at least 12 consecutive months. This requirement can be suspended, however, upon prior approval of the NEC.

Comment: The purpose is to strike the first sentence of the provision as it now reads as being a source of confusion within the Party. It is believed that by restoring the original language as it existed from 1900 until 1964 the original clarity of purpose would also be restored and eliminate an unnecessary source of confusion and occasional controversy. The second sentence of the provision would not be affected by this change.

3. Article XII, Section 3: It is recommended that this provision be amended by the addition of a separate paragraph (b), and that the existing provision be retained as paragraph (a), the new paragraph to provide as follows:

(b) The NEC shall determine when the use of ballots shall be required.

Comment: The purpose is to clarify what is already an established practice, but which is occasionally overlooked or misunderstood in some sections. There have been instances of out-of-town members and members excused from attending business meetings being deprived of an opportunity to vote when viva voce voting has been used in voting on important matters such as the election of delegates and alternate delegates to the National Convention. The addition of this provision would remove an unnecessary source of

doubt in new sections and add the force of constitutional authority to counterbalance the occasional oversight that occurs in established sections.

4. It is recommended that a new Section 6 be added to Article XII, and that the existing Section 6 and all following sections be renumbered accordingly. The new provision would provide the following:

Section 6. No Section shall endorse or lend support of any kind to any trade or labor union without the specific approval of the NEC or a National Convention.

Comment: Although one might assume that this would be self-evident for any section of the SLP, and superfluous in light of the existing guidelines previously adopted and included in the handbook on *Intervention and Union Work*, there has been at least one recent occurrence where an experienced section of the Party made a financial contribution to the strike fund of a union that was not even engaged in a strike at the time, and without prior consultation with the national office. Furthermore, in this particular case the section went outside its area of jurisdiction to another state in order to make its contribution, and only informed the national office after its contribution had been made. No section should ever go outside its area of jurisdiction for any purpose without the specific approval of the section having jurisdiction over the area in question, or of the NEC in areas where no section exists. No section should ever lend financial or any other support to any institution of capitalism under any circumstances, unless it is through the national organization and in connection with some Party purpose that has been decided or approved at the national level.

The national office has not been free to pursue this matter with the offending section, and since the section in question obviously is unclear on where it does and does not belong geographically, and in other respects, despite its being among the oldest and most experienced sections of the Party, this provision would remove any cause for doubt born of ignorance and defuse any possibility of unnecessary future controversy or dispute within the Party on such elementary matters. The exceptions allowed for by the amendment being recommended are identical in purpose to the exceptions allowed for by the preceding provision governing Party relations with “issue-oriented coalitions or movements,” and are included for the

same reasons.

On motion, the report was referred to an appropriate committee when elected.

Report of Financial Secretary

E. Barnes presented the following report:

**Financial Report to the 41st National Convention of the
Socialist Labor Party**

This financial report is an elaboration on the general letter, which will accompany the audited financial statement mailed to the membership.

A comparison between the fiscal year, ending December 31, 1992, with the fiscal year, ending December 31, 1991, reveal the following:

- (1) A 2 percent *decrease* in regular operating expenses.
- (2) A 7 percent *increase* in payroll expenses. (A mail clerk was added to the headquarters staff.)
- (3) A 20 percent increase in other expenses. (Includes occasional expenses such as equipment purchases, special project expenses, e.g., *The People Centennial* and the SLP's *1992 Campaign for Socialism*, special printing expenses, etc.)

The increase in other expenses accounted for \$6,018 of the \$90,716 deficit at the end of 1992. It represents part of the \$25,482 (\$17,922 in postage and \$7,559 for printing) expenditure incurred for the SLP's *1992 Campaign for Socialism*.

- (4) The remaining deficit (\$84,698) was the result of a **40 percent overall decrease in income**.
 - a) A 13 percent decrease in interest income.
 - b) A 20 percent decrease in funds from members and sympathizers.
 - c) A 69 percent decrease in funds from bequests.
 - d) A 69 percent decrease in funds from miscellaneous sources.

The Party's reserves, which showed a balance of \$467,885 at the beginning of 1992, were used to pay the deficit. The financial statement at the end of 1992 recorded a net loss of \$93,895 leaving a balance of \$373,990 in the reserves. Unless this downward trend in income loss is reversed, deficits averaging close to \$100,000 a

41ST NATIONAL CONVENTION

year will deplete the Party's reserves in two to three years.

However, merely holding the line for several years will seriously reduce our potential for reaching workers, and diminish our chances for increasing the Party's membership, as well as our ability to make **any kind** of an impact during the 1996 election campaign.

Bequests continue to stabilize the Party's financial situation. Without bequests in the amount of \$42,175 in 1992, the deficit for the year would have increased by that amount to \$132,891.

Bequests received in 1992 were as follows:

Harry T. Gannon	\$ 2,123.61
Harry Barbola	7,000.00
Robert C. Wagner	4,874.74
Harold F. Haggett	1,000.00
Rose Cooper	16,500.00
William Walbridge	10,677.07
Total Bequests	\$42,175.42

Projections for 1993

The first quarter of 1992 reflected a **deficit of \$27,274.87.**

The first quarter of 1993 reflected a **deficit of \$47,558.97.**

Expenses for the first quarter-1993 compared with the first quarter-1992 show:

- (1) Daily receipts remained the same.
- (2) A 68 percent *decrease* in interest income.
- (3) A 31 percent *decrease* in contributions to funds from members and sympathizers.
- (4) An 11 percent *decrease* in regular operating expenses.
- (5) A 2 percent *increase* in payroll expenses.

Overall there was a 7 percent increase* in expenses and a 40 percent decrease in income. (*Does not include computer equipment purchased during the first quarter of 1993. The \$7,875.40 expenditure was charged to other expenses.)

Bequests received so far in 1993 total \$33,243.21.

There are four other estates with settlements pending from which payment should be received in 1993:

D. Ballantyne (amount unknown), L. Grebe (\$2,217.40), M. Conklin (\$12,500) and I. Newman (\$40,000 to \$79,000).

The total receipts from bequests range from \$54,700 to \$93,300 for the year.

It is highly unlikely that any additional bequests will be realized

SOCIALIST LABOR PARTY

in 1993, and, whatever is realized, will merely wipe out the deficit for 1992, and possibly a portion of the deficit for 1993.

There are some obvious factors that are contributing to the Party's financial problems, including the economy. Underemployment, as well as unemployment, is taking its toll on the majority of workers, including members and sympathizers of the SLP.

The "recovery" hailed by the media has not trickled down, nor will it trickle down to the workers. It is not just socialists who are pointing out that the "recovery," is based on increased production with fewer workers. Capitalism is making it plain that—like it or not—to remain competitive in the world market, increased production with fewer workers is a fact of life under capitalism that must be accepted by the workers. How workers will respond to this reality, now that there is little pretense about capitalism's relationship with them, remains to be seen.

Problems that are peculiar to the Party itself include the demographics of our membership, and subscribers to *The People*, which affect our ability to build new sections and strengthen those we have. Many subscribers to *The People* are in areas where there are no sections, and sections are in areas where there is a limited number of responsive subscribers. Related to that is the number of Party members-at-large, who have no contact with other members for moral support, or guidance in organizing Party activities—whose inactivity is most likely due to their isolation.

An undeniable problem is the advanced age of many of our members, which has removed many of us from the workplace without younger members to replace us, and in some cases has limited, or curtailed, participation in Party activities that require physical stamina. These things can't be changed. But they are problems that can be overcome.

The election of a Financial Secretary at the 1991 convention obviously did not solve the Party's financial problems. Plans for a Sustainer Fund appeal to readers of *The People*, and the placement of appropriate ads in the paper on an ongoing basis to encourage readers to make bequests to the Party, have been under consideration. However, these appeals will be going to the same people who have been asked to contribute to a variety of funds in addition to the standard Press Security Fund, Leaflet Fund, the Thanksgiving Fund and Christmas Box, including the more recent Campaign Fund, Moving Fund, and Publications Fund. While further efforts along these lines may bring *some* results, it is doubtful it will make

a substantial difference in the income the Party is presently realizing.

The solution appears to lie in increasing the number of people to whom we can appeal for funds—people who *must* have an interest in the SLP's program. Volume would certainly increase revenue, however, numbers for numbers' sake has never been an option for the SLP. But, out of a population that exceeds 250 million, there must be thousands, most likely millions, of American workers who can see the logic behind socialist industrial unionism. We must find a way to reach enough of them to sustain this organization—enough of them so that we can continue to publish our literature, and *The People*—enough of them so that the Party can maintain whatever access it still has to public forums.

The Party's agitational opportunities have always been limited. But without a viable organization, letters to the press will be less effective, the SLP will not receive inquiries for information from students, or invitations to lecture at schools; will not receive invitations from radio and TV stations—rare though they are—or have legitimate access to the ballot. And, last but not least, workers may lose access to SLP literature.

If the solution to the Party's financial situation lies with increasing the Party's membership, building the Party's membership depends on more aggressive use of the opportunities it currently has.

The responsibility of those of you, who are delegates to this convention, is to weigh all of the options, in view of the limited physical and financial resources available, and come up with the best long-term solution you can—not only to keep the SLP from further decline, but to set in motion plans to help it grow.

It will then be up to the Party's membership to give full support to the action taken at this convention.

Fraternally submitted,
[signed] EDNA V. BARNES
Financial Secretary

On motion, the report was referred to an appropriate committee when elected.

Introduction of Resolutions

On motion, Resolution 1-A from Sect. Akron, Ohio, submitted through the national office, was referred to an appropriate committee when elected. [See Appendix, page 148.]

SOCIALIST LABOR PARTY

On motion, Resolution 1-B from Section Akron, submitted through the national office, was referred to an appropriate committee when elected. [See Appendix, page 148.]

On motion, Resolution 1-C from Section Akron, submitted through the national office, was referred to an appropriate committee when elected. [See Appendix, page 148.]

On motion, Resolution 1-D from Section Los Angeles, Calif., submitted through the national office, was referred to an appropriate committee when elected. [See Appendix, page 149.]

On motion, Resolution 3-A from National Member-at-Large G. Tagle, Pa., submitted through the national office, was referred to an appropriate committee when elected. [See Appendix, page 157.]

On motion, Resolution 3-B from National Member-at-Large G. Tagle, Pa., submitted through the national office, was referred to an appropriate committee when elected. [See Appendix, page 158.]

On motion, Resolution 3-C from National Member-at-Large G. Tagle, Pa., submitted through the national office, was referred to an appropriate committee when elected. [See Appendix, page 158.]

On motion, Resolution 3-D from National Members-at-Large F. Dorn and D. Bradia, N.Y., submitted through the national office, was referred to an appropriate committee when elected. [See Appendix, page 159.]

On motion, Resolution 3-E from National Members-at-Large F. Dorn and D. Bradia, N.Y., submitted through the national office, was referred to an appropriate committee when elected. [See Appendix, page 160.]

On motion, Resolution 3-F from National Members-at-Large F. Dorn and D. Bradia, submitted through the national office, was rejected upon motion duly made and seconded.

Delegate E. Leader presented Resolution 2-A.

A motion was made and seconded to reject the resolution. The chair was not able to determine the vote by voice vote. A motion was then passed that the vote on the motion be taken by roll call. The motion to reject the resolution was passed by a vote of 15 in favor, 7 against, as follows:

A. Bradshaw - no; A. Stokes - no; D. Bills - yes; A.A. Albaugh - yes; E. Thiele - no; H. Coretz - yes; J. Toth - yes; K. Heck - yes; E. Leader - no; K. Kapitz - yes; R. Burns - yes; S. Fink - yes; G.S. Taylor - yes; C. Turner - yes; M. Mahoney - yes; F. Cline - yes; L. Fisher - yes; J. Frank - no; A. Haber - no; J. Hollon - yes; C. Markel - no; J. McHugh - yes.

41ST NATIONAL CONVENTION

Discussion of National Secretary's Report

Discussion of the National Secretary's "Introduction" began at 11:58 a.m. and closed at 12:29 p.m.

Discussion of the section on "National Headquarters" began at 12:30 p.m. and closed at 12:40 p.m.

A one-hour recess was declared at 12:40 p.m.

AFTERNOON SESSION, SUNDAY, MAY 2, 1993

The session was called to order at 1:40 p.m.

On roll call, all present.

Discussion of National Secretary's Report

There was no discussion on the section "State of Organization."

Discussion on the section "1992 Campaign for Socialism" began at 1:42 p.m. and closed at 1:49 p.m.

Discussion on the section "General Activities" began at 1:49 p.m. and closed at 1:58 p.m.

There was no discussion on the section "Interferences."

Discussion on the section "Party Press and Literature" began at 1:59 p.m. and ended at 2:05 p.m.

Discussion on the section "NEC and National Officers" began at 2:05 p.m. and ended at 2:07 p.m.

Discussion on the section "Recent Developments With Regard to the Suspended Editor" began at 2:27 p.m. and closed at 2:30 p.m.

Discussion of Financial Secretary's Report

Discussion on the report began at 2:30 p.m. and ended at 2:35 p.m.

Determination of Committees

At 2:35 p.m., a recess was declared until 3 p.m. Reconvened at 3:10 p.m.

A motion was passed to establish the following five committees:

State of Organization (3 members)

Agitation (5 members)

Party Press and Literature (5 members)

National Headquarters (3 members)

Constitution (3 members)

SOCIALIST LABOR PARTY

Referring Matters to Committees

On motion, the National Secretary's "Introduction" was referred to the Committee on Party Press and Literature.

On motion, the National Secretary's report on "National Headquarters" was referred to the Committee on National Headquarters.

On motion, the National Secretary's report on "State of Organization" was referred to the Committee on State of Organization.

On motion, the National Secretary's report on "*1992 Campaign for Socialism*" was referred to the Committee on Agitation.

On motion, the National Secretary's report on "General Activities" was referred to the Committee on Agitation.

On motion, the National Secretary's report on "Interferences" was referred to the Committee on Agitation.

On motion, the National Secretary's report on "Party Press and Literature" was referred to the Committee on Party Press and Literature.

On motion, the National Secretary's report on "NEC and National Officers" was referred to the Committee on National Headquarters.

On motion, the National Secretary's report on "Recent Developments With Regard to the Suspended Editor" was referred to the Committee on National Headquarters.

On motion, the National Secretary's report on "Constitutional Amendments" was referred to the Committee on Constitution.

On motion, the report of the Financial Secretary was referred to the Committee on State of Organization.

On motion, Resolution 1-A was referred to the Committee on Agitation.

On motion, Resolution 1-B was referred to the Committee on Party Press and Literature.

On motion, Resolution 1-C was referred to the Committee on Agitation.

On motion, Resolution 1-D was referred to the Committee on Party Press and Literature.

On motion, Resolution 3-A was referred to the Committee on Party Press and Literature.

On motion, Resolution 3-B was referred to the Committee on Party Press and Literature.

On motion, Resolution 3-C was referred to the Committee on Constitution.

41ST NATIONAL CONVENTION

On motion, Resolution 3-D was referred to the Committee on Constitution.

On motion, Resolution 3-E was referred to the Committee on Party Press and Literature.

A motion was passed that no member be elected to more than one committee.

Election of Committees

The chair called for the nomination and election of committees with the following results:

Committee on State of Organization (3): D. Bills, A. Haber and L. Fisher were nominated. On motion, these three members were elected to constitute the committee.

Committee on Agitation (5): A. Stokes, S. Fink, J. Toth, A. Bradshaw, J. Hollon and J. Frank were nominated.

A motion that these members constitute the committee was not concurred in.

On motion, the following were elected by a show of hands: A. Stokes, S. Fink, J. Toth, A. Bradshaw, and J. Hollon.

Committee on Party Press and Literature (5): R. Burns, J. McHugh, K. Boettcher, C. Markel, E. Leader and E. Thiele were nominated.

On motion, the following were elected by a show of hands: R. Burns, J. McHugh, K. Boettcher, C. Markel and E. Thiele.

Committee on National Headquarters (3): H. Coretz, G.S. Taylor, A.A. Albaugh and C. Turner were nominated.

On motion, the following were elected by a show of hands: H. Coretz, G.S. Taylor, A.A. Albaugh.

Committee on Constitution (3): K. Kapitz, K. Heck, M. Mahoney and E. Leader were nominated.

On motion, K. Kapitz, K. Heck and M. Mahoney were elected by a show of hands.

At 3:55 p.m., the convention adjourned until 9 a.m., Monday, May 3.

MONDAY MORNING SESSION, MAY 3, 1993

The session was called to order at 9:08 a.m.

K. Boettcher was elected chairperson for the day.

G.S. Taylor was elected vice chairperson for the day.

On roll call, all present.

The sergeant at arms reported four members present.

SOCIALIST LABOR PARTY

A motion was made to approve the minutes of Sunday's session. The minutes were corrected to reflect that the minutes of Saturday's session were approved as read. On motion, the minutes as corrected were approved.

Reports of Committees

Committee on State of Organization—L. Fisher reported progress.

Committee on Agitation—A. Stokes presented the following report:

Re Resolutions 1-A and 1-C

1. On Sunday afternoon, May 2, 1993, the members of the Agitation Committee met and considered Resolutions 1-A and 1-C.

2. Re Resolution 1-A submitted from Section Akron, Ohio:

The resolution was amended to read as follows:

“We recommend, when members issue trial gift subscriptions to *The People*, that they be encouraged to contact the interested person and report it at a section meeting. This procedure may help determine if follow-up calls could possibly generate a stronger interest in the Party's program and foster discussion group meetings.”

The committee recommends adoption of this resolution as amended.

3. Re Resolution 1-C submitted from Section Akron, Ohio:

The committee recommends rejection of this resolution on the grounds that it is unnecessary because the intent and material of the resolution is adequately covered in the *SLP Civil Liberties Guide*, ~~and the publishing and shipping schedules are already available to the sections and interested members.~~¹

4. At present, the committee is still at labor on the following portions of the National Secretary's report: “1992 Campaign for Socialism,” “General Activities,” “Interferences.”

Fraternally submitted,
[signed] ALBERT F. STOKES, Chair
ALAN BRADSHAW, SID FINK,
JOE HOLLON, JOSEPH TOTH

¹ Stricken portions of committee reports were deleted by amendment. Under-scored portions were added by amendment

41ST NATIONAL CONVENTION

Committee on Agitation

A motion was made to adopt the report. A motion to refer the report back to committee was not concurred in by a show of hands. A motion was passed to consider the report seriatim.

Re #1: A motion to adopt this portion of the committee's report was passed by a show of hands.

Re #2: A motion to reject was not concurred in. On motion, this section of the committee's report was approved.

Re #3: A motion was made to adopt. An amendment was passed to strike the words, "and the publishing and shipping schedules are already available to the sections and interested members." On motion, this section was approved as amended.

Re #4: On motion, this section was approved.

On motion, the report as a whole, as amended, was approved.

Committee on Party Press and Literature—K. Boettcher reported progress.

Committee on National Headquarters—H. Coretz reported progress.

Committee on Constitution—M. Mahoney presented the following reports:

Re National Secretary's Report on "Constitutional Amendments"

1. Article V, Section 7: The committee recommends adoption of this amendment which will delete this section and all its provisions in their entirety, with the remaining sections being renumbered accordingly. The committee feels that with the adoption of the new NEC procedures of the 40th National Convention (April 28–30, 1991), Section 7 is no longer viable.

Fraternally submitted,
[signed] KATHERINE KAPITZ, Chair
KARL HECK, MICHAEL MAHONEY
Committee on Constitution

A motion was made to adopt the report. On motion, the report was referred back to committee.

Re National Secretary's Report on "Constitutional Amendments"

2. Article VII, Section 5 (b): The committee concurs and recommends that the first sentence of Article 7, Section 5 (b) be deleted and replaced with the sentence, "Delegates shall be members

SOCIALIST LABOR PARTY

in good standing of the Party for at least 12 consecutive months.”
The second sentence of the provision would remain as is. The committee feels that the change would clarify the Article and eliminate confusion. [Emphasis in original.]

Fraternally submitted,
[signed] KATHERINE KAPITZ, Chair
KARL HECK, MICHAEL MAHONEY
Committee on Constitution

On motion, the committee’s report was adopted.

Re National Secretary’s Report on “Constitutional Amendments”

3. Article XII, Section 3: The committee recommends amending this Article by adding paragraph (b) to read:

“(b) The NEC shall determine when the use of ballots shall be required,”

and to retain the existing provision as paragraph (a). The committee feels that by establishing this change it will give constitutional authority to the use of ballots as directed by the NEC and clarify an established practice.

Fraternally submitted,
[signed] KATHERINE KAPITZ, Chair
KARL HECK, MICHAEL MAHONEY
Committee on Constitution

On motion, the committee’s report was adopted.

Re National Secretary’s Report on “Constitutional Amendments”

4. Article XII: The committee recommends the adoption of a new Section to this Article which would be numbered as Section 6, with the current Section 6 and all following sections to be renumbered. The new provision will read:

“Section 6: No Section shall endorse or lend support of any kind to any trade or labor union without the specific approval of the NEC or a National Convention.”

The committee feels that this new Section 6 clearly spells out the SLP’s position on endorsement or supporting of trade and labor unions which would be in sync with the current handbook on *Intervention and Union Work*.

Fraternally submitted,

41ST NATIONAL CONVENTION

[signed] KATHERINE KAPITZ, Chair
KARL HECK, MICHAEL MAHONEY
Committee on Constitution

On motion, the committee's report was adopted.

Re Resolution 3-C (Part I) from Member-at-Large Gene Tagle,
Honesdale, Pa.

The committee recommends rejection of the resolution to delete and replace Article I, Section E of Organizational Norms and Procedures for the following reasons:

a) The current Article I, Section E strongly and clearly expresses the policy of the SLP concerning the acts and decisions of the National Convention and the position that members must uphold, represent and defend.

b) Changing the Organizational Norms and Procedures to include the wording, "personal opinion to the contrary notwithstanding," would create anarchy, with no guiding Party norms. It would allow individual members to "pick and choose" which SLP policies they decided to uphold, represent or defend.

c) In reviewing the comment, appended to the resolution, it appears that the intended change was submitted to allow for "reform" issues to take precedence over established SLP policies.

Fraternally submitted,
[signed] KATHERINE KAPITZ, Chair
KARL HECK, MICHAEL MAHONEY
Committee on Constitution

On motion, the committee's report was adopted.

Re Resolution 3-C (Part II) from Member-at-Large Gene Tagle,
Honesdale, Pa.

The committee recommends rejection of the resolution to delete and replace Article VII, Section 12 (a) of the SLP Constitution for the following reasons:

a) The current Article VII, Section 12 (a) strongly and clearly expresses the policy of the SLP concerning the acts and decisions of the National Convention and the position that members must uphold, represent and defend.

b) Changing the Constitution to include the wording, "personal opinion to the contrary notwithstanding," would create anarchy with no guiding Party norms. It would allow individual members to "pick and choose" which SLP policies they decide to uphold, rep-

SOCIALIST LABOR PARTY

resent or defend.

c) In reviewing the comment appended to the resolution, it appears that the intended change was submitted to allow for “reform” issues to take precedence over established SLP policies.

Fraternally submitted,
[signed] KATHERINE KAPITZ, Chair
KARL HECK, MICHAEL MAHONEY
Committee on Constitution

On motion, the committee’s report was adopted.

Re Resolution 3-D from Members-at-Large Leslie Dorn and David
Bradia;

The committee recommends rejection of this resolution for the following reasons:

a) The decision for the national headquarters office to move to the West Coast of the United States, as well as the decision to no longer have an NEC Subcommittee, were made at National Conventions in a democratic manner by vote of the delegates at those conventions.

b) The NEC Subcommittee was disbanded for the valid reason that enough members were not forthcoming to fill the various membership positions. At this date, the situation has not changed and there is no guarantee of any kind to indicate that moving the NEC Party’s headquarters offices would provide the manpower necessary to fill the NEC Subcommittee positions.

c) The difficulty of finding members to fill positions at the national office also indicates a problem in recruitment, in that, if the Party has difficulty filling these ~~seven~~ positions; it would certainly have difficulty filling ~~an additional~~ seven positions for the NEC Subcommittee.

d) To imply that moving the national headquarters to another area would immediately provide both the NEC and the NEC Subcommittee with the necessary members defies logic and represents an oversimplification of the facts.

Fraternally submitted,
[signed] KATHERINE KAPITZ, Chair
KARL HECK, MICHAEL MAHONEY
Committee on Constitution

A motion was made to approve the report. An amendment was

41ST NATIONAL CONVENTION

passed as follows: under "b" the word "NEC" was struck and replaced with the word "Party's"; under "b" the word "offices" was struck; under "c" the words "seven" and "an additional" were struck. On motion, the report, as amended, was approved.

At 10:35 a.m., a 10-minute recess was declared. Reconvened at 10:40 a.m.

Report of Mileage Committee: E. Barnes submitted the following report:

Your committee reports that the delegates listed below have reported that their mileage in attending the convention is as follows:

Section	Delegates	
Los Angeles (1)	Alan Bradshaw	\$ 60.00
Sacramento (1)	Albert Stokes	0
S.F. Bay Area (2)	Donna Bills	0
	Kenneth Boettcher	0
Dade Co. (1)	Arla A. Albaugh	509.00
St. Petersburg (1)	Edward Thiele	388.00
Cook Co. (1)	Henry Coretz	0
Wayne Co. (1)	Joseph Toth	265.00
Minneapolis (1)	Karl Heck	280.00
New York City (1)	Edward Leader	424.00
Akron (1)	Katherine Kapitz	417.00
Cleveland (1)	Robert Burns	0
Portland (1)	Sid Fink	134.00
Philadelphia (1)	George S. Taylor	510.00
Seattle (1)	Charles Turner	130.21
Milwaukee (1)	Michael Mahoney	279.75
Mbrs.-at-Lge. (7)	Frank Cline	273.00
	Louis Fisher	136.19
	Joseph Frank	578.00
	Arlene Haber	259.00
	Joseph Hollon Sr.	259.00
	Christian Markel	0
	James McHugh	466.00
Nat'l. Sec'y.	Robert Bills	0
Fin. Sec'y	Edna Barnes	0

In keeping with this report, your committee recommends that the delegates be paid the amounts due them, the total being:

SOCIALIST LABOR PARTY

\$5,368.15.

Fraternally submitted,
[signed] EDNA V. BARNES, GENEVIEVE GUNDERSON
Mileage Committee

On motion, the report was adopted.

New Business

Delegate J. Frank indicated he had several resolutions to present. A motion was passed that all resolutions be read and then acted on seriatim.

1) Be It Resolved, That the Party establish its own liberal arts college to reach younger, less capitalist propagandized people.

Reaching this group who are not yet mired down by responsibilities under capitalism would provide more new SLP leaders. The college would teach Marxian economics and the materialist conception of history.

The professor's salaries would be paid by the student's tuition. Other costs would be covered by donation. Initially the building would be rented. It would be a city college with no dormitory facilities. (If *The People* were discontinued, these funds would be available! It could be a two- or four-year college.¹

2) Be It Resolved, That the Party publish a national members-at-large directory. Any member who did not want to be included could so inform the national office.

Having this directory would allow public meetings to be made in regions between members-at-large and initiate establishing sections and contacts.

3) Be It Resolved, That the Party establish a dedicated presidential election fund.

This will allow the Party to get its message more widely distributed and possibly enhance our public meetings. (Frequently, at public meetings, the news media will make a TV coverage.)

There may be red tape in certain states that would be obstacles to be overcome.

4) Be It Resolved, That the Party publish a complete leaflet on racism. (The latest current leaflet is incomplete, inasmuch as it

¹ The delegate neglected to insert closing parentheses in two places. His style has been retained.

41ST NATIONAL CONVENTION

does not give the SLP program. (An older leaflet entitled, "Race Prejudice, Why" is complete and could be a model for the new leaflet.)

5) Be It Resolved, That the Party keep its newsletter, but eliminate *The People*.

This will drastically reduce editing and mailing expenses. *The People* is not needed because the Party has its *Socialist Studies* pamphlets, leaflets and other pamphlets. The money saved can be used to print more leaflets and fund the SLP college. To discontinue *The People* will require revising the Constitution.

6) Be It Resolved, That the Party investigate suing the cheap magazine, *People*, for copyright infringement of the SLP's newspaper. Having reading material with the *People's* name confuses contacts into thinking that we are a cheap organization and discourages them, besides being a defamation of character.

The suing process should cost the Party nothing, since the lawsuit could be based on a contingency basis.

[signed] JOSEPH J. FRANK

Re Resolution 1: On motion, the resolution was rejected.

Re Resolution 2: On motion, the resolution was rejected.

Re Resolution 3: On motion, the resolution was rejected.

Re Resolution 4: On motion, the resolution was rejected.

Re Resolution 5: On motion, the resolution was rejected.

Re Resolution 6: On motion, the resolution was rejected.

At 11:07 a.m., the convention adjourned until 4 p.m.

MONDAY AFTERNOON SESSION, MAY 3, 1993

The session was called to order at 4 p.m.

On roll call, all present.

The sergeant at arms reported five members present.

Reports of Committees

Committee on Constitution—M. Mahoney presented the following report:

Re National Secretary's Report on "Constitutional Amendments"

1. Article V, Section 2 (paragraphs a thru d). The committee recommends adoption of this amendment which will delete this section and all of its provisions in their entirety, with the remain-

SOCIALIST LABOR PARTY

ing sections being renumbered accordingly. The committee feels that with the adoption of the new NEC procedures, Article V, Section 2 (a-d) are no longer viable.

Fraternally submitted,
[signed] KATHERINE KAPITZ, Chair
KARL HECK, MICHAEL MAHONEY
Committee on Constitution

On motion, the report was adopted.

Committee on State of Organization—L. Fisher presented the following reports:

Re National Secretary's Report on "State of Organization"

Your committee notes from the National Secretary's report that though no SLP sections are presently operating below strength, most sections are confronted with problems that either make it difficult for them to meet their constitutional obligations or are unable to carry on a consistent level of activity. Nevertheless, your committee appeals to all sections of the Party to make an all-out effort to conduct Party activity by which new members can eventually be admitted. We need only cite the recently chartered Section Dade Co., Fla., as an example of what can be accomplished if we, as an organization, are determined. Certainly, if a group of national members-at-large can work hard to form a section, those of us already organized in sections can work just as hard to preserve what we have and build on it.

With regard to the problem of isolation that is inherent in the practical circumstances of our national members-at-large, your committee suggests that those members-at-large who are able to, make every effort to attend a section's affairs when their circumstances permit. Unfortunately, most of the Party's members-at-large are widely scattered across the country and would rarely find it possible to attend a Party affair. To those members we can only encourage them to carry on Party activity as best they can in conjunction with the national office until such time as their efforts pay off in the form of new members in their locality and eventually in the formation of a new section.

Your committee finds that the "State of Organization" report to the convention contains numerous valuable organizational lessons that all of us should benefit from. Unfortunately, those lessons result from errors committed by a number of experienced sections

who should have learned those lessons long ago and not have forgotten them.

If we hope to revitalize our organization it is incumbent upon all of us to recognize the necessity of “running a tight ship,” and not allow ourselves to become slipshod in our adherence to established procedure or to the Party’s Constitution.

Your committee, therefore, reminds the sections and members-at-large to acquire a working knowledge of the Party’s Constitution and of *Organizational Norms and Procedures*, as well as other Party guidelines. We cannot overemphasize these important documents. For without becoming familiar with them we do not benefit the smooth operation of the organization, but lose valuable time in going over the same ground. We also emphasize to the sections and members, that if a doubt arises as to proper procedure, they need only consult with the national office.

As a further aid to the smooth operation of the Party your committee recommends that a “slightly revised” *Guide for SLP Discussion Groups*, mentioned in this section of the report, be made available to the sections and members as soon as is practical.

Your committee also notes from the report that the National Secretary feels that an older *Guide for Study Class Instructors* has value for the organization. Therefore, your committee recommends that, as circumstances permit, this guide be reviewed and updated by the national office, and eventually made available to the sections and members.

Fraternally submitted,
[signed] LOUIS FISHER, Chair
DONNA BILLS, ARLENE HABER
Committee on State of Organization

On motion, the report was adopted.

Re Report of Financial Secretary

Your committee was gratified to note from the report of the Financial Secretary that the Party’s financial reserves at present are at a good level. However, experience has shown, and we are reminded by the Financial Secretary in her report, that we must not allow ourselves to become complacent about the Party’s finances. What at one point appears to be a good cushion, can all too quickly result in a financial crisis if we are not constantly and consistently reaching out and augmenting the Party’s reserves. The financial

SOCIALIST LABOR PARTY

crisis that the Party faced in 1987 is a fairly recent painful and frightening experience that your committee hopes the Party is never confronted with again.

Your committee is very much concerned by that portion of the Financial Secretary's report that notes there has been an overall decrease in income for the Party in 1992 on all levels: interest derived from the Party's bank accounts; contributions received from members and sympathizers; and bequests.

We have no control over the amount of revenue realized from interest-bearing bank accounts. However, as an organization we can exert a certain amount of control over the other sources of funds.

Your committee was pleased to note that plans are under consideration to once again appeal to the readers of *The People* to take part in the SLP Sustainer Fund, and we hope that the membership will also be reminded to become regular contributors to the SLP Sustainer Fund. This particular fund, as many of you know, is an ongoing fund in which members and sympathizers contribute a given amount each month to the organization.

Your committee also urges that the Party's sections and at-large members increase their efforts to hold regular fund-raising affairs. There has been a decline in the number of these affairs held in recent years, a decline that must be arrested and reversed.

Your committee was pleased to note that plans are under consideration to place an ad in *The People* encouraging readers to make bequests to the Party. However, your committee believes further action on the matter of bequests is necessary. Experience has proven that the financial support that the Party has realized through bequests is the primary source of money that has kept it solvent down through the years. There is no doubt that the substantial sums of money that the Party has realized from the generosity of its members and sympathizers through bequests has allowed the Party to wipe out its deficits and build up its financial reserves year after year after year.

Your committee notes that it has been some time since the membership was reminded of the importance and responsibility of providing for the Party in wills, etc. Accordingly, your committee recommends that the Financial Secretary prepare a letter at the earliest possible date to the membership reminding them of the importance of leaving bequests to the Party.

Your committee also recommends that the Financial Secretary

prepare a similar letter concerning bequests at the earliest possible date to be circularized among the readers of *The People*.

In making the above recommendations, your committee is not unmindful of the generous financial support shown the Party throughout the years by its members and supporters. And we in no way intend to undermine that spirit of generosity in making the recommendation that they be further appealed to. But if we are to ensure the financial security of the Party, we have no choice but to again appeal to the members and supporters regarding this important matter.

Fraternally submitted,
[signed] LOUIS FISHER, Chair
DONNA BILLS, ARLENE HABER
Committee on State of Organization

On motion, the report was adopted.

Committee on Agitation—A. Stokes reported progress.

Committee on Party Press and Literature—J. McHugh presented the following reports:

Re Resolution 3-B From National Member-at-Large Gene Tagle

The Party Press and Literature Committee has, upon careful review and consideration of Resolution 3-B, recommends rejection.

The resolution proposes to eliminate from the masthead of *The People* the line “Published by the Socialist Labor Party.” The members of this committee unanimously agree that the Party’s traditional straightforward and above-board approach to Socialist education is *appropriately* embodied in this frank acknowledgment that *The People* is published by the Socialist Labor Party. We believe that it is in the Party’s best interests to continue this tradition.

We recognize that the word “socialist” is besmirched by the history of the bureaucratic state despotisms that usurped the word and has long been slandered by defenders of capitalism who self-interestedly apply its name to those totalitarian states.

But what we Socialists want is socialism. Calling it by a different name, or attempting to hide or play down the fact that we are Socialists, or that our journal is a Socialist journal, lends legitimacy to the efforts of the usurpers and distorters to bastardize the term. And if we are not forthright in identifying ourselves as So-

SOCIALIST LABOR PARTY

cialists, then we could lose our credibility in our efforts to convince the working class of the need to abolish capitalism and establish socialism.

The People is *unabashedly* the journal of the Socialist Labor Party. Let it remain so.

As to the arm and hammer, we think the positive effects of the Party's long-standing use of that emblem likely outweigh the potential disadvantages of some workers mistaking it for the hammer and sickle.

Literally millions of workers in this century have seen the arm and hammer imprinted on our banners, posters, publications and leaflets. In a revolutionary crisis, when workers become much more interested in alternatives to their miserable lives under capitalism, who can tell how many of those millions will think about the pamphlet, imprinted with our emblem, they read years back, or the speaker they heard under a banner displaying the arm and hammer, and seek out those who display that emblem during the crisis?

We also feel that the chariot in the masthead, added during *The People's* centennial year, is a link to our proud past that serves notice to its readers that this journal, "Established in 1891," is a steadfast and stalwart advocate of workers' class interests that will not "go away" until its mission has been achieved.

Lastly, the resolution requests a modern masthead. We note that the Kabel typeface in which the words "the People" are set *is* a modern typeface, relatively new as typefaces go.

In short, while we recognize that our present masthead is not set in stone and could be changed for some good reason, we find nothing of that kind in Resolution 3-B, and many good reasons to leave it like it is.

Fraternally submitted,
[signed] KEN BOETTCHER, Chair
PAT BURNS, CHRISTIAN MARKEL,
JIM MCHUGH, ED THIELE
Committee on Party Press and Literature

On motion, the report was adopted.

Re Resolution 1-B From Section Akron

Your committee recommends rejection of this resolution, for the following reasons:

41ST NATIONAL CONVENTION

Multiple-page versions of the *Socialist Studies* would be harder to handle and distribute as single 8-1/2" x 11" sheets stapled together.

The present format *already* allows for the use of three-ring binders, albeit smaller binders than 8-1/2" x 11", and so would seem to satisfy the intent of the resolution as is. One member of our committee already keeps his *Socialist Studies* in such a binder. Additionally, the existing format can be enlarged in a photocopier to fit a letter-size sheet.

We echo the resolution's feeling that the *Socialist Studies* series is an invaluable aid for study classes, and hope that the national office finds time to continue the series—in *any* practical format, including single letter-size sheets, in the future—but we see no reason to lock the national office into any specific format.

Fraternally submitted,

[signed] KEN BOETTCHER, Chair

PAT BURNS, CHRISTIAN MARKEL,

JIM MCHUGH, ED THIELE

Committee on Party Press and Literature

On motion, the report was adopted.

Re Resolution 3-A From National Member-at-Large Gene Tagle

Your committee recommends rejection of this resolution.

Restricting the use of handguns, automatic and semiautomatic weapons would further infringe on our right to keep and bear arms.

Moreover, restrictions of this sort constitute a step toward disarming the working class, while the capitalist class, or rather, the coercive agents of its political state, remain fully armed. While the high-tech weapons available to the police and military may make the weapons available to workers seem merely symbolic, such weapons still constitute a potentially vital means of defense for the working class.

Laws do not prevent criminals from getting guns, any more than laws can halt the social anarchy and crime that capitalism generates.

Fraternally submitted,

[signed] KEN BOETTCHER, Chair

PAT BURNS, CHRISTIAN MARKEL,

JIM MCHUGH, ED THIELE

SOCIALIST LABOR PARTY

Committee on Party Press and Literature

On motion, the report was adopted.

Re Resolution 1-D From Section Los Angeles

Your committee has carefully reviewed this resolution and recommends rejection.

The socialist industrial union concept is not and never has been a blueprint for the building of a socialist movement or society. The resolution would turn SIUism into just such a blueprint, and a blueprint that would significantly change and complicate the basic SIU concept. We view the representational scheme presented in the resolution as only one possible way in which the working class could choose to fine-tune representation in the socialist industrial union structure. There are, no doubt, any number of ways in which the workers themselves might choose to refine that structure as their own experience dictates—but *such choices must be left to that experience and the workers themselves.*

The SLP has no business recommending any specific, detailed blueprint to the workers, and any attempt to do so really amounts to mere abstract conjecture.

Fraternally submitted,

[signed] KEN BOETTCHER, Chair

PAT BURNS, CHRISTIAN MARKEL,

JIM MCHUGH, ED THIELE

Committee on Party Press and Literature

On motion, the report was adopted.

Re “Party Press and Literature” Section
of the National Secretary’s Report

Your committee has carefully reviewed and considered this section of the National Secretary’s report and recommends adoption. We applaud the efforts made by the National Secretary and the national headquarters staff in continuing to prepare the materials noted in the report and especially their successful efforts in maintaining the writing and publication of *The People* under the trying conditions that existed before this convention.

We also affirm the apparent effectiveness of the use of our mailing list to cultivate subscriptions and renewals for *The People*, and hope that such efforts will continue, along with the advertising campaign for *The People* in other publications as the national office

sees fit.

We would like to express our appreciation of the National Secretary's continuing work towards publication of the works of De Leon. We also note the importance of the work being done toward preparing basic works of Marxism for publication under the New York Labor News label, in view of the book burning and other factors in the former Soviet bloc that hold the potential for drying up traditional sources for these works.

Additionally, in commenting on Party press and literature in general, the committee reaffirms the need for work to begin on the translation and publication of some of the Party's basic leaflets and pamphlets in Spanish, so that efforts may begin to reach Hispanic workers with the SLP message. We understand that for this work to begin, a mechanism must be in place, consisting of a committee of Spanish-speaking Party members, responsible to the NEC and the national office, to do the necessary translations and provide a means for the Party to conduct timely correspondence with Hispanic workers responding to such literature. We hope that SLP members can be found who are willing to engage the national office in a discussion about how such a mechanism might be set up, along the lines of previous foreign-language Party committees in the past, so that this important work can proceed. We understand that there are members in the Party who have expressed interest in helping to develop Spanish-language materials for the Party, and hope that they will step forward to initiate serious discussions with the national office on the mechanics of setting up such a structure.

Fraternally submitted,

[signed] KEN BOETTCHER, Chair

PAT BURNS, CHRISTIAN MARKEL,

JIM MCHUGH, ED THIELE

Committee on Party Press and Literature

On motion, the report was adopted.

Re "Greetings" ["Introduction"] Section
of the National Secretary's Report;

Your committee recommends adoption of this section of the National Secretary's report and its publication in *The People* at the earliest possible date. We commend the National Secretary on the appropriateness of the message of his "Greetings" ["Introduction"] that "The organization and the principle are one."

SOCIALIST LABOR PARTY

Fraternally submitted,
[signed] KEN BOETTCHER, Chair
PAT BURNS, CHRISTIAN MARKEL,
JIM MCHUGH, ED THIELE
Committee on Party Press and Literature

On motion, the report was adopted.

Re Resolution 3-E From National Members-at-Large Dorn and
Bradia

The Party Press and Literature Committee recommends rejection of this resolution.

The resolution calls for this convention to reprint a pamphlet *Socialist Industrial Unionism: The Workers' Power* that a previous convention has already passed judgment on. Calls were heard at the 1989 convention to reprint this pamphlet, and were formally answered by that convention. The makers of this resolution bring up no new arguments, and fail to rebut the reasoning behind the 1989 convention's democratic decisions concerning the problems with merely reprinting the pamphlet. Accordingly, it should be rejected.

Fraternally submitted,
[signed] KEN BOETTCHER, Chair
PAT BURNS, CHRISTIAN MARKEL,
JIM MCHUGH, ED THIELE
Committee on Party Press and Literature

A motion was made to adopt the report. An amendment was passed to strike the words "a pamphlet" in the first sentence of the second paragraph and replace them with "*Socialist Industrial Unionism: The Workers' Power.*" The motion, as amended, was adopted.

Committee on National Headquarters—H. Coretz presented the following reports:

Re NEC Nominations

Your committee was presented with a list of 11 excellent and eligible members willing to serve on the NEC. Because only seven members may constitute this committee, after careful consideration, we nominate the following members to serve the Party in that capacity: Donna Bills, Bernard Bortnick, Henry Coretz, Sid Fink,

41ST NATIONAL CONVENTION

Angeline Kleist, George Taylor, Charles Turner.

Fraternally submitted,
[signed] HENRY CORETZ, Chair
GEORGE S. TAYLOR, ARLA ALBAUGH
Committee on National Headquarters

A motion was made to adopt the report. On motion, the report was referred back to committee.

Re Editor and Financial Secretary

Your committee has been unable to find members willing and able to serve as Editor or Financial Secretary.

Fraternally submitted,
[signed] HENRY CORETZ, Chair
GEORGE S. TAYLOR, ARLA ALBAUGH
Committee on National Headquarters

On motion, the report was referred back to committee.

Re Nomination of National Secretary

Your committee has interviewed a member who is willing to serve as National Secretary of the Socialist Labor Party if nominated and it is prepared to make such a nomination.

Fraternally submitted,
[signed] HENRY CORETZ, Chair
GEORGE S. TAYLOR, ARLA ALBAUGH
Committee on National Headquarters

On motion, action on the committee's report was postponed. (See page 142.)

At 5:15 p.m., a 15-minute recess was declared. Reconvened at 5:25 p.m.

A motion was adopted that the Committee on National Headquarters be expanded to consist of five members.

On motion, K. Boettcher and J. McHugh were elected to the committee.

At 5:28 p.m., the convention adjourned until 9 a.m., Tuesday, May 4.

TUESDAY MORNING SESSION, MAY 4, 1993

The session was called to order at 9:03 a.m.

K. Boettcher was elected chairperson for the day.

SOCIALIST LABOR PARTY

G.S. Taylor was elected vice chairperson for the day.

On roll call, all present except A. Haber who arrived shortly.

The sergeant at arms reported four members present.

On motion, the minutes of Monday's session were accepted as read.

Reports of Committees

Committee on Agitation—A. Stokes presented the following reports:

Re National Secretary's Report on "1992 Campaign for Socialism"

Your committee has carefully reviewed and considered the section of the National Secretary's report dealing with the *1992 Campaign for Socialism* and recommends its adoption.

The correspondence between the sections and the national office relating to the results of the campaign was also examined. From the correspondence and from the National Secretary's report, the following conclusions can be drawn:

(1) The success achieved in the campaign was due, in large part, to the coordinated efforts of the national office, *The People* staff, and the sections. The national office helped the sections with special publicity needs and new, timely leaflets; *The People* staff helped with articles relating to the leaflet materials; and the sections, in turn, made extra efforts to meet the goals of the campaign.

(2) When activities are planned well in advance, and with a stated commitment to achieve certain goals, (e.g., leaflet distribution, public meetings, etc.), everyone is encouraged to make good on their commitment. Setting realistic goals, and planning well in advance leads to follow-through.

(3) Some sections expressed disappointment because a great deal of effort was like "laboring like a mountain to bring forth a mouse." This is a rough period in our history, but, if we double our efforts, we can bring forth "two mice" and this spells success! Increased agitational efforts achieve results, but making no effort achieves nothing. Modest gains resulting from a great expenditure of labor are preferable to no results at all. For example, one member of your committee distributed 3,600 leaflets on his own, arranged three public lectures with publicity help from the national office, and spent Sundays during the summer hosting an open-air display of Party literature with the following results: two new members of the Party were gained; a dozen good contacts were de-

veloped and a section of the Party was saved from going down the drain.

While many valuable lessons were learned, particularly in areas where we encountered success, lessons of a different nature were learned in areas where the campaign brought to light weaknesses, the most important of which, was the disappointingly low level of activity among the younger members and national members-at-large. As the National Secretary pointed out, members-at-large constitute an ever increasing proportion of our national membership, and this trend can be expected to continue as the demographic shifts, now in progress, continue to develop. It is, therefore, of prime importance to the agitational efforts of the Party that this issue be addressed and that constructive solutions to the problem be found and implemented. The committee, therefore, makes the following recommendations:

(1) An inventory of personnel abilities and preferences in the form of a survey needs to be taken among the national members-at-large to determine the extent of their skills, abilities, and areas of interest relating to Party activities. We suggest that a form letter be sent from the national office to the members-at-large asking for the above information and also inviting input from these members on how to ease their feeling of isolation from Party activities.

(2) The results of this survey could then be used by the national office and the Party as a whole in developing programs which involve the members-at-large. Help might even be found in the form of additional manpower to help the national office operate.

(3) Every encouragement should be given to national members-at-large to stop thinking of themselves as lonely, isolated individual voices crying in the capitalist wilderness, and to start thinking of themselves as the nuclei of future sections of the Socialist Labor Party.

(4) National members-at-large should be encouraged to list their names in the directory section of *The People* ~~to facilitate communication and networking with other members-at-large and also serve as points of contact with the Party for those who may become interested in its program.~~

(5) National members-at-large who live outside the jurisdiction of but in proximity to sections should be encouraged by the sections to visit the sections, when possible, and to work with the sections in special projects such as leaflet campaigns, state fair information booths, lectures, etc.

SOCIALIST LABOR PARTY

The results of the *1992 Campaign for Socialism* were indeed encouraging, because they showed the determination of our members to accept the challenges of building a revolutionary, classconscious socialist movement in this country as well as showing our potential to mount even more successful campaigns in the future.

Fraternally submitted,
[signed] ALBERT F. STOKES, Chair
ALAN BRADSHAW, SID FINK,
JOE HOLLON, JOSEPH TOTH
Committee on Agitation

A motion was made to adopt the report. An amendment was passed by a show of hands to strike the balance of the sentence under item 4, beginning with the words “to facilitate . . .” On motion, the report, as amended, was adopted.

Re National Secretary’s Report on “General Activities”

As in past convention reports, the National Secretary furnished us with a detailed report fleshed out with statistics on general activities. This report deals with the years 1991–1992.

We note that on the plus side, there was an increase in the level of activities in 1992 over 1991 in the following areas: public meetings, 75 percent; contacts, 17 percent; leaflet distribution, 10.3 percent; distribution of *The People*, 4.5 percent.

We also note one area of concern which the National Secretary addressed in this section of his report and which is also mentioned in his report dealing with the *1992 Campaign for Socialism* and that is our inability to sufficiently motivate the growing sector of our membership that belongs to the Party as national members-at-large. This concern was addressed by this committee in its report on the *1992 Campaign for Socialism*.

We note that while we are growing in membership “in the sticks,” we are not experiencing such gains in urban areas where sections are located. It is there where millions of unemployed workers live in stressful situations. It is there where workers must be hungering for a ray of hope and a way out which makes sense. If we are failing to reach them then, “the fault is not in the stars but in ourselves.” Sections must try harder because the field is wide open for us to exploit.

This committee not only urges the membership to study the facts and figures in the National Secretary’s report, but also to use

41ST NATIONAL CONVENTION

them as a starting point for setting new goals.

Fraternally submitted,
[signed] ALBERT F. STOKES, Chair
ALAN BRADSHAW, SID FINK,
JOE HOLLON, JOSEPH TOTH
Committee on Agitation

A motion was made to adopt the report. On motion, the report was referred back to committee.

Re National Secretary's Report on "Interferences"

Your committee has reviewed the National Secretary's report on "Interferences." It is apparent that considerable time, effort, and money has had to be expended on legal matters connected with our rights under the First Amendment. As economic conditions worsen in the years ahead, the capitalist class will, no doubt, attempt to place even more restrictions on our activities.

All members, therefore, should study the National Secretary's report carefully and reread the *SLP Civil Liberties Guide* so as to avoid unnecessary litigation, and to acquaint themselves with their rights under the law.

Your committee recommends adoption of this section of the National Secretary's report.

Fraternally submitted,
[signed] ALBERT F. STOKES, Chair
ALAN BRADSHAW, SID FINK,
JOE HOLLON, JOSEPH TOTH
Committee on Agitation

On motion, the report was adopted.

Committee on National Headquarters—K. Boettcher reported progress.

At 9:45 a.m., the convention adjourned until 2 p.m.

AFTERNOON SESSION, TUESDAY, MAY 4, 1993

The session was called to order at 2:05 p.m.

On roll call, all present except R. Burns who arrived shortly.

The sergeant at arms reported six members present.

Committee on Agitation—A. Stokes reported progress.

Committee on National Headquarters—J. McHugh presented

SOCIALIST LABOR PARTY

the following reports:

Re “Recent Developments With Regard to the Suspended Editor”

The former Editor’s April 19 letter to his section, tendering his resignation as a member of the Socialist Labor Party, confirms the correctness of the NEC’s suspension of the Editor.

We agree with the National Secretary’s assessment of his letter and hope that it will serve to convince any member who still harbors any reservations regarding the correctness of the actions the National Secretary and the NEC took to protect the SLP and its official organ, *The People*. Those actions were completely justified and merely fulfilled constitutional obligations incumbent upon the National Secretary and the NEC.

Fraternally submitted,
[signed] KEN BOETTCHER, Chair
ARLA ALBAUGH, HENRY CORETZ,
JIM MCHUGH, GEORGE S. TAYLOR
Committee on National Headquarters

A motion was made to adopt the report.

An amendment was made to strike the third paragraph on page in this section of the National Secretary’s report. The chair ruled the amendment out of order. The chair’s ruling was appealed. On motion, the chair’s ruling was upheld.

The main motion was adopted by a show of hands.

Re “National Headquarters” Section
of the National Secretary’s Report

Your committee has carefully reviewed this section of the National Secretary’s report. We have also interviewed all the full-time and volunteer members of the headquarters staff, and heard the comments of many members who voiced their opinions to the committee.

There is no doubt that, as the National Secretary observes in this section of the report, “The present crisis at the national headquarters is the most threatening of any since 1973, when the Editor of the *Weekly People* walked off the job and left it to his one assistant and the then-National Secretary to contend with the problem.” The national headquarters staff and the Party membership rose to the occasion and brought the party through that crisis, and it seems apparent that the national headquarters staff and the

41ST NATIONAL CONVENTION

Party membership are determined to see the Party through this crisis as well.

This committee heard pledges from the present staff, including Comrades Donna Bills, Ken Boettcher, Genevieve Gunderson and Jim Parker, to continue doing the work that has enabled the paper to continue publication of *The People* since the former Editor was suspended.

It heard a pledge from Comrade Nathan Karp that he is willing to continue his volunteer work at headquarters to the extent of supplying a minimum of two articles per issue and performing the editing of articles from the field, should the National Secretary request his assistance in that chore.

It heard a pledge from Comrade Edna Barnes that she is willing to stay on at the national office in whatever capacity the National Secretary sees fit.

And it heard from several members in the field who have pledged to do their best to submit articles regularly.

The National Secretary, for his part, has indicated that he will do the necessary to get the job done.

We urge and expect every delegate to this convention to return home and make every effort to determine if there are any qualified members of the Party in their sections or areas who are willing to consider employment at the national office, and to contact the national office as soon as possible to make that willingness known. We urge and expect every delegate to return home and make every effort to determine if there are any qualified members of the Party who would be willing to take a stab at submitting articles from the field.

We realize that our committee cannot produce any new recommendations; cannot pull the proverbial "rabbit from a hat" that can solve the present crisis. Only the concerted collective action of the Party's dedicated national office staff and membership can see us through this crisis.

In the meantime, the National Secretary must be given full authority to make any adjustments at national headquarters he deems necessary, including authority to adjust the publishing schedule of *The People*, to maximize the possibilities for continued publication of our journal.

Fraternally submitted,
[signed] KEN BOETTCHER, Chair
ARLA ALBAUGH, HENRY CORETZ,

SOCIALIST LABOR PARTY

JIM MCHUGH, GEORGE S. TAYLOR
Committee on National Headquarters

On motion, the report was approved.

Re Editor of *The People*

The committee has been unable to find a member who is willing and able to serve as Editor of *The People*.

Since the position of Editor of *The People* is now vacant, the Party is obliged to act in accordance with Article IX, Section 7 (a) through (c) of the Party's Constitution which provides that "... in the continued absence of an Editor..." "the National Secretary shall be responsible for employee relations in the editorial department." In sum, in the absence of an Editor, the National Secretary is obliged to serve as acting Editor.

This has been the Party's past practice, and while we recognize that this puts extra burdens on the National Secretary, there is no alternative now. We hope that, in view of the support the headquarters staff has indicated it is willing to give the National Secretary in his effort to continue publication of *The People*, the National Secretary will find this arrangement workable until such time as a qualified Party member can be found to serve as Editor.

Fraternally submitted,
[signed] KEN BOETTCHER, Chair
ARLA ALBAUGH, HENRY CORETZ,
JIM MCHUGH, GEORGE S. TAYLOR
Committee on National Headquarters

On motion, the report was approved.

Re Financial Secretary

The committee has been unable to find a member willing and able to serve as the Party's Financial Secretary. The committee wishes to thank Comrade Edna Barnes for serving as the Party's Financial Secretary during this current term.

Since this will leave the position vacant when the current Financial Secretary's term of office expires, the Party is obliged to act in accordance with Article VIII, Section 6 of the Party's Constitution which instructs the NEC to "fill the office temporarily, and at once proceed to nominate the best qualified member available to fill the post permanently. . . ."

If no qualified member is available then the Party must fall back

41ST NATIONAL CONVENTION

on the past practice of having the National Secretary fill the post as acting Financial Secretary until a qualified member can be found and nominated for the position.

Again we hope that he will find the situation tolerable and workable, in view of the support the staff and the rest of the Party seem more than willing to give him in maintaining the headquarters operation and publication of *The People* in the current crisis.

Fraternally submitted,
[signed] KEN BOETTCHER, Chair
ARLA ALBAUGH, HENRY CORETZ,
JIM MCHUGH, GEORGE S. TAYLOR
Committee on National Headquarters

On motion, the report was approved.

Re NEC Nominations

The committee was presented with a list of twelve (12) eligible members willing to serve on the National Executive Committee (NEC). We recommend that the list of twelve be accepted as nominees for the seven positions on the NEC. The twelve (12) members are: Donna Bills, Bernard Bortnick, Frank Cline, Henry Coretz, Dan Deneff, Sid Fink, Louis Fisher, Joseph Hollon, Angeline Kleist, Albert Stokes, George Taylor, Charles Turner.

Fraternally submitted,
[signed] KEN BOETTCHER, Chair
ARLA ALBAUGH, HENRY CORETZ,
JIM MCHUGH, GEORGE S. TAYLOR
Committee on National Headquarters

On motion, the report was adopted.

A motion was made to proceed with the election of the NEC by roll call vote. An amendment was passed to open the floor for additional nominations before voting. J. Frank and E. Leader were nominated.

A 10-minute recess was declared at 2:40 p.m. Upon reconvening at 2:50 p.m., the main motion was passed.

The chair proceeded to call the roll for election of the NEC with the following results: D. Bills - 17; B. Bortnick - 17; F. Cline - 3; H. Coretz - 16; D. Deneff - 8; S. Fink - 20; L. Fisher - 20; J. Frank - 4; J. Hollon - 2; A. Kleist - 17; E. Leader - 5; A. Stokes - 9; G.S. Taylor - 15; C. Turner - 5.

Accordingly, the following members were elected the National

SOCIALIST LABOR PARTY

Executive Committee for the 1993–1995 term: D. Bills, B. Bortnick, H. Coretz, S. Fink, L. Fisher, A. Kleist and G.S. Taylor.

On motion, the Committee on National Headquarters report on nomination of National Secretary was taken up. (See page 133.)

On motion, the report was approved.

J. McHugh nominated Robert Bills for the office of National Secretary.

On motion, nominations were closed.

On motion, Robert Bills was reelected. On motion, the vote is to be recorded as being unanimous. [Applause.]

R. Bills briefly addressed the convention. [Applause.]

New Business

S. Fink presented the following statement:

Comrade Chairman:

I respectfully request the privilege of the floor to bring before the convention a matter that we all know occurred and on which I believe the convention should express its anger and resentment.

Comrades:

I have reference to the two insidious, insulting and insolent documents through which at least one former member—expelled some years ago—sought to inject himself into our organization and to influence our members' actions with regard to our organizational problems.

What is most troubling about this matter is that although the two documents were a tissue of lies, distortions and malicious misrepresentations, it is clear that whoever drafted those documents was privy to certain information regarding internal Party matters relating to the suspension of the Party's national Editor. Whoever was responsible for making that information available to this enemy, or those enemies who drafted and circulated those lampoons committed an act of treachery and is guilty of having aided and abetted an enemy who made a vicious attack on our Party.

Also troubling is the fact that the ex-member, Edward Wizek, who identified himself, attended our convention banquet where he insidiously approached some of our newer members for reasons that I believe it reasonable to conclude were far from honorable. That these newer members did not reject his advances is understandable, since they did not know of his disruptive background. However, equally troubling is the fact that a number of veteran

41ST NATIONAL CONVENTION

members apparently forgot—or overlooked—Wizek’s Party record and saw fit to greet and converse with him, as though he was one who was welcome at our affairs.

I therefore move that the convention adopt this brief statement as an expression of anger and resentment at Wizek’s despicable conduct and his renewed attempt to damage the SLP; and as an expression of contempt for the cowardly and sneaky manner in which those lampoons were circulated; and, finally, that a copy of this statement be sent to the sections and members of the SLP for their information and future guidance.

Fraternally submitted,
[signed] SID FINK

NOTE: If any delegate wishes to read a brief summary of Wizek’s prior anti-SLP action, s/he can find it on pages 83 and 84, and on pages 150 thru 153, of the 1982 National Convention Report.¹

On motion, the statement was adopted. [Applause.]
At 3:20 p.m., the convention adjourned until 5:30 p.m.

TUESDAY EVENING SESSION, MAY 4, 1993

The session was called to order at 5:30 p.m.

On roll call, all present except J. Frank and J. Hollon. J. Hollon arrived shortly.

The sergeant at arms reported six members present.

Reports of Committees

Committee on Agitation—A Stokes reported that the committee was almost completed with its work and suggested that the convention recess until 7 p.m.

At 5:37 p.m., the convention adjourned until 7 p.m.

SECOND TUESDAY EVENING SESSION, MAY 4, 1993

The session was called to order at 7:10 p.m. by Vice Chairperson G.S. Taylor.

On roll call, all present except K. Boettcher and J. McHugh, both of whom arrived at 7:20 p.m.

The sergeant at arms reported seven members present.

¹ [This refers to the printed edition. The page references will differ with the online edition.]

SOCIALIST LABOR PARTY

Reports of Committees

Committee on Agitation—A. Stokes presented the following report:

Re Report on National Secretary's Report on "General Activities"

Your committee has carefully reviewed this section of the National Secretary's report concerning the general activities of the Party for the years 1991–1992. We note, with great encouragement that the statistics cited in the report reveal a marked increase in activity during the year 1992 as compared to 1991. The following areas of activity showed increases: public meetings increased by 75 percent; contacts increased by 17 percent; leaflet distribution increased by 10.3 percent; and distribution of *The People* increased by 4.5 percent.

What makes the National Secretary's report on "General Activities" different from others that have been submitted to conventions in recent years is that the statistics revealed that we, as a Party, accomplished more in the year 1992 than we have in any of the preceding five years, and that this was due, in large measure to the successful *1992 Campaign for Socialism*. This fact is something that needs to be taken to heart by each member of the Party, for it shows, unmistakably and unequivocally, that, despite the earnest wishes of the enemies of the working class, that the Socialist Labor Party is here and it is here to stay.

The *1992 Campaign for Socialism* taught us many valuable lessons that we can put to practical use in making plans for agitational programs in the future. For one thing, it showed us what we can do when we have the benefits of a well-thought-out, coordinated plan of action involving the national office, sections, and national members-at-large aimed at the achievement of realistic goals that allow us to broaden our horizons of activity and raise the level of our own classconscious agitation. Furthermore, the 1992 campaign taught us that the best antidote to the poisons of frustration, despair and hopelessness that lead to inactivity on the part of some of the less active members, is a renewed commitment to the principles and organization of the Socialist Labor Party which finds expression in agitational activities focused on reaching the working class with our all-important message. No member of this Party, whether in a section, or a national member-at-large should ever

feel that their efforts on behalf of this organization or its teachings are ever wasted or that they labor in vain for a future that will never come. The truth is, that our teachings and program and organization hold great promise for the future, and that by persevering in agitational activities with a spirit of determination to overcome every obstacle, no matter how great, in our effort to reach the workers with our message, we are doing our part to see that the promise of the future is kept. Because our principle and our organization are one, practical agitational activity on a day-to-day, month-to-month, year-to-year basis is the key to giving birth to the ultimate expression of that principle: the Socialist Industrial Republic of Labor. Each leaflet we hand out, each new subscription to *The People* we get, each piece of literature we place in a worker's hand, every worker we invite to a social, or to a public meeting, each worker we tell about the Socialist Labor Party brings the future that much closer to the present. Comrades, when you make your agitational plans for the future, and when you set about accomplishing your mission to the working class, please keep these lessons firmly embedded in your consciousness, and never allow yourselves to think pessimistically about either our principles or our organization. Our teachings are correct, and our principles have been proven time and time again in the crucible of experience, even as our organization has been tested time and time again in the crucible of the class struggle. It is, therefore, of the utmost importance to proceed in all our doings with the unshakable self-confidence that come what may, ultimate victory will be ours.

With the foregoing in mind, your committee makes the following recommendations for general activities and agitation:

(1) We must build on the successes of the 1992 campaign by encouraging further issue-oriented national campaigns coordinated on a Partywide basis, by leaflets, articles in *The People*, lectures, etc., using the 1992 campaign as a model and using the valuable lessons learned to sharpen and refine our agitational skills and to raise our level of classconsciousness.

(2) The progress of the various national campaigns, once mounted, should be constantly monitored by sections and national members-at-large and their evaluations of the successes and failures should be reported to the national office.

(3) Sections and national members-at-large must take stock of themselves and realistically evaluate their abilities and capabilities relating to the Party's agitational efforts. Nobody can be ex-

SOCIALIST LABOR PARTY

pected to do everything, but everybody can and ought to put their shoulder to the wheel and do something.

(4) Sections must be encouraged to make realistic plans and set achievable goals. We direct their attention in this matter to the positive experience of Section San Francisco Bay Area and the success they enjoyed from planning their upcoming year's activities in advance.

(5) National members-at-large are encouraged to build sections in their areas. Our Party's history provides inspiring examples of members organizing sections in their localities. The recent example of Section Dade County, Fla., shows that this is still possible today.

(6) National members-at-large are encouraged to utilize the opportunities for intra-Party communication via the procedures set up in Article IV of the Organizational Norms and Procedures when planning and coordinating their agitational activities.

(7) Sections and national members-at-large are encouraged to set up self-service newsstands for distribution of *The People*. Another activity which has brought good results is the use of outdoor displays of our leaflets and literature. If people won't come to us, we can go to them with our message. Tables of literature in front of libraries, colleges, etc., have proven very effective and the continued use of this method of public education should be encouraged.

(8) Leaflet distribution and distribution of *The People* continue to be the mainstays of our agitational efforts. It is imperative that we continue to expand our leafleting activities.

(9) For many years, Party members have written letters to the editors of newspapers, magazines, etc., on issues of public interest that the Party has spoken out on. This has been an effective method of agitation and of reaching the public.

(10) In all of our agitational efforts we must bear in mind that we must present our message clearly, effectively and correctly to workers who have been misled and miseducated about socialism. Continued efforts on our part are necessary to sharpen our presentation and teaching skills in order to make our agitational efforts more efficient and productive.

Fraternally submitted,
[signed] ALBERT F. STOKES, Chair
ALAN BRADSHAW, SID FINK,
JOE HOLLON, JOSEPH TOTH

41ST NATIONAL CONVENTION

Committee on Agitation

A motion was made to adopt the report.

An amendment to strike the word “five” in the second paragraph of the report was not concurred in. An amendment to insert the words “any of” in the second paragraph of the report was passed. On motion, the report, as amended, was adopted.

New Business

On motion, K. Boettcher resumed the chair.

The convention extended a vote of thanks to the National Secretary for all that he’s done to keep the Party together.

On motion, the national office was authorized to edit the minutes of the proceedings.

On motion, the minutes of Tuesday’s sessions were approved as read.

On motion, the minutes as a whole, as amended, were approved.

The convention extended its thanks to the recording secretary.

On motion, the convention adjourned sine die at 7:45 p.m.

Fraternally submitted,
[signed] DONNA BILLS
Recording Secretary

Appendix

RESOLUTION 1-A FROM SECTION AKRON

Resolution from Section Akron:
to the 1993 National Convention.

We recommend, when members issue trial gift subscriptions to *The People*, that they be encouraged to contact the interested person by phone and report it at a section meeting. This, in turn, may help determine if follow-up calls could possibly generate a stronger interest in the Party's program and foster discussion group meetings.

RESOLUTION 1-B FROM SECTION AKRON

Resolution from Section Akron:
to the 1993 National Convention

The *Socialist Studies* outlines are an invaluable aid to discussion group meetings presenting basic socialist fundamentals and reference material to timely subjects. It would be well to consider for all practical purposes a change in the format and in the selection of the most desirable topics of the times. We therefore:

Recommend that *Socialist Studies* be printed on 8-1/2" x 11" paper with holes to fit into a standard three-ring notebook for study class students.

RESOLUTION 1-C FROM SECTION AKRON

Resolution on Agitation

Whereas, the national office provides the sections and members with extended information (some of it recently compiled) and instruction on how members should conduct themselves when engaging in the process of distributing SLP leaflets, fliers and *The People*. This information can be consumed in about an hour. On the other hand;

Whereas, the national office provides the membership with brief forms on a yearly publishing and shipping schedule, and the correct procedures in addressing all correspondence to the national office, for which we are in turn grateful;

Therefore, Be It Resolved, That the national office be authorized to provide a brief and crucial summary of a Code of Ethics to be

used by SLP members and sympathizers in their agitation work in distributing SLP literature, leaflets and *The People*.

RESOLUTION 1-D FROM SECTION LOS ANGELES

Resolution

To Upgrade the Socialist Industrial Union Concept.

Be It Resolved, That in the interest of substantive and informed advocacy, the Socialist Labor Party upgrade its promotion of socialist industrial union organization by embracing the following three structural principles:

1. Basic shop mix
2. Cyclic rotation
3. Caucus

Explanation:

In light of the continuing failure by the workers to form socialist industrial unions after almost 90 years of SLP advocacy, Section Los Angeles of the Socialist Labor Party of America feels it is incumbent upon the Party to provide a heightened rendering of the SIU model. There is at present a total lack of any elaboration of those of its features which are essential to distinguish it from contemporary labor unions. Up to now, the working class has failed to be convinced of the SIU's value by the display of a brief chart and an equally sketchy explanation, both of which mark the norm for its presentation by the SLP. It is apparent that innumerable exhortations to, "go out and build socialist industrial unions," have not brought about even the most hesitant attempts to do so. We do not believe that blame for this can be laid at the feet of workers. Rather, the fault lies with the SLP for its failure to propound an organizational scheme that is unique to the SIU. The time is long overdue for the SLP to reexamine the SIU plan with the intent of supplying it more substance and definition than hitherto provided. We believe, also, that this reexamination should be, as it should have been from the start, an ongoing process within the Party.

An observation of the facts shows that the best of intentions are always defeated when organizational structures similar to those of capitalist labor unions are relied upon to support the practical application of socialist strategies. In contrast, a basic tenet of the SLP's proposal for the SIU is that control of the organization must be maintained at all levels by workers on the shop floor. But, this is, in theory, what the AFL-CIO also contends to offer. Yet, work-

SOCIALIST LABOR PARTY

ers have since discovered that such is not the case, that control swiftly passes out of their hands. In consequence, not only are they properly skeptical of the current unions, but of any other that claims to give them control, while offering what appears as only an organizational clone of existing unions. We should not wonder, then, if workers' skepticism of capitalist unions attaches also to their perception of the SIU as an acceptable governing body.

To avoid this perception it is essential to exhaustively delineate the salient features of each of socialist industrial unionism's indigenous structures. An occasional cartoon or the brief flow chart offered by the SLP over the years leave much to be desired. A reluctance to press the working class with anything which does not appear to arise spontaneously from its ranks is understandable. However, basic principle must remain the guide, as the SIU upgrade outlined below attests.

Upgrade Synopsis

The SLP maintains that the SIU is applicable for workers in two ways:

- 1.) As a defense against capitalist onslaughts while striving for socialism;
- 2.) As their governing body once socialism is established.

These two different functions define separate operational modes. The first function does not possess the prerogative to elect managers, supervisors, etc., or to organize production for use rather than profit. These powers are reserved to its future performance as government.

Regardless of their differences, both modes share the overriding concern that control by workers on, and from, the shop floor be structurally articulated at all levels of administration. It forms the core of their operative principle, without which no continued progress is possible. There can be no spot in their structure where that principle is inapplicable. At local, national and all-industry councils, the shop, and only the shop, is in attendance. No intervening proxy is to be allowed by which control becomes indirect.

What makes this possible is an elective system which promotes the utmost accountability from its representatives. Its procedure derives from practices of preliterate industrial societies. Two fundamental principles are essential to its successful operation. The first is the principle of the basic shop mix. The second is the principle of cyclic rotation. A third principle, that of "caucus," is sup-

plemental to the first two, and supports their operation.

Basic Shop Mix:

The principle of basic shop mix stems from the fact that within each industrial plant there are divisions of labor into “shops” based on the “tools of production.” “Tool of production” here refers to a function which is essential for the productive needs of an industrial process. While industrial processes vary from industry to industry, typical processing departments within most industrial plants include:

Departments = Shops

A	Quality control	G	Production
B	Maintenance	H	Facilities
C	Transportation	I	Medical
D	Cafeteria	J	Recreation
E	Stock	K	Receiving/Shipping
F	Safety	L	Engineering

These departments currently represent “tools of production” in terms universally adopted by major productive constituencies around the world. “function” stands in the stead of “form.” The “department” becomes the “shop.”

Within each of these departments there are further divisions, many of which overlap. For instance, the medical, cafeteria, recreation and safety departments share a concern over the issue of health. In many maintenance departments there are janitors, electricians, mechanics, plumbers and other repair and upkeep specialists. Engineering can include research and development, as well as production support. Some departments may be absorbed by other departments, as when quality control is administered by production.

The principle of the basic shop mix establishes that local, national and all-industry councils be fully representative of all the functioning departments within the industry they represent. Accordingly, every council must consist of a delegate from each department of the industry to which it ministers. A basic shop mix is each council’s manifest.

The plant council typifies the constituency of a basic shop mix because each and every one of its shops finds a seat at its table, as shown below:

	Shop	A	Delegate
+	“	B	“

SOCIALIST LABOR PARTY

+ “ C “
+ “ D “
+ “ E “
+ “ F “ = Basic Shop Mix = Plant Council
+ “ G “
+ “ H “
+ “ I “
+ “ “ “

Plant councils, so formed, provide worker control of every plant falling within the aegis of each of the many basic industrial constituencies comprising a socialist society.

Other levels of worker control are exercised through an all-industry congress and national and local councils. Local councils take their delegates from shops whose industry operates several plants in the same area. Transcending local council ministrations, a national-industry's council draws delegates from all the local areas where their particular industry has plants. Maintaining harmonious relations between all of the industries is the task entrusted to the all-industry congress, a council composed of delegates from all the industries.

The electoral process for these councils requires a different approach than that used for plant councils. Otherwise, the far-flung constituencies represented by these councils would make them unwieldy due to their vastly increased size. If the problem of size were handled as present unions handle it, by designating voter bases that transcend the single shop, then the principle of control by the shop floor would suffer a setback. This is because in industries of any appreciable scale most workers are unknown to one another. It is unrealistic to expect them to make informed choices for councils from lists principally composed of strangers. These considerations present serious dilemmas if control of industry is to be maintained at the level of the shop floor.

Cyclic rotation:

The principle of cyclic rotation overcomes these dilemmas. It provides for local, national and all-industry representation to pass around the plants from one shop to another in strict order. In the case of a local council election, but one shop from each plant is privileged to vote a member onto the council. During that council's term, its delegates are restricted to those who belong to the shops with the vote. Though, as councilpersons the delegates may have

41ST NATIONAL CONVENTION

wide responsibilities, it is to the members only of their own shop floor to whom they are directly answerable, for they can be immediately removed any time their shopmates judge a more suitable replacement is available.

Illustration of the principle of cyclic rotation for local council representation is as follows:

Shop A sends representative from Plant #1

+	“	B	“	“	“	#2
+	“	C	“	“	“	#3
+	“	D	“	“	“	#4
+	“	E	“	“	“	#5
+	“	“	“	“	“	“

If there are insufficient plants to bring a council into conformity with the principle of the basic shop mix, the process continues until such occurs. For instance, in the event there are eight shops in the basic shop mix of a particular industry, but within a specific local area that industry maintains only five plants, the cycling would continue until the eight shops are represented, thus:

B Shop A sends representative from plant #1

A	“	B	“	“	“	#2	
S	“	C	“	“	“	#3	
I	“	D	“	“	“	#4	
C	“	E	“	“	“	#5	
	“	F	“	“	“	#1	R
S	“	G	“	“	“	#2	E
H	“	E	“	“	“	#3	C
O							Y
P							C

M	At the expiration of this council's	I
I	Term the cycling process for the	N
X	Next one begins at plant #4.	G

Elections to the national councils and the all-industry congress follow the same procedure; each shop in every plant takes it in turn, depending on the period of rotation, to seat its representative. Using, for example's sake, a basic shop mix of five, the sequence for successive elections is as follows:

First period of rotation for council representation

Shop A sends representative from Plant #1

“	B	“	“	“	“	#2
“	C	“	“	“	“	#3

SOCIALIST LABOR PARTY

“ D “ “ “ #4
 “ E* “ “ “ “ #5

Second period of rotation for council representation

Shop B sends representative from Plant #1

“ C “ “ “ “ #2
 “ D “ “ “ “ #3
 “ E* “ “ “ “ #4
 “ A “ “ “ “ #5

Third period of rotation for council representation

Shop C sends representative from Plant #1

“ D “ “ “ “ #2
 “ E* “ “ “ “ #3
 “ A “ “ “ “ #4
 “ B “ “ “ “ #5

Fourth period of rotation for council representation

Shop D sends representative from Plant #1

E* “ “ “ “ #2
 “ A “ “ “ “ #3
 “ B “ “ “ “ #4
 “ C “ “ “ “ #5

Fifth period of rotation for council representation

Shop E* sends representative from Plant #1

“ A “ “ “ “ #2
 “ B “ “ “ “ #3
 “ C “ “ “ “ #4
 “ D “ “ “ “ #5

At the conclusion of one complete cycle of rotation, after each shop has taken its turn, the entire process begins again and is repeated indefinitely.

This rotational scheme can be stated in terms of the logical operation, “or/and.” Explicitly rendering it so, and substituting “+” for “and,” allows a reduction of the above expanded version to:

<u>Plant #1</u>	<u>Plant #2</u>	<u>Plant #3</u>	<u>Plant #X</u>	
Shop A	Shop A	Shop A	Shop A	
or	or	or	or	Local
Shop B	Shop B	Shop B	Shop B	Councils
or	or	or	or	
Shop C >+	Shop C >+	Shop C >+...	Shop C >	National
or	or	or	or	Councils

41ST NATIONAL CONVENTION

Shop D	Shop D	Shop D	Shop D	
or	or	or	or	All-Industry
Shop E	Shop E	Shop E	Shop E	Congress
or	or	or	or	

For brevity's sake, this last can be reduced to:

<u>P1</u>	<u>PX</u>	
SA	SA	Local Councils
Or SB	Or SB	
Or SC >+...	Or SC >	National Councils
Or SD	Or SD	
Or SE	Or SE	All-Industry Congress

A merging of this with the expression for the plant council provides the following coupled array, wherein the distinction between the two modes of selection is plainly brought out:

<u>P1</u>	<u>PX</u>	
SA	SA	
+ SB	+ SB	
+ SC >+...	+ SC >	Plant Councils
+ SD	+ SD	
<u>+ SE +</u>	<u>+ SE</u>	
SA	SA	Local Councils
Or SB	Or SB	
Or SC >+...	Or SC >	National Councils
Or SD	Or SD	
Or SE	Or SE	All-Industry Congress

The period of rotation is variable, depending on the council being elected—local, national or congressional. In progressing from plant to congress there is a widening in the scope of each council's functions. To perform effectively, delegates need term periods appropriate to each level of representation. Where representatives to a plant council are elected to a one-year term, terms of two, three and four years, respectively, befit local, national and all-industry councils.

Elections to the different council levels are staggered so that shops are saved the disruption which might occur if called upon to provide delegates for several councils at once. Staggering also preserves continuity of administration and, by spreading representation more evenly, sustains each shop's involvement in the elective

and administrative processes. As rotation always takes place in strict order, the principle of basic shop mix continues to be maintained throughout, guaranteeing that no “tool of production” goes unrepresented in socialism’s “administration of things.”

Caucus:

While cyclic rotation considerably reduces the size of councils, those at the national and all-industry levels remain large. Though large, these assemblies function successfully by adopting the routine of caucus. A caucus occurs when within a larger grouping a group of lesser size meets apart. The reasons for it can vary, but, in general, it is for policy-making purposes. It enables delegates to hold counsel amongst themselves in order to make common cause. A practice traceable to the Alongonguins, caucus long ago penetrated deep into American political life.

Each member of the SIU stands in organic relation to a shop, a local area and to a national industry. Within the different levels of representation those affiliations establish the basis for caucus. It occurs in a local council only when that council is of a size to contain multiples of its basic shop mix. Then it obtains simply as a matter of shop affiliation—maintenance workers meet with maintenance workers, engineers with engineers, etc., to shape their individual policy on concerns within the council. Where there are 10 shops in the basic shop mix, there would then be 10 caucuses formed—one for each shop.

In a national-industry council, shop and local affiliation provide the basis for two caucus groups. These embody the mutuality of interests shared, in the one instance, by those of the same shop function, and, in the other instance, by those from the same locality. Every delegate to the national council is a member of both caucuses, gaining the opportunity, thereby, of assessing issues from two perspectives. At one time a safety delegate from a particular locality meets in caucus with the safety delegates from all the other localities and, at another time, that selfsame safety delegate caucuses, regardless of shop, with all other delegates from the same local area as they themselves are dispatched from.

The all-industry congress is formed of three caucus groups, derived in turn from industry, local and shop affiliation. Those affiliations determine the caucus assignments of delegates, every one of whom has a place in each of the three groups.

A significant distinction of the all-industry congress’s local cau-

cus is that, if the scheme of representation currently proposed by the SLP is maintained, then only at this distant juncture are delegates from all the different industries brought face to face for considerations of mutual concern at the local level. The coherence of regional communities would likely be strengthened were this stage of cooperation shifted to local administrative entities. This is one of the concerns not addressed through the SLP's present advocacy.

Conclusion:

Of the criteria which sets the SLP apart from other Marxist parties, none is more requisite than its adherence to the concept of the SIU. It is sad commentary that the short treatment of the SIU provided above has been more thorough than the usual treatment afforded it in our literature. Experience of nearly 90 years supports the conclusion that it has been unwise to avoid a thorough and continuous investigation of fundamental structural concerns inherent in the SIU concept. As a result of that avoidance the concept remains, as yet, inadequate for the needs of those it is intended to serve. Therefore, it is of the utmost importance to reexamine both the concept and our posture regarding it. In so doing, attention must be paid, at long last, to structure, for, without it the mouthing of socialist principle remains an exercise in futility. It is essential that the SLP proffer the working class a greater measure of expertise than hitherto. Such a gesture can be made by adopting this resolution, wherein is held up to the workers a blueprint for union organization that, in contrast to all others, is structurally resistant to bureaucratic degradation and subsequent capitalist control

**RESOLUTION 3-A FROM NAT'L MEMBER-AT-LARGE
GENE TAGLE, PA.**

Resolved, That the Socialist Labor Party shall adopt a policy supporting restrictions on the sale of handguns, automatic and semiautomatic guns.

Comment: According to an article in the January 1993 *Atlantic* magazine, author Erik Larson notes that in the past two years 60,000 people were killed by guns in the United States. This exceeds the number of U.S. service men and women killed in the Vietnam War. More than 100,000 students bring guns to school every day. Domestic homicides and suicides now amount to horrific numbers, thanks to easy access to handguns in the home.

SOCIALIST LABOR PARTY

Drive-by killings are commonplace. This is obviously a symptom of a decaying capitalist society, but working-class people need protection while it rots. A Gallup poll shows 93 percent of the American public wants some kind of gun control. It seems like only the SLP and the NRA oppose all manner of control. Some bedfellow for the SLP!

RESOLUTION 3-B FROM NAT'L MEMBER-AT-LARGE GENE TAGLE, PA.

Resolved, That the masthead of *The People* be redesigned to eliminate the line, "Published by the Socialist Labor Party," and the arm and hammer and Roman chariot logos; further, that a new masthead and logo reflect the modern era in which we live.

Comment: Nothing against tradition. Everything against confusion. The arm and hammer is often misconstrued to be a communist symbol. Eliminate the confusion. Drop it. Eliminate the line, "Published by the Socialist Labor Party." If I were to pick up a paper announcing it was published by the Republican or Democratic Party, like most other people, I would take it for a biased publication full of claptrap, and discard it. Unfortunately, people are prejudiced. Let's acknowledge it and give them a chance to read before they can react to any buzz words. Publication credit in the page three box should suffice.

RESOLUTION 3-C FROM NAT'L MEMBER-AT-LARGE GENE TAGLE, PA.

Resolution

Resolved, That Article I, Section E of *Organizational Norms and Procedures* be deleted and replaced with the following:

Section E. Actions of the convention approved by referendum shall be regarded by all members as Party policy until reversed or modified. Party policy shall be accurately stated by all members, personal opinion to the contrary notwithstanding.

Resolution

Resolved, That Article VII, Section 12(a) of the SLP Constitution be deleted and replaced with the following:

Section 12(a). Acts and decisions of the National Convention

approved by referendum shall be regarded by all members as Party policy until reversed or modified. Party policy shall be accurately stated by all members, personal opinion to the contrary notwithstanding.

Comment: No one should be required to defend a policy which he/she deems to be not in the best interests of the working class and/or a violation of conscience. I regard the Party's opposition to gun control as one such indefensible policy and cannot defend it.

RESOLUTION 3-D FROM NAT'L MEMBERS-AT-LARGE L. DORN AND D. BRADIA, N.Y.

Resolution No. 1

Whereas, as presently constituted the Party has eliminated an essential vital lifeline to its functioning properly, namely the NEC Subcommittee.

Whereas, when the thought of moving the national office from the New York City area was first expressed, the first thing we, the undersigned, thought of is where can we find sufficient qualified members who are willing to donate their time and effort freely, at their own expense, to constitute the new NEC Subcommittee?

Remember, they had one in New York City. De Leon did all his writings there and the national office was there for many good long years with an NEC Subcommittee. Apparently, our concern was not shared by those who decided to move, nor also by those who decided where to move to. For many years this, the NEC Subcommittee, has been the main active working body to help guide the organization over its many hurdles. Without it, the National Secretary has no active body to report to. There is no good substitute for this lifeline. The NEC which meets every two years can hardly be considered to be an active working body. Only an NEC Subcommittee can actively work in behalf of the NEC in between NEC sessions.

The Party will not function properly nor grow properly without this important lifeline. Only two years ago at the last convention, one of the staff members at the national office said the Party is losing ground. And we have every reason to believe it will continue to lose ground, unless this convention rises up to its responsibility to carry out the message presented in this resolution. After all, it is here in Palo Alto where the Party has deteriorated.

Let us not forget it was here where we lost the *Weekly People*,

SOCIALIST LABOR PARTY

even though we're all thankful we have the biweekly People. We lost having political candidates and under the present unhealthy situation there appears to be no prospect of having them. It's a situation in the SLP unheard of before Palo Alto.

We recently regained one section. However, the Party lost many sections since the national office has been in Palo Alto.

Let's not forget De Leon's warning, "the road to hell is paved with good intentions." Speaking in callous but truly realistic terms, we trust this convention will take the bull by the horns and move the Party on to a better SLP.

Therefore, Resolved the SLP shall establish an NEC committee as previously set up when the national office was in the New York City area. Said subcommittee to be composed of members of the Party not working at the national office. If for any reason this cannot be done in Palo Alto, the national office shall move to where this can be done, for example, to possibly Philadelphia, before newer and more serious pitfalls befall the Party. If only four or five qualified members can be found in the Philadelphia area to form a Subcommittee, this is all right. It would be a good start until the former desired seven members can be found. The welfare and healthy operations of the SLP should be paramount to any personal considerations, not the other way around.

Those who have the best interests of the Party should be willing to leave sunny California if need be. We are paraphrasing Thomas Paine here who said, "the summer soldier and sunshine sailor will shrink from the service of his country." We, the undersigned, feel so strongly about this resolution that we paraphrase again. This time it's what De Leon showed on one occasion. He said, in so many words, that a member may have to use two swords, one in each hand. One sword to fight capitalism and the other to straighten out what is wrong within the Party.

Fraternally submitted,
F. LESLIE DORN
DAVID BRADIA

[signed]

RESOLUTION 3-E FROM NAT'L MEMBERS-AT-LARGE L. DORN AND D. BRADIA, N.Y.

Resolution No. 2 and Supplement

Whereas, it is four years since the 1989 National Convention, where it was decided that a new pamphlet on socialist industrial

unionism be printed. And we find no such pamphlet in sight.

Whereas, there are some serious discrepancies on this matter that crept into the printed 1989 SLP convention proceedings regarding the pamphlet, *Socialist Industrial Unionism: The Workers' Power*. For example, on page 95 in the proceedings are the terms automation, robotomy and computerization. And it is claimed these new developments in technology are not considered in the pamphlet in question. Now let's turn to the pamphlet on page 24 and what do we find? We find a section headed, "Mass Job Destruction via Automation." And we feel the subject of automation is adequately covered in the pamphlet.

As for the subject of robotomy and computerization and additional technology such as laser, used for welding and cutting steel in industry, as well as new assembly methods, all of which displace labor, we feel a short additional preface to the pamphlet can well take care of these.

Whereas, as for the matter of the unemployed, shown on page 98 in the 1989 proceedings, again we feel what the pamphlet says on page 50 is sufficient. The pamphlet says: "There is also the question of jurisdiction over the unemployed, for bona fide unionism does not exclude them as dues collecting unions do. In most cases the solution is simple, for unemployed workers, as a rule, will join with the workers in that industry in which they are normally employed. Thus, unemployed sailors will join the marine transport industrial union, unemployed textile workers the textile workers industrial union, and so forth, down the line."

Again, on pages 95 and 96 of the 1989 convention proceedings, the request is made that a "presentation should, of course go on to explain why it is only via the SIU program that real and lasting peace can be won." But the pamphlet in question in Chapter 2 on page 12 is headed, "The Road to Peace," and we feel the subject is adequately covered there.

As for the pamphlet in question being post-World War II, remember all the De Leon pamphlets and writings are pre-World War I. The examples in the pamphlet in question are clearly understood, the same as in the De Leon works which are of a much older era.

On page 98 of the 1989 convention proceedings, the matter of where the original nucleus of the SIU will originate is brought out as to whether it will be from our present unions or otherwise. First of all who cares? The pamphlet in question is correctly directed at

SOCIALIST LABOR PARTY

the working class. This includes all parts of the working class, whether they be workers in the present unions, which are based upon the preservation of capitalism, or otherwise. As for the SLP, we will always be there to assist wherever possible to directly educate and help organize any nucleus of the SIU to its correct formation and direction. And the pamphlet in question already strongly shows this.

There are other reasons other than the pamphlet in question, why the Party has backslided in all its efforts to reach the working class and these are taken up elsewhere. And we believe the Party will continue to backslide unless corrective action is taken. None of the three chosen by the National Secretary to analyze the pamphlet have shown chapter and verse what is wrong with the pamphlet, nor has anyone else. Yes, there is one verse in the pamphlet that should be changed. This is the verse *Weekly People* [...] should be changed to *The People*, which is biweekly.

We asked veteran sympathizer Clifton Field, who is an engineer, and who has worked for some of the biggest companies for many years, such as Kodak and General Electric. We asked him a simple question, since he is thoroughly familiar with this pamphlet. We asked him: "If the workers were ready, willing and determined to build the socialist industrial union, could they do so with the knowledge imparted in this pamphlet?" He replied, "Of course." And we the undersigned say likewise.

Only last year NEC Member George Taylor, in the proceedings of the NEC Session held then, as shown on page 30, said: "I consider our present out-of-print edition of 1974 [pamphlet, *Socialist Industrial Unionism: The Workers' Power*] quite good and maybe consideration should be given to making some changes and using it."

In the 1974 edition of the pamphlet, former National Secretary Arnold Petersen says in his preface to the pamphlet, along with saying many more things extolling the pamphlet, he says: "Studied with care, this well written pamphlet will help to guide and direct the workers into the right channel and aid them in steering clear of the multitudinous pitfalls with which the road is filled that all revolutionary classes must travel, and particularly the modern revolutionary class, the wage working class."

The pamphlet wisely places emphasis on elected workers' councils in each plant to supervise and direct production. And this is rightly so, because whatever group or team arrangement develops,

the pamphlet applies.

Therefore, Be It Resolved, That the 1974 printing of the pamphlet, *Socialist Industrial Unionism: The Workers' Power*, shall be reprinted for distribution as shown herein.

[signed] Fraternaly submitted,
 F. LESLIE DORN
 DAVID BRADIA

Supplement to Resolution No. 2

It so happens that two companies right here in Rochester, N.Y., have the most developed technology as can be found anywhere.

One of them is in the Xerox complex here. They have copied the worker arrangement of the AT&T in Texas. And by setting up what is called a focus-factory which allows for great flexibility, they have found it to be so productive, that they are avoiding sending assembly work out of the country.

They eliminate costly warehousing of raw materials by having suppliers send them materials when they determine they will be ready for them, called "Just-in-Time" supplies from suppliers.

They have changed the lighting to new energy-saving, metal-halide lighting that eases stress.

New electrostatic floors were installed. Employees have to don special heel straps that discharge electricity into the floor so that delicate printed circuit boards in the copiers aren't damaged when touched. The walls were painted a bright blue.

New adjustable work benches were installed to keep bending and stretching to a minimum, while wrist-twisting and ear-splitting pneumatic tools were replaced with quiet powerful electric ones.

Instead of having one long assembly line where each worker performs a single, repetitive task, cells of about seven workers each are responsible for building entire machines as a group. That decreases boring and injury-causing repetition, but also makes workers more accountable for the quality and productivity of their group.

Workers build the copiers on roller-equipped "conveyors," which latch together and come apart easily so manufacturing cells can be enlarged or reduced to size in response to customer demand. If demand for a machine goes up, they can simply add another cell.

The above will suffice for now, even though the focus-factory entails a number of other additional changes.

SOCIALIST LABOR PARTY

Xerox is converting three nearby buildings in their complex into focus-factories, most of the changes should be done by this year's end.

The overhaul will split those four plants into seven focus-factories. In other words, a plant may contain more than one focus-factory, specializing in each of the following areas: high-volume machines, mid-volume machines, low-volume copiers, color machines, remanufactured copiers and printers, components and lastly, consumables such as copier cartridges.

The focus-factory leapfrogs the Japanese group methods and as already expressed, prevents work to be sent out of the country. With this new assembly type arrangement, the displacement of workers is tremendous. Now a plant employs hundreds where it used to employ thousands. And efficiency has gone up more than 30 percent.

Again, the pamphlet in question allows for all the above, because the pamphlet places importance in establishing elected plant councils to supervise and direct production, completely in line with our socialist industrial unionism program.

The second plant here in Rochester is the Gleason Corp., the leader in producing gear-cutting machinery. They have 85 percent of the world's market. The machines they produce are (CNC) Computer-Numerical-Controlled machines.

Some parts of the company look more like a computer or semiconductor company, so many numerical-controlled computer machines are used in the production process. They have four flexible automation machine centers, which automatically do the work of facing, milling, tapping, reaming and boring.

They also have a laser-cutting machine which cuts steel to an accuracy of five thousandths of an inch.

They have a clean room with filtered air and controlled temperature that workers enter only while wearing special garments. The room is used by Gleason for assembly of precision bearings.

The rest of the factory is also clean and temperature controlled, and high tech with none of the grease and metal shavings that machine shops historically bring to mind. And all operations are performed quietly.

They have a computer monitoring system that tells the status of projects.

Because the machines could be changed over quickly from making one kind of gear to making another, they fit in with those mod-

41ST NATIONAL CONVENTION

ern companies “Just-in-Time” production systems.

Gear-cutting machines are used by makers of automobiles, trucks, farm machinery and construction equipment.

Gleason is the world’s leading maker of machines for cutting bevel gears—gears that mesh at an angle.

The work force is organized into self-directed work teams. Each worker is a member of two teams—a functional team to do a specific job and a cross-functional team, which brings together employees from a variety of different departments.

There are other important things about what makes this plant so high tech. However, the foregoing will suffice for the purpose of this resolution.

The two above examples of the most highly technological developments show the pamphlet in question to be accurate in calling for elected workers’ councils in the plant to direct and supervise production. In other words, it again shows the socialist industrial union program of the SLP is in tune with the most highly developed production processes.

Robotomy has no application in some companies. The above are two examples where robotomy has no application.

[signed] Fraternally submitted,
F. LESLIE DORN
DAVID BRADIA