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Platform and Constitution

OF THE

Socialist Labor Party

OF THE

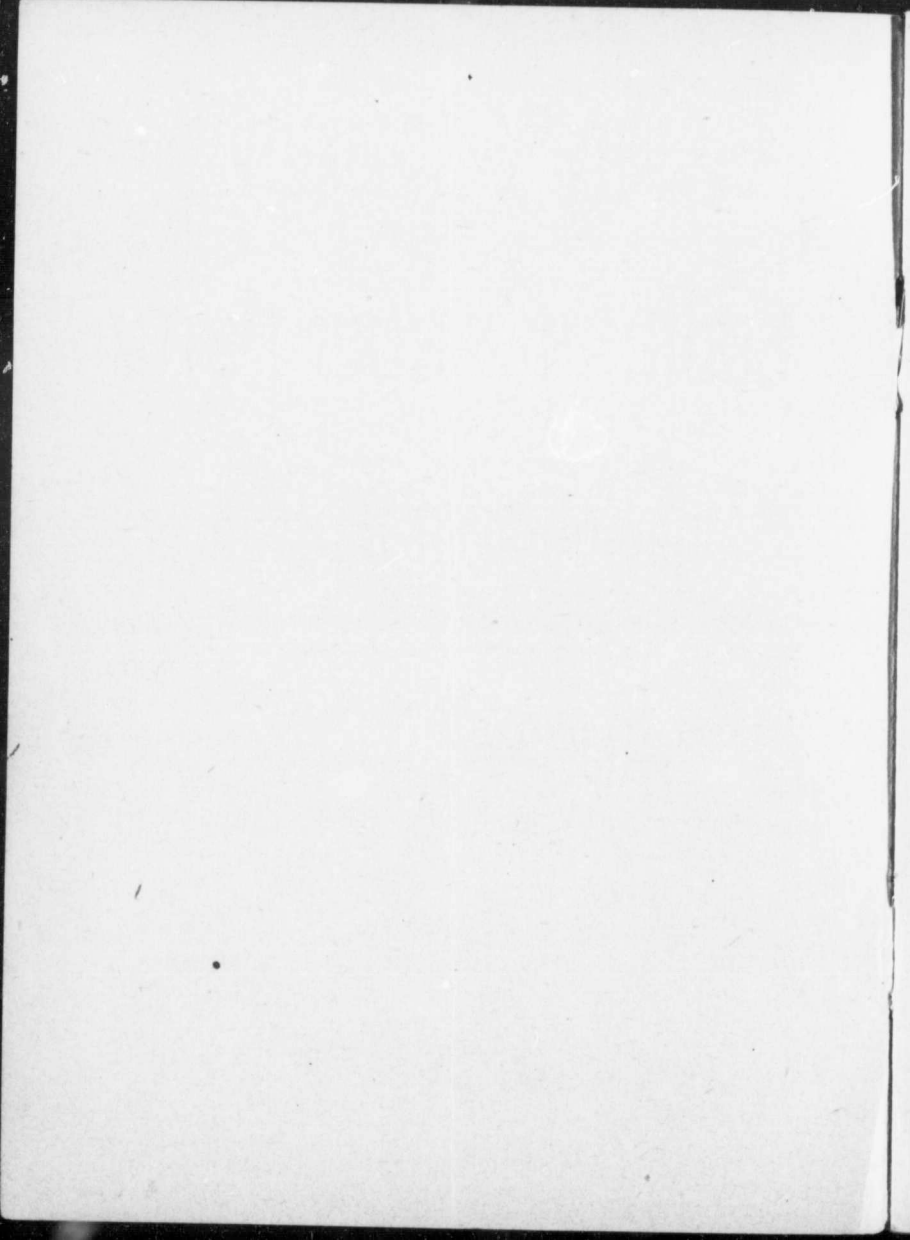
Dominion of Canada.



Amended Sept. 2, 1901.

31:22 MACINNIS COLLECTION

BOX 302-22



Platform and Constitution
OF THE
SOCIALIST LABOR PARTY
OF THE
Dominion of Canada.

PLATFORM.

The Socialist Labor Party of Canada re-asserts the inalienable right of all men to life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness.

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

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

To the obvious fact that a despotic system of economics is the direct opposite of our democratic system of politics can plainly be traced the existence of a privileged

class, the corruption of Government by that class, the alienation of public property, public franchises and public functions to that class, and the abject dependence of even the mightiest nations upon that class.

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

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

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

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

A professedly democratic franchise in Canada is made a mockery and a farce by a license system of cash deposits, property qualifications and other impediments to the free exercise of the ballot, and to the free nomination and election to public office in the Dominion of wage-working citizens.

Against such a system the Socialist Labor Party enters its protest, and reiterates its fundamental declaration that private property in the natural sources of production and in the instruments of labor is the obvious cause of all economic servitude and political dependence.

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

We, therefore, call upon the wage-workers of Canada, and upon all other honest citizens, to organize under the banner of the Socialist Labor Party into a classconscious-

body, aware of its rights and determined to conquer them by taking possession of the public powers; so that, held together by an indomitable spirit of solidarity under the most trying conditions of the present class struggle, we may put a summary end to that barbarous struggle by the abolition of classes, the restoration of the land and of all the means of production, transportation and distribution to the people as a collective body, and the substitution of the Co-operative Commonwealth for the present state of planless production, industrial war and social disorder; a commonwealth in which every worker shall have the free exercise and full benefit of his faculties, multiplied by all the modern factors of civilization.

RESOLUTIONS.

While the above is the platform of the S. L. P. of C. for parliamentary elections (Provincial and Dominion), it is in order for sections of the party to append to the platform for the purpose of Municipal and Local campaigns resolutions to embody demands for immediate relief from present conditions, it being distinctly understood that nothing can be appended to the platform that in any way conflicts with its revolutionary principles.

CONSTITUTION.

I.—MANAGEMENT.

The affairs of the Party are conducted by the National Executive Committee, the National Board of Appeals, the Local Sections, the National Conventions and by the general vote. At all elections a plurality vote is sufficient to elect; but an absolute majority is required to elect the seat of the National Executive Committee.

II.—SECTIONS.

1. Seven persons may form a Section, provided they acknowledge the Platform and Constitution of the Socialist Labor party, and belong to no other political party, and do not hold office in a pure and simple trade union.*

(a) Membership of Sections must be made up of not less than two-thirds wage-workers.

(b) They shall report their organization as a Section, giving a list of members and remitting \$1.00 for charter, with the dues for the current month, to the National Executive Committee.

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

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

(e) A member in good standing of one Section shall have the right to attend and speak at any meeting of another Section, but shall not be allowed to vote.

* The history of the defective organization of the working class under the constitution of pure and simple Unionism proves that the officers of such unions naturally tend to become corrupt tools of Capitalist politicians, abusing their official position in the union to divide the rank and file on election day, and leading them into one or other of the political shambles of Capitalism, hence the above clause to protect the S. L. P., the only class conscious political organization of the working class in Canada.

For attitude on Craft Organization see resolutions at end of this Constitution, page 14.

(f) Each Section shall send every six months a report of its numerical and financial condition, its progress and prospects, with the names and addresses of members in good standing and otherwise to the National Executive Committee.

2. The Section shall be the unit of organization.

3. It shall be the duty of Sections to provide rules governing their action, providing such do not conflict with the rules of the National organization.

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

5. Every Section shall elect from its members an Organizer, Financial Secretary, Corresponding Secretary, Treasurer and Literature Agent, and such additional officers as it deems proper. The Organizer shall conduct the correspondence with the National Executive Committee, and shall send an official report once every six months to said Committee; he shall send 5 cents of the monthly dues of each member to the National Executive Committee; he shall conduct the local organization and agitation.

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

7. Sections shall have jurisdiction over their own members. *Local + Prov Ex.*

8. Every ~~section~~ shall elect a Grievance Committee of three members, which shall investigate immediately all charges and difficulties in the Section, and report its findings.

9. All charges must be made in writing, whereupon the committee shall investigate the case and hear the witnesses of both parties. The same shall not be debated until the Grievance Committee has thoroughly investigated the case and reported to the Section. A detailed report of

the investigation and findings shall be drawn and laid before the next business meeting of the Section. The Section shall then decide the matter, and its decision be entered on the minutes. The minutes and all papers concerning the investigation shall be delivered to the Secretary of the Section for safe keeping. The Secretary shall inform the accused in writing of such decision.

All members against whom charges are made shall retain their full constitutional rights pending investigation and decision of the Section.

All decisions of the Section may be appealed from to the National Board of Appeals.

10. After action taken in accord with Clauses 8 and 9, a majority of two-thirds of the members present at any business meeting shall be sufficient to expel any member; a simple majority shall be sufficient to suspend. Names of expelled members to be published in the official organ of the party.

11. No expelled or suspended member shall be accorded the privileges of a member of the Party by any Section or National Committee unless the bar of expulsion or suspension has been removed by the Section expelling or suspending such member, or by the National Board of Appeals.

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

13. In any Section which is divided into two or more branches, all dealings with the Party's National Executive shall be carried on by the Section Organizer.

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

15. A sick or unemployed member will be excused from payment of dues and his card marked by the Finan-

cial Secretary and reported to the National Executive Committee.

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

17. In case of dissolution of any Section all property of the same must be delivered to the National Executive Committee.

18. No Section shall enter into any compromise with any other political party.

IV.—NATIONAL EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE.

1. The National Executive Committee shall be composed of seven members, to be elected by a general vote of the Section of the place selected as the seat of the same. The Committee shall elect from its members a Recording Secretary and a Treasurer.

The said Section shall elect the National Secretary, who shall also act as Secretary for International Affairs. He shall be a member of the Executive Committee, but with an advisory voice only. The names of the members of the National Executive Committee, together with the name of the National Secretary, shall be submitted to general party vote for confirmation.

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

The said Section shall also elect an Auditing Committee, which shall have power at any time to inspect and audit the books and the funds on hand.

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

3. The National Executive Committee has for its duty :

(a) To carry out the resolutions of the National Convention and those adopted by general vote.

(b) To supervise the agitation throughout the country.

(c) To establish proper relations and communications with the Socialist parties of other countries.

(d) To make all necessary preparations for the National Convention, and make a full report to such convention on all party matters.

(e) To issue to the Sections semi-annually and in a sufficient number of copies a report of the Party's finances.

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

(a) To receive and submit to a general vote propositions sent by any Section if endorsed by at least one other Section. If in the opinion of the National Executive Committee a proposition is not in the interest of the Party, it shall not be submitted to general vote, unless 20 per cent. of all the Sections in good standing shall subsequently re-endorse it ; then the proposition shall be submitted to a general vote.

(b) To be represented in the National Convention by the National Secretary, who shall have no vote, but merely an advisory voice in the proceedings, and shall bear no other credentials.

(c) The National Executive Committee may make its own order of business.

(d) That the National Convention or general vote shall fix the compensation (if any) to be paid at any time to the executive officers of the Party.

5. Annually and in due time the National Executive Committee shall call upon the Sections to make nomina-

tions for not more than three delegates to represent the Party in the annual convention of the Socialist Trade and Labor Alliance. The nominees shall be chosen by a general or referendum vote, and the ones receiving the highest vote shall be declared elected.

6. The National Executive Committee shall issue application cards to the Sections bearing a plain exposition of the principles of the Socialist Labor Party, and also of the duties required from the applicant for membership.

V.—NATIONAL BOARD OF APPEALS.

1. The National Board of Appeals shall be composed of seven members, to be elected by a general vote of the membership of the city selected by the National Convention as the seat of such Board. No member of the Board shall be eligible to any office in the party during his or her term of office; nor shall the seat of the Board be the same as that of the National Executive Committee.

2. The duties of the Board shall be :

(a) To settle, upon appeal, all difficulties in the Party within four weeks after receiving the necessary evidence, the decisions to be at once communicated to the National Executive Committee; and to decide appeals in cases of expulsion and of suspension.

(b) From all decisions of the Board appeal may be taken to the general vote, or to the National Convention, provided a convention is to be held within six months. The Sections must report the result of their votes to the National Executive Committee within six weeks; within two additional weeks the National Executive Committee must publish the result in the official organ of the Party.

(c) The Secretary of the Board of Appeals shall

render to the National Convention a full report of the transactions of the Board during its term of office.

(d) The Board shall declare vacant the seat of any of its members who shall have been absent from three consecutive meetings without sufficient excuse, and order the membership of its locality to fill the vacancy.

3. The Secretary of the Board may, or upon the demand of a majority of the members thereof, shall, call a session.

4. The members making a decision shall sign the same before transmittal to the National Executive Committee.

5. Duplicates of decisions and dissenting opinions shall be filed with the Secretary of the Board before transmittal to the National Executive Committee.

6. No person connected with a case shall be qualified to sit on it. If the issue is one in which the whole Section is interested, and such Section happens to be the one that chooses the Board, then the National Executive Committee shall appoint another Section to choose a Board of Appeals for that case.

VI.— CONVENTIONS.

1. A National Convention of the Party shall be held every third year; but if three Sections in two different Provinces so demand, a general vote shall be taken as to holding a special convention. A general vote shall decide as to the place, but the date of a convention shall be fixed by the National Executive Committee.

2. A Section of seven members shall be entitled to one delegate, and to an additional delegate for every twenty-five additional members or major portion thereof.

Each delegate shall have only one vote.

3. The expenses of delegates shall be borne by the

Sections sending them. The expenses of the National Convention shall be paid by the Party.

4. The National Convention shall frame the National Platform, decide the form of organization, select the seats of the National Executive Committee and Board of Appeals.

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

VII.—DUES.

1. The Sections shall levy upon each applicant for membership an initiation fee of 25 cents, to be applied to a six months' subscription to the official organ of the Party; also upon each of their members a monthly tax of five cents, to be paid monthly to the National Executive Committee.

2. The dues shall be receipted for by stamps to be furnished by the National Executive Committee.

VIII.—THE PARTY PRESS.

Pending such time as the Canadian Party shall be in a position to establish a National organ of its own, official organ of the S. L. P. of the U. S. A. shall be recognized and accepted as the official journal of the S. L. P. of Canada.

MISCELLANEOUS REGULATIONS.

This Constitution may be amended by the National Convention or by a general vote. Within five weeks after the issuance of a call for a general vote relative to changing the constitution, amendments may be proposed by any Section to any proposition so laid before the Party, and such amendments shall then also be submitted to be voted on, together with the original proposition. The result of the vote must be reported to the National Executive Committee within ten weeks after the first call was issued.

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

No Section or sub-division shall be designated by race or nationality.

All officers, boards or committees of the Party shall be subject to removal by their constituents. (See Art. IV., Sec. 1, as to the National Executive Committee.)

CANDIDATES FOR PUBLIC OFFICE.

No person shall be nominated as a candidate for any public office unless he has been a member of the Party for at least three months, and has identified himself with the Party by active participation in its work.

No candidate of this Party for any public office shall be permitted to accept any nomination or endorsement from any other political party

Any member of the Socialist Labor Party accepting a nomination of the Party shall at once place in the hands of the Secretary of the Section of which he is a member, his resignation, dated blank, of the office for which he is so nominated, and authorize the Section to have it filed with the proper authorities in case of his election and failure to stand squarely on the Party's platform and to advocate its principles.

All former provisions conflicting with this constitution are rescinded.

RE CRAFT ORGANIZATION.

Whereas, the absurdity and inefficiency of the old-style, pure and simple form of trade unionism has been

demonstrated by its divisions at the ballot-box, and by the corrupt associations of its officials with capitalist political jobbery, we recommend to all workers to join the organization of their craft in the Socialist Trade and Labor Alliance, a trade union movement which teaches the political solidarity of all wage workers at the ballot box.



RE LABELS.

Owing to the corrupt dealings of the leaders of trade unions in union labels for the benefit of competing capitalists without adequate protection and compensation to the workers, this Party hereby decide that no pure and simple trade union label shall appear on the official literature of the Socialist Labor Party of Canada.