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# Platform and Constitution of the National Party:

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Platform Revised and Constitution Adopted March 6-7-8, 1918:

## Principles, Spirit, and Aims.

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### Platform of the National Party.

The National Party, in Convention assembled, accepting the guidance of Almighty God, makes this Declaration of Principles, with it regards as a covenant with the American people.

Our aim is the attainment of Democracy in Government and Industry, and in our international relations. We favor such governmental action as will secure the most widely diffused equality of opportunity in all that concerns the lives of our citizens.

#### Part I.

##### Political Democracy.

(1) **Equal Suffrage:** (a) The right of suffrages should not be denied or abridged on account of sex. We therefore demand the nationwide enfranchisement of women on equal terms with men, and pledge ourselves to work for the realization of that ideal. In particular we pledge ourselves to work in the states for the ratification of the Federal Suffrage Amendment whenever it shall be submitted.

(b) We demand enforcement of the laws which give the right to vote to American citizens of Negro descent, and, in order that they and others may be fitted to vote intelligently, we advocate federal aid to common school education, to be distributed among the states in proportion to the amount of illiteracy.

(c) We favor the restoration of self-government to the District of Columbia, and of the electoral franchise to its citizens, male and female.

(d) We advocate the abolition of all property qualifications for the franchise or for election to pub-

lic office.

(2) **Initiative, Referendum, and Recall:** In order that the people may have the democratic right to originate and reject legislation, and to control elected officials, we advocate the adoption by city, county, state, and nation of the Initiative, Referendum, and Recall, with adequate safeguards against their abuse.

(3) **The Short Ballot:** We favor the principle of the Short Ballot in all state and municipal elections, and a greatly increased centralization of responsibility, especially in matters of municipal administration, this to be coupled with the right to recall elected officials as a safeguard against possible abuse of power.

(4) **Proportional Representation:** We favor the adoption of a system of Proportional Representation, so as to assure to every party representation in the legislative councils of the state and the nation in proportion to its numerical strength. We favor the application of the same principle to the government of cities.

(5) **Prohibition:** We favor legislation by state and nation absolutely prohibiting the manufacture, sale, transportation, importation, and exportation of intoxicating liquors and beverages, and we pledge ourselves to work with all our might for the ratification by the states of the Federal Prohibition Amendment.

(6) **Executive Budget:** We favor the Executive Budget — a schedule of the proposed expenditures prepared in advance by responsible administrative officials, and submitted to the legislative branch of the government for examination, discussion, and revision. This should apply to municipal, state, and national governments.

(7) **Election Laws:** We favor the passage of election laws that will afford minority parties a fair chance to nominate candidates and place them before the people.

(8) **Cabinet Responsibility:** To make our government departments responsible to the elected representatives of the people, we advocate legislation providing that all members of the cabinet be given seats in Congress, but without votes, and be subject to direct interpellation.

(9) **Absentee Voters:** No citizen should be disfranchised in elections by reason of change of residence or enforced absence from home. We advocate the amendment of our election laws to make it possible for all duly qualified and registered voters who are unable to vote in person in the districts where they are so qualified and registered, to register or vote by affidavit wherever they may be.

(10) **Freedom of Speech and Press:** We stand for the fullest freedom of speech and press compatible with the safety of our democratic institutions. We are unalterably opposed to any censorship which does not have for its purpose either (a) the withholding from the enemy in times of war of information of military value; (b) the prevention of malicious slander and misrepresentation; (c) the detection and punishment of direct incitements to crime.

We demand that legislation be immediately enacted to take from the officials of the post office department the powers of suppression which they have used for a generation.

(11) **Prison Reform:** We advocate the abolition of contract prison labor, the employment and instruction of prisoners under proper conditions in serviceable trades and occupations, and the payment to them of union wages for the support of their families, reasonable deduction to be made for their own maintenance. As a general rule, we advocate that discharged prisoners should be restored to citizenship not later than one year after the expiration of their sentences. We favor the proper segregation of prisoners in accordance with their physical and mental ability, and the establishment in all prisons of the honor system and self-government. We favor publicity for all that goes on within prison walls, especially of all punishments of every kind of infraction of prison rules.

(12) **Uniform Divorce Laws:** We favor uniform

marriage and divorce laws, the extermination of polygamy, and the most rigorous suppression of the traffic in girls and women and all other forms of commercialized vice.

## **Part II. Industrial Democracy.**

Equality of Economic Opportunity is essential to Industrial Democracy. We therefore favor the following measures as means to secure that end:

(1) **Public Ownership:** Public ownership, operation, and democratic control of steam and electric railroads, shipping, telegraph and telephone systems, coal and metal mines, waterpower, natural gas and oil wells, light and power plants, timber lands, terminal warehouses and elevators, packing plants and flour mills, and all other public utilities and basic industries which depend on franchises, or require large scale operation on a noncompetitive or centralized basis.

(2) **Municipal Ownership:** Municipal ownership, operation, and democratic control of all public utilities, and all services essentially monopolistic in nature.

(3) **Democratic Taxation:** (a) The gradual and progressive transfer of taxes from improvements and all products of labor to land values, so as to break up land monopoly and to increase opportunities for production.

(b) Rapidly progressive taxation of incomes and inheritances, with heavier rates on incomes from investments than from personal services.

(4) **Extension of Postal System:** We favor the extension of the postal savings system, to the end that the present limit on deposits may be greatly extended and that loans may be made direct to the people on satisfactory security at the cost of service. We favor the extension of the parcel post to the point of fullest possible public service.

(5) **Assistance to Farmers:** We urge as a means of encouraging farmers: (a) Extension of the Federal Loan Law provisions to those desiring to acquire farm lands or equipment.

(b) Advances upon crops or products in storage.

(c) Government insurance of farm, stock, and crops against natural calamities.

(d) Federal inspection and grading at terminals

of all grain and other farm products under a system of civil service.

(e) Untaxing all improvements, crops, stock, and all farm equipment, and progressive taxation of large holdings of farm land, with a minimum exemption for homesteads, so as to render it unprofitable to hold large tracts of arable lands idle and to force them into productive use.

(f) Direct governmental assistance to farmers' cooperative organizations.

**(6) Abolition of Speculation:** We favor the abolition of gambling or trading in "options," "futures," or "short selling," or any other form of so-called speculation, wherein products or securities are not received or delivered, but wherein so-called contracts are settled by the payment of "margins" or "differences" through clearing houses or otherwise.

#### **Labor Legislation.**

1. We hail as one of the important recent developments of industrial democracy the achievement of union labor conditions in industrial establishments engaged in government work, whether such establishments are owned and operated by the government or by private contractors. This is sound social policy, and we favor its extension to all work performed by or for the government.

2. We urge that upon all boards or commissions created for the management of publicly owned industries or services, or for the supervision of private enterprises, the workers shall have adequate representation.

3. We favor such scientific regulation of immigration as will limit the number of immigrants to the capacity of our country to assimilate them without lowering our industrial, political, or social standards.

4. We favor the progressive shortening of the legal workday in keeping with the increasing productiveness of machinery, and securing to every worker a rest period of not less than a day and a half in each week.

5. We favor the protection of workers by governmental insurance against sickness, injury, and death; together with maternity benefits and old age pensions.

6. We favor a more rigorous and effective inspection of buildings, factories, workshops, and mines, for the better protection of the workers.

7. We favor the adequate protection of children by the enactment and rigid enforcement of thorough-going state and federal child-labor laws.

8. We favor forbidding interstate shipments of all products made by (a) children, (b) women employed more than eight hours a day or six days a week, (c) convicts under private contract, (d) persons employed in uninspected factories or mines.

9. We oppose the invasion by the courts through injunction of the Constitutional guarantees of freedom of speech, of assembly, and of organization.

10. We favor the extension of the labor bureau system, to distribute labor in accordance with supply and demand, and the establishment of a system for placing settlers on unoccupied lands, thereby relieving congestion of population in industrial centers.

11. We believe the government of the United States should actively foster and encourage the development of cooperative producing and trading associations, to the end that the workers of the nation may be increasingly enabled to control the economic conditions of their own lives.

12. We urge the development of instrumentalities which shall guarantee to every willing worker opportunity to secure employment adapted to his capacities.

### **Part III. International Democracy.**

We recognize the Republic of the World as the goal of international political development. As steps looking toward and corollaries of that goal we propose the following:

**(1) Abolition of Secret Diplomacy:** We demand the complete democratization of our foreign policy and international relations. Believing that the making of secret treaties and agreements by governments without the sanction of their peoples is one of the chief causes of international misunderstandings and wars, we demand that the government of the United States shall not make any treaty or agreement with any nation or nations except in open session of the Senate. We further demand that in the councils of the nations the government of the United States shall urge that the sanction of the peoples shall be made essential to any treaties or agreements among civilized nations.

(2) **International Policy:** In the interest of world peace and a higher civilization we demand that the representatives of this nation in the councils of nations urge the following principles:

(a) The sea and all waterways flowing into the sea must be open without hindrance to the peaceful navigation of all peoples. The duty of policing the seas must be made the collective function of the associated nations.

(b) All strategic ocean waterways must be internationalized and their protection be the function of the associated nations.

(c) Prohibitive or discriminatory tariffs or taxes on trade and commerce and inequitable discriminations among the peoples of the various nations in the matter of franchises, privileges, and trading rights must be prohibited.

(3) **Foreign Investments:** Foreign investments should bear their own risks. They should receive no diplomatic or military support. The United States should refrain from becoming a guarantor of foreign investments.

(4) **International Organization:** We favor the creation of an international tribunal so constituted as to represent the weak as well as the powerful nations for the settlement of disputes between nations, and the development of effective methods of enforcing the decisions of such tribunal.

(5) We favor the formation of a union of the nations of the world for the purpose of enforcing international equality and the maintenance of peace.

## **Constitution of the National Party.**

### **Article I.**

#### **Name and Object.**

Section 1. This organization shall be called the National Party. Where necessary for legal reasons, the organization in any state may bear another name approved by the National Executive Committee.

Section 2. The object and aim of this party shall be to bring about by political action such policies on

the part of our government as will secure the fullest individual liberty and the most widely diffused equality of opportunity in all that concerns the lives of our citizens and ultimately the attainment of democracy in government, in industry, and in our international relations.

### **Article II.**

#### **Membership.**

Section 1. Every man or woman who is a citizen or resident voter of the United States of the age of 18 years and upwards, and who shall make written application therefor, shall, upon payment of membership fees, become a member of this organization.

Section 2. A member of the party shall be recognized as such by all subordinate organizations in any state or territory of the Union.

Section 3. All applications for membership in the party shall be sent to National Headquarters, together with the fees paid thereon, and each member shall be supplied by the national office with an official membership card. The Executive Committee, however, may provide for the delivery of cards to the State Chairman or other officials which they shall issue to members, making report thereof to the national office and to the state office in each case. Members shall be recognized as such only upon presentation of cards when requested.

Section 4. Every active member shall pay \$1.00 per calendar year, in advance, as dues and shall have all privileges and voting powers within the organization. State organizations may charge a larger sum and retain the difference for their own purposes. State organizations may charge a larger sum and retain the difference for their own purposes.

Section 5. The sympathizers with the principles of the National Party who do not desire to become active members thereof, may become contributing members by any contributions to its funds in any given year. Any such sympathizer who may purchase the annual official button of the party for the sum of fifty cents shall be designated as associate members. In either case they shall furnish their names and addresses to the national office.

Section 6. Any citizen in the service of the US

Army and Navy during the period of the war shall enjoy all rights and privileges of the active membership without payment of dues.

**Article III.  
Organization.**

Section 1. The affairs of the party shall be administered by the following: (1) the National Advisory Committee; (2) the National Executive Committee; (3) the National Committee; (4) officials and committees of above; (5) National Conventions; (6) State organizations hereinafter provided for; (7) Members voting as hereinafter provided.

Section 2. The Executive Committee shall be composed of twenty-nine (29) members who shall be elected by the regular national convention. They shall employ and have control of all officials and employees of the party, and, subject to other provisions of this constitution, shall direct its business policies and methods.

**Article IV.  
Advisory Committee.**

Each national convention shall elect a committee, to be known as the Advisory Committee, which shall render such assistance as other committees or officials of the party may request, provided the Executive Committee shall have power to add members to the Advisory Committee.

**Article V.  
National Committee.**

The members of the party in each state shall elect two persons (one man and one woman) in accordance with the laws of said state and supplementary regulations, which shall be adopted by the state committee, or, in default thereof, by the National Executive Committee.

**Article VI.  
Officers.**

Section 1. Each convention shall elect the national officers, to-wit: chairman, four vice-chairmen,

secretary, and treasurer.

Section 2. All officers may be paid for services rendered and shall have the rights, powers, and duties implied by their titles. So far as their official rights and duties are concerned, they may be at any time removed by the Executive Committee. This removal of officers by the Executive Committee shall be subject to the referendum as provided for in Article X. Any of them who handle funds shall give bonds as the Executive Committee shall determine.

**Article VII.  
Powers of Executive Committee.**

Section 1. The Executive Committee shall decide on the exact time and place of all regular national conventions and make arrangements therefor. It may call special conventions when deemed advisable and provide rules for action until the convention itself may provide for them. It shall make reports or cause officials to make reports periodically to the members of the National Committee, and, where practicable, to have the reports published for the information of the members.

Section 2. It shall determine the location of the headquarters and of any other divisional headquarters or other offices which it deems advisable. Such offices shall work under the direction of National Headquarters and make weekly reports thereto.

Section 3. Meetings of the Executive Committee shall be held the first Wednesday in March of each year and at such times and places as the committee may determine. Upon petition of any five members of the Executive Committee, the chairman of said committee shall call a meeting of that organization.

Section 4. Members and officers of the Executive Committee shall be subject to recall by the National Committee upon referendum, on demand of ten members from separate states, and to effect recall an affirmative vote of at least sixty-five percent of the total membership of the National Committee shall be essential.

Section 5. The Executive Committee shall have the power to fill vacancies in all cases not otherwise provided for.

**Article VIII.  
National Conventions.**

Section 1. Regular national conventions of the party shall be held in 1920 and every two years thereafter.

Section 2. Special conventions of the party may be held at any time if ordered by a two-thirds vote of the Executive Committee or two thirds-of the National Committee upon referendum demand of ten members from separate states.

Section 3. In preparation for any national convention computation shall be made of the average number of active members in good standing in each state during a period of six months, beginning nine months before the convention. Thereafter the National Executive Committee shall determine the number of delegates in proportion to the average membership computed as above provided. Every state, however, shall be allowed at least one delegate. No delegate shall be eligible unless he is a resident member of the state from which his credentials are presented. Railroad and sleeper fare of delegates to and from the convention of the party shall be paid from the national treasury.

Section 4. The election of delegates to the national convention shall, whenever possible, be completed at least thirty days preceding the convention and the respective state secretaries shall furnish the National Secretary with a list of accredited delegates immediately after such election.

Section 5. At the time and place set for opening the convention the chairman or, in his absence, refusal, or inability to act, the vice-chairman, shall call the convention to order. The secretary shall call the roll of uncontested delegates, and then the roll of those claiming seats as to whom there is a contest. All the claimants shall be allowed to speak on the floor as to matters of contest, but not otherwise. If necessary for purpose of organization the vote of those contesting delegations whom the National Committee may have held entitled to seats, shall be taken and counted.

Section 6. The national convention shall have the power to nominate candidates for President and Vice President, to elect officers of the party, to adopt a national platform and resolutions supplemental thereof, to adopt such amendments to this constitution as it may see fit, and to transact such other busi-

ness as it may desire. Vacancies on the national ticket shall be filled by the National Committee.

**Article IX.  
State Organization.**

Section 1. The Executive Committee shall provide for organizations in each state and conforming to the laws thereof, which shall exercise the political functions of the party. Wherever any organization shall have become ineffective, the Committee shall have the power to direct a complete reorganization thereof.

Section 2. Any convention of the state or local organizations may adopt such platforms as it chooses, provided it be not inconsistent with the national platform.

Section 3. Such state and local organizations shall furnish from time to time the reports of their acts to the national office. They shall, in accordance with state laws, care for all political activities of the party, the nominations of candidates, the conduct of campaigns, and the like. In all respects they will assist and work in harmony with the national office and its employees.

Section 4. Organizations in state, congressional, legislative, county, or other political subdivisions, shall have power to receive contributions to carry on their educational and campaign work, and they shall be furnished by the national office with names and addresses of all persons resident within their district who shall become members of the party, and all persons known to be sympathetic therewith.

**Article X.  
Initiative — Referendum — Recall.**

Section 1. Any member of the party may transmit to the national office any resolution or statement by way of amendment of this constitution, draft of provision for platform, or otherwise. It shall be communicated to the appropriate committee of the national or state conventions or to the Executive Committee at its meeting for action thereupon, as may be requested by the proposer thereof.

Section 2. Should such resolution or statement be rejected or modified, it shall, on a request for referendum of ten members of the National Committee, be submitted to referendum of the National Commit-

tee. If two-thirds of said committee vote for it, a referendum of the membership shall be taken. A vote of the majority of the total membership of the party shall be required to adopt the proposal in the form stated.

Section 3. The above shall be construed to apply to any proposal for the modification or repeal of any regulation adopted by any authority of the party and to any motion of the discharge of any party official.

Section 4. The Executive Committee shall adopt any regulations necessary to make the above rules effective and to prevent the submission of substantially identical resolutions oftener than once in a year.

### **Article XI. Official Publication.**

An official bulletin may be issued by the Executive Committee for the information of the party membership. Each active member shall be entitled to receive said bulletin. It is, however, expressly provided that the National Executive Committee may so construe this section that second-class rates under the postal regulations shall be available for the mailing of the bulletin.

### **Article XII. National Organizers.**

Section 1. The organization activities of the party shall be in control of the National Chairman and an organizer's committee composed of equal numbers of men and women which shall be appointed by the Executive Committee.

Section 2. The National Office shall, whenever it seems necessary and practicable, supplement the organization work as distinguished from the direct political activities of a state or local organization by the employment of organizers for the state with the concurrence of the state organization. These organizers shall be charged with the responsibility of securing

members of the party in cooperation with the local party authorities. Such representatives shall be employed by the National Party Office and shall render reports as directed by the National Chairman. Their compensation shall be defrayed by the national and local authorities in such proportion as may be arranged between them. Such representatives shall have no authority over the regularly constituted political authorities of the party in the state, shall not be officers thereof, nor interfere in any manner with local party politics.

### **Article XIII. Membership Lists.**

Lists of members with addresses in any geographical division shall be delivered to the members demanding it under the following circumstances:

1. As to any state or small organization, on demand in writing of five percent of the members in good standing in the geographical division in question.

2. As to the list of members for the party in the whole nation, two percent of the members in good standing therein. No such lists shall be given out except as provided above. But, however, this shall not be construed to refer to transmission of lists by party officials for purposes of party business and for party advantage.

### **Article XIV. Amendments.**

Section 1. Amendments may be made by any national convention or in the manner provided under Article X (Initiative — Referendum — Recall).

Section 2. Such amendments shall take effect upon adoption by a convention or in case of referendum when the result thereof has been canvassed and the result announced by the Executive Committee.

*Edited by Tim Davenport.*

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