

---

# Platform of the Social Democratic Party of America, 1900

Published in *Appeal to Reason*, whole no. 250 (Sept. 15, 1900), pg. 3.

The Social Democratic Party of America declares that life, liberty, and happiness depend upon equal political and economic rights.

In our economic development an industrial revolution has taken place, the individual tool of former years having become the social tool of the present. The individual tool was owned by the worker who employed himself and was master of his product. The social tool, the machine, is owned by the capitalist and the worker is dependent upon him for employment. The capitalist thus becomes the master of the worker and is able to appropriate to himself a large share of the product of his labor.

Capitalism, the private ownership of the means of production, is responsible for the insecurity of subsistence, the poverty, misery, and degradation of the ever-growing majority of our people; but the same economic forces which have produced and now intensify the capitalist system will necessitate the adoption of socialism, the collective ownership of the means of production for the common good and welfare.

The present system of social production and private ownership is rapidly converting society into two antagonistic classes — i.e., the capitalist class and the propertyless class. The middle class, once the most powerful of this great nation, is disappearing in the mill of competition. The issue is now between the two classes first named. Our political liberty is now of little value to the masses unless used to acquire economic liberty.

Independent political action and the trade union movement are the chief emancipating factors of the working class, the one representing its political, the other its economic wing, and both must cooperate to abolish the capitalist system.

Therefore the Social Democratic Party of America declares its object to be:

*First* — The organization of the working class into a political party to conquer the public powers now controlled by capitalists.

*Second* — The abolition of wage slavery by the establishment of a national system of cooperative industry, based upon the social or common ownership of the means of production and distribution, to be administered by society in the common interest of all its members, and the complete emancipation of the socially useful classes from the domination of capitalism.

The working class and all those in sympathy with their historic mission to realize a higher civilization should sever connection with all capitalist and reform parties and unite with the Social Democratic Party of America.

The control of political power by the Social Democratic Party will be tantamount to the abolition of all class rule.

The solidarity of labor connecting the millions of class-conscious fellow workers throughout the civilized world will lead to international socialism, the brotherhood of man.

As steps in that direction, we make the following demands:

*First* — Revision of our federal constitution, in order to remove the obstacles to complete control of government by the people irrespective of sex.

*Second* — The public ownership of all industries controlled by monopolies, trusts, and combines.

*Third* — The public ownership of all railroads, telegraphs, and telephones; all means of transportation and

communication; all water works, gas and electric plants, and other public utilities.

*Fourth* — The public ownership of all gold, silver, copper, lead, iron, coal, and other mines, and all oil and gas wells.

*Fifth* — The reduction of the hours of labor in proportion to the increasing facilities of production.

*Sixth* — The inauguration of a system of public works and improvements for the employment of the unemployed, the public credit to be used for that purpose.

*Seventh* — Useful inventions to be free, the inventor to be remunerated by the public.

*Eighth* — Labor legislation to be national, instead of local, and international where possible.

*Ninth* — National insurance of working people against accidents, lack of employment, and want in old age.

*Tenth* — Equal civil and political rights for men and women, and the abolition of all laws discriminating against women.

*Eleventh* — The adoption of the initiative and referendum, proportional representation, and the right of recall of representatives by the voters.

*Twelfth* — Abolition of war and the introduction of international arbitration.

*Edited by Tim Davenport*

1000 Flowers Publishing, Corvallis, OR · June 2013 · Non-commercial reproduction permitted.