
National Committee: The Policy of the Socialist Movement Outlined for Another Year: An Enthusiastic Gathering: St. Louis, Missouri — Jan. 29-Feb. 1, 1903.

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The most important national gathering ever assembled by the American Socialists was that held in St. Louis, beginning Wednesday, Jan. 29th and ending Feb. 1 [1903], at noon, the occasion being the annual meeting of the National Committee. Twenty-two states were represented by the following members: New Hampshire, S.F. Chaffin; Massachusetts, James F. Carey; New York, Morris Hillquit; New Jersey, G.H. Goebel; Connecticut, George A. Sweetland; Pennsylvania, J. Mahlon Barnes; Ohio, W.G. Critchlow; Indiana, William Mahoney; Illinois, B. Berlyn; Wisconsin, Victor Berger; Kentucky, — Dobbs; Missouri, G.H. Turner; Iowa, John M. Work; Minnesota, G.H. Lockwood; North Dakota, R.C. Massey; South Dakota, Samuel Lovett; Nebraska, C. Christensen; Kansas, Walter Thomas Mills; Montana, Clarence S. Smith; Washington, George E. Boomer. The session was opened with [N.A.] Richardson, of California, in the



chair, and Leon Greenbaum acting as secretary for the session.

It was soon developed that a determined spirit was to be manifested in the meetings, and that the policy of the National Secretary [Greenbaum] and the Local Quorum† was to be dealt with in a firm and resolute manner. It was a noteworthy fact that not a single member of the committee endorsed the fusion policy which had been so strenuously urged by members of the Local Quorum.‡ On that one question there was no division. This is encouraging, and speaks of the statesmanship, integrity, and political discernment of the Socialist Party in the most emphatic terms. At a time when it has become notorious that William R. Hearst is busy organizing the union men of the cities into independent political parties, aided by a purse that can unloose thousands to accomplish his aims, and when

†- The "Local Quorum" was a subcommittee of the National Committee consisting of 5 elected members from the party's headquarters city (St. Louis). The Local Quorum handled the day-to-day affairs of the organization, functioning in the role of an Executive Committee. Members of the St. Louis Local Quorum as of February 1903 included: William Brandt, M. Ballard Dunn, G.A. "Gus" Hoehn, E. Val Putnam, and James S. Roche.

‡- The St. Louis Local Quorum, AF of L partisans all, advocated Socialist support of the various "Union Labor Parties" which had emerged in San Francisco and elsewhere around the country.

anyone who has the slightest knowledge of politics can readily see that in Hearst is impersonated the historical tactics of the Democratic Party, it is almost inconceivable that men like Greenbaum, Roche, and Putnam should fall into the net so cunningly spread for their entanglement. As *The Appeal* has pointed out in previous editions, the legitimate end of Union Labor Parties is in the Democratic fold, and this end is predestined by the Hearst machine. For the Socialist Party to have fostered the organization of Union Labor Parties would have been to jeopardize its own existence and to have thereby betrayed the 300,000 voters who trusted its honesty at the last election.

The Socialist Party was on trial at St. Louis, and the verdict is clear and explicit, as the following resolutions, which speak in no uncertain tones, declare:

To the National Committee of the Socialist Party in Session.

Comrades:—

Your subcommittee on Resolutions herewith submits a declaration of the position of the Socialist Party in reference to fusion or amalgamation with so-called Union Labor and radical political parties.

Resolution.

Whereas, The history of the labor movement of the world has conclusively demonstrated that a Socialist Party is the only political organization able to adequately and consistently conduct the political struggles of the working class, and

Whereas, All "radical" and reform parties, including the so-called Union Labor Parties, have, after a brief existence, uniformly succumbed to the influence of the old political parties and have proven disastrous to the ultimate end of the labor movement, and

Whereas, Any alliance, direct or indirect, with such parties is dangerous to the political integrity and the very existence of the Socialist movement, and

Whereas, At the present stage of development of the Socialist movement of this country there is neither necessity nor excuse for such alliance, therefore be it

Resolved, That no state or local organization, or member of the party shall under any circumstances, fuse, combine, or compromise with any political party or organization, or refrain from making nominations in order to further the interests of candidates of such parties or organizations.

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After the Committee on Resolutions had reported as above and the report was unanimously

adopted, the next real struggle in the committee was begun. A National Secretary must now be chosen to serve for a year. For this office the contest, which was begun by preliminary skirmishes before the convention assembled, finally narrowed down to W.G. Critchlow, of Ohio, and William Mailly, of Massachusetts. In the earlier hours of the session, Work, of Iowa, had been seriously considered, and had he been an active candidate for the position, he undoubtedly could have received the support of the Western men and several of the Eastern delegates. The West, however, wished to be generous with the East, and while considerable distrust of Western Socialists was manifested on the part of Comrades Carey, of Massachusetts, and Hillquit, of New York, and while the West by uniting could have selected both the Secretary and the headquarters, yet they manifested no purpose to exert their power, and on the final vote, Berlyn, of Illinois, and Christensen, of Omaha, voted for Mailly, thus electing him. When the referendum on the location of headquarters is taken, Eastern Socialists are now solemnly reminded of this most generous act on the part of the Western comrades. I think I may say that the election of Mailly is satisfactory to the Socialists in every state and territory in the Union. His fitness is unquestioned, and he will add great strength to his position.

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It is to be regretted that on the other questions at issue before the meeting, the Eastern comrades could not reciprocate the Western spirit. The Western men wanted the headquarters at Omaha, and the reasons urged were singularly strong. They were:

1. Omaha is the center of the revolutionary section of the United States. No argument need be adduced to prove this to a Western man. The only strong attempts that have been made since the [Spanish-American] war to overthrow the capitalist control and possession of the government have come from the Western field. While the East is essentially conservative, the West is essentially revolutionary, and despite any arguments to the contrary, Socialism will first mass its strength in the Western section.

2. The West is the natural field of operation of the Democratic Party. Here is its only revolutionary

following, and here it has played its game of fusion and destruction. Here it must be fought to a finish and this time squelched for good. With the Democratic Party out of the way, the desperate battle between the capitalist class, represented by the Republican Party, and the working class, represented by the Socialist Party, will commence at once, and that is what we all wish. In these days the mistaken man who temporizes with the Democratic Party is consciously or unconsciously selling the honor and life of the Republic for a miserable mess of pottage. In the midst of Bryanism, the Socialist headquarters have now been placed, and the issue is plain. Hearst and Bryan may construct another reform party, but their attempts to fool the working class will be met at every point by the Socialist Party — aggressive, determined, and uncompromising.

3. Omaha, one of the most thoroughly unionized towns in the United States, HAS A SOCIALIST MOVEMENT ENDORSED BY THE CENTRAL TRADES AND LABOR ASSEMBLY. It is a city of 125,000 people, and at this very hour the Socialists are waging a battle for the control of the municipality that is not equalled by any other city of similar size in the United States.

Of course, the Eastern comrades are not aware of these things, because they have not been generally published, but the facts stand. On the final vote, Omaha was selected as against Indianapolis — Chaffin, of New Hampshire; Sweetland, of Connecticut; and Healy, of Florida, voting with the Missouri Valley states.

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Hillquit, of New York; Carey, of Massachusetts; Mahoney, of Indiana; Berger, of Wisconsin; Berlyn, of Illinois; Barnes, of Pennsylvania; and Dobbs, of Kentucky, voted against Omaha, and fought desperately against the removal from St. Louis until such time as a referendum could be taken. The West, however, would not yield the point, and the new [Local] Quorum was instructed to remove the effects of the national headquarters to Omaha at once, and to this end Comrade Lovett, of South Dakota, was selected to make the change. The comrades above enumerated threatened a referendum vote, and if they carry out their conclusions as manifested at St. Louis, will peti-

tion for the matter of the headquarters to be removed to Chicago.

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Eventually, I think the headquarters will go to Chicago, possibly during the next Presidential campaign, but for the present the selection of Omaha is undoubtedly an ideal one, and I cannot believe that a foolish and wholly unnecessary struggle will be undertaken on a matter that should remain settled for a year at least.

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What we want now is unity and organization. The 300,000 men who voted for Socialism at the last election must be organized into locals, districts, and states. We must begin to prepare for the Cooperative Commonwealth, for only the foolish in both the capitalist and working class ranks now fail to see that Socialism is inevitable. We must begin to prepare for our victory. The Socialist now who does not at once identify himself with the local of his town is publishing to the world his unfitness to help organize the Cooperative Commonwealth. If you have no local in your town or precinct, then organize at once. Don't imagine that a local is merely a political club. Far from it. It is the training school of Socialism, absolutely necessary, and which someday will be the real government of your town, and in its collective capacity, the government of the state and nation. If you do not understand this, then get out your books and commence to study, for you have not learned your lesson. Be sure you understand Socialism before trying to teach others.

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It is the purpose of this paper to assist the National Committee in the work of organization by publishing news, giving advice, and constantly urging you the NECESSITY of the organization. All states and territories not in good standing with the National Committee should become so at once. This applies with particular force to the state of Texas and the territory of Oklahoma. The Secretaries of these localities should identify their respective bodies with the na-

tional organization at once and make their standing good. We have stopped our talk about a big vote. We polled that at the last election. No Socialist should now hold any other thought than victory, full and complete.

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Brief personal sketches of the members of the National Committee would greatly interest our readers, and standing by themselves, each comrade is noteworthy, but our space will not permit and we must confine ourselves to a few. Because of Comrade Carey's position in the Massachusetts legislature, he is particularly of interest. Carey is a shoemaker by trade, and bears the mark of the machine in his eyesight, which has been injured by close application to his work. He has a finely developed mind, is a good debater, and has learned parliamentary tactics so well that he can cope with the ablest in the land.

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Hillquit, a lawyer of New York, is a marvel of keenness and precision. His arguments are made with a clearness of mind that is truly remarkable, and I think I may say without doubt that sooner or later he will stand where he can measure strength with the shrewdest manipulators of the capitalist class, and on that day Hillquit will be a foeman the capitalists will wish not in evidence.

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Smith, of Montana, was the surprise of the meeting. He is Secretary of the ALU and editor of its official paper. A practiced debater, with an even balance of mind, he met Hillquit on every point, and before the proceedings were finished New York discovered that Montana was on the map.

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Healy, from the far-off state of Florida, was another surprise. Calm, cool, and practical, speaking but little, but saying something on each occasion, he likewise demonstrated to the committee that the South is

not the barren ground for Socialism which many have supposed, but is ripe for the growth of the movement.

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Well, there was Mills — but who don't know Mills? Berger, of Wisconsin, who speaks in paragraphs, a the newspaper man is prone to do, who has a determination that halts at nothing, but a kindness of heart that makes him lovable even when in opposition. Berlyn, of Chicago, is a prime joker, as well as a prime Socialist. Richardson, of California, is scholarly and intellectual. Lovett and Massey, of the Dakotas, typical representatives of the prairie states, but wholly uncomprehended by the Eastern comrades; Christensen, of Nebraska, a blacksmith and a scholar; Work, of Iowa, quiet and demure, but always in evidence. Turner, of Missouri, was the youngest of the body, a boy in appearance, but a giant in his work. Mahoney, the printer of Indiana, is thoughtful and even-minded. Dobbs, of Kentucky, is a newspaper man of experience. Critchlow, of Ohio, is a model State Secretary, and has organized a powerful movement in the Buckeye state. Goebel, of New Jersey, is a traveling man, who as usual, gets what he goes after. Then there was Barnes, of Pennsylvania, who says but little, but saws wood all the time; Chafin, of New Hampshire, and Sweetland, of Connecticut, typical Yankees and both valuable men; and Boomer, of Washington, whose name and methods are harmonious. Last on the list is Lockwood, of Minnesota, who is an artist in thought and appearance, and who will not many months hence command an opportunity to stamp his thoughts on the public through the cartoon. A more completely cosmopolitan body of men was never assembled, truly typical of the Socialist movement in America, which is destined to lead the first and successful attack on capitalism.

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I regret that the limited space at my disposal does not afford me an opportunity to give a more detailed report, but I have given the essential features of the meeting. Other resolutions were passed among which were those relating to the trade unions, ever the object of protection of the Socialist movement; one extend-

ing fraternal greetings to the Socialists of Germany; one relating to propaganda, speakers, etc. None of these, however, were of special importance, except that relating to trade unions, which we give below. Though much intensity of feeling was engendered during the debates, it ended with the session, and three cheers for Socialism were given with earnestness and enthusiasm, and differences created by debate will be succeeded by unity on the battlefield.

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Resolution on Trade Unions.

The National Committee of the Socialist Party in annual session assembled hereby reaffirms the attitude of the party toward the trade union movement as expressed in the resolution on the subject adopted by the Indianapolis convention of 1901.

We consider the trade union movement and the Socialist movement as inseparable parts of the general labor movement, produced by the same economic forces and tending towards the same goal, and we deem it the duty of each of the two movements to extend its hearty cooperation and support to the other in its special sphere of activity.

But we are also mindful of the fact that each of the two movements has its own special mission to perform in the struggle for the emancipation of labor, that it devolves upon the trade unions to conduct the economic struggles of the working class, that it devolves on the Socialist Party to fight the political battles of the working class, and that the interest of labor as a whole will be best conserved by allowing each of the movements to manage the affairs within its own sphere of activity without active interference by the other.

The Socialist Party will continue to give its aid and assistance to the economic struggles of organized labor regardless of the affiliation of the trade unions engaged in the struggle and will take no sides in any dissensions or strifes within the trade union movement; the party will also continue to solicit the sympathy and support of all trade organizations of labor without allowing itself to be made the ally of any one division of the trade union movement as against another.

We also declare that we deem it unwise to invite trade unions as such to be represented in the political conventions of our party.

While these resolutions are sufficiently self-explanatory, a more concise statement of the Socialist position may make the meaning clearer. The Ameri-

can Labor Union, the Western Federation of Miners, the Brewers' Union, and many smaller organizations, have officially endorsed Socialism. The American Federation of Labor lacked but a few votes of doing so at the New Orleans convention. These endorsements were brought about by union men within the ranks of their separate organizations, and not by the Socialist Party through its official management.

The Socialist Party will assist and support every union in its economic conflicts with capitalism, whether that union has endorsed Socialism or not, because its true mission is to fight the political battles of the working class. It will not enter any internal conflicts between labor organizations, but will support the American Federation of Labor when on strike, as readily as the American Labor Union. It is not seeking, like Hearst and the Democratic machine, to organize the unions into political machines, and will ever warn the trade unionists against the inevitable disruption of their organizations should they permit Democratic politicians to organize Union Labor Parties for the express purpose of decoying them into the mire of Democratic politics. The Socialist Party will adopt the honorable course of confining its efforts to converting individuals to the philosophy of Socialism, and will content itself with the knowledge that in due time all union men will become Socialists. It bases its assurance on the fact that only through the complete capture by the working class of the powers of government, and the establishment of the Cooperative Commonwealth, can the people be freed from the despotism and tyranny of capitalism.

The corrupt attempts of the Democratic machine to decoy the unions into the vagaries of vacillating Democratic politics will end in a bubble, and the Socialist Party will remain a stone wall of defense against all attacks. Every move of the Socialist Party on the political chessboard demonstrates the statesmanship of the Socialist leadership and justifies its claim to its inevitable success.

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