
Official Minutes of the General Committee of the Socialist Party of St. Louis, June 16, 1919

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St. Louis, Mo., June 16th, 1919.

Special meeting of the General Committee called to order at 8:10 pm.¹ [George] Tourville elected chairman. The following call was read:

St. Louis, Mo., June 13, 1919.

To the Delegates of the General Committee,
Socialist Party of St. Louis.

Comrades:—

In compliance with Article IV of Section 2 of our local constitution, the undersigned delegates to the General Committee, representing the branches set opposite their names, are herewith calling a SPECIAL meeting of the General Committee to be held MONDAY, June 16th, 1919, 8 o'clock in the evening, at 940 Chouteau Avenue.

The object of calling this meeting is the conclusion reached that matters of much importance now confront us and should be acted upon immediately, and we trust that each and every delegate will make it his or her business to be present at this meeting.

Fraternally yours,

Frank Pfister, Delegate 10th Ward Branch.
W.M. Brandt, Delegate 10th Ward Branch.

¹ The General Committee was the moniker given to the City Central Committee.

G.A. Hoehn, Delegate 11th Ward Branch.
L.H. Proske, Delegate 12th Ward Branch East.
A. Pape, Sr., Delegate 12th Ward Branch West.
John Mueller, Delegate 13th Ward Branch North.
Fred Duerkop, Delegate 15-16th Ward Branch.
Harry Hellwig, Delegate 15-16th Ward Branch.
George Tourville, Delegate 19-20th Ward Branch.
Max Hendler, Delegate 19th-20th Ward Branch.
Jacob Grimm, Delegate 23rd Ward Branch.
John Braun, Delegate 24th Ward Branch.
George Patterson, Delegate 24th Ward Branch.
William C. Long, Delegate 27th Ward Branch South.
John S'Renco, Delegate Jewish Branch.
Joseph Norvell, Delegate Jewish Branch.

After the call was read and received, the secretary [William Brandt] called the attention of the delegates to the following:

That on June 11th a communication had come before our Executive Committee, the same being from the State Executive Committee, Socialist Party of Missouri, in which they notified us that the branches of the Lithuanian and South Slavic Federations are no longer entitled to participate in the affairs of our party, as their respective Federations had been suspended [May 24, 1919], pending an investigation of irregularities by a Special Committee and a Special National Convention; also, informed the delegates of the action of our local Executive Committee, in which he wrote the State Executive Committee, requesting these branches be allowed to join our General Committee if they purchase their dues stamps direct from us, the same as ward branches;² also read reply from the State Secretary [=???] received in today's mail, in which we are informed that the members of these branches may join our ward branches provided they are not in agreement with the defiant policies of their Federations, and suggesting to us that all that was necessary to determine this would be for them to sign the regulation application card which says they accept the constitution and platform of the Socialist Party.

² Since their establishment about a decade earlier Language Federation branches purchased their dues stamps from the Translator-Secretary of the given federation, which effectively constituted a parallel organization within the SPA.

The secretary called the attention of the delegates to the necessity of determining by motion, so that no question could be raised on the legality of this meeting, whether the delegates from the two branches as mentioned should be recognized or whether we should comply with the instruction coming from the State Executive Committee.

After a general discussion was held on the matter, the following motion was made and carried:

That the delegates from the South Slavic and Lithuanian Branches shall not be retained as delegates to this committee, and that the members of those branches be invited to join the party as individuals.

The chair called for a rising vote on the motion, the vote being twenty-five (25) in favor and five (5) against. The chairman [Tourville] then declared the motion carried.

The secretary then made a verbal statement as to the reasons for the calling of the meeting and of the dissension that now exists in our movement, and that our party should prepare a statement of our position on the so-called "Left Wing controversy" within the party.

He also reported that he had sent the roster of our branches to the National Party Secretary [Adolph Germer], requesting that each Branch Secretary be mailed a copy of the June 15th [Socialist Party Official] Bulletin, which contained the official minutes of the National Executive Committee [Chicago meeting of May 24-30, 1919], in reference to the "Left Wing controversy," and he had also requested from the National Secretary a number of copies be sent our local to be distributed among the delegates to our General Committee.

The chairman [Tourville] recognized Comrade Hoehn, who read a statement in reference to the position that our party should take upon this matter. (This statement will appear in full in *St. Louis Labor* and *Arbeiter-Zeitung*, this week's issue, date of June 21, 1919; copy of statement also on file at party headquarters.)

A motion was made and seconded that the statement as read by Comrade Hoehn be adopted as our position on the controversy; that it be made part of the records and that copies of the same be sent to our ward branches and to the Socialist press throughout the country.

Discussion was then held upon the motion, lasting until nearly midnight; then a motion was made and carried that this meeting adjourn until Monday, June 23, 1919, to convene again at 8 pm, the same place, for further action on the question before the house, and that the statement as presented by Comrade Hoehn be published in our papers this week's issue, Saturday, June 21st, 1919.

Delegates Present:

Ward 1 — Kosman & Shepard;
2 — Unger & Mueck;
6-7 — Skoven;
8-9 — Kraek, Stutz & Witkay;
10 — Pfiser & Brandt;
11 — Dorn, Boelling & Hoehn;
12 East — Proske;
12 West — Pape;
13 North — Mueller;
13 South — Hoffman;
14 — Gerdes;
15-16 — Duerkop & Hellwig;
19-20 — Tourville & Hendler;
22 — Aldrich;
24 — Rauss, Messmer, Patterson & Braun;
25 — Grimm;
26 — Seifert
27 South — Long & Ungerer;
27 North — Koch & Hoffmeister;
Jewish — S'Renco;
Gravois German — Dittrich, Mink & Hadwich;
Bohemian — Jetensky;
German Women — Hillmer;
Longwood — Ebner;
YPSL [Circle] #1 — Eckhoff, Cornell & Lennerth;
YPSL [Circle] #2 — Norvell, Kaplan & Manes.

Meeting adjourned at 11:55 pm.

W.M. Brandt,
Secretary

ST&BU
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WB/MP

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