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# Official Minutes of the General Committee of the Socialist Party of St. Louis, July 7, 1919

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St. Louis, Mo., July 7, 1919.

Regular meeting of the General Committee called to order at 8:10 pm. Aldrich elected chairman. The following comrades were seated on credentials: Sigmund S'Renco of the 23-25 Ward Branch and Joe Norvell and John S'Renco of the Jewish Branch.

The following applicants were admitted to membership: Ward 1 — B.B. Gregory; 19-20 — David Friedman and Jacob Apelbaum; 8-9 — Edward Lacher; 14 — Jesse F. Arlitz; Gravois German — Anton Adler and Joseph Beregszaszy.

## **Secretary's Report.**

That ballots had been received from the State Office for the election of four delegates to the Special National Convention; also, eight hundred (800) special fifty cents (50¢) National Assessment stamps had been received, these stamps being issued for the purpose of defraying the expenses of the delegates. Received, and stamps and ballots distributed. Secretary further reported all those not gotten out at this meeting would be mailed out with the minutes.

Would also recommend that a special committee of three be elected to count the ballots and that branches shall send in all individual members' ballots to party headquarters to be counted

by this committee. Recommendation concurred in and Patterson, Mink, and Stutz were elected the committee.

Also reported that there were vacancies on the Executive Committee, due to Comrade Barker leaving the city and Comrade Jurkovich being of the South Slavic Branch. Received, and Aldrich and Koch elected to fill the vacancies.

### **Executive Committee Report.**

On the communication, from the National Executive Committee, in which they reviewed the actions at their recent meeting May 24 to May 30 [1919] inclusive and setting forth briefly their reason for revoking the charter of the Michigan state organization and the suspension of the seven language federations, your committee recommends, through a motion by Comrade S'Renco and seconded by Comrade Braun, that we go on record as not favoring any referendums in the matter of suspension of Michigan state organization and the language federations until all evidence in the matter is investigated by the special committee and the National Party Convention to be held August 30. Concurred in.

Communications from the State Executive Committee, informing us that the Lithuanian and South Slavic Branches are no longer affiliated, and are not entitled to participate in the affairs of the Socialist Party of Missouri; also, that charges of irregularities in voting in National Referendums "B" and "C" had been made,<sup>1</sup> and as the federations of these branches were cited in these charges, your Executive Committee took the following action:

Instructing the Secretary [William Brandt] to write both the South Slavic and Lithuanian Branches, requesting that all individual ballots cast by their branch members on these two referendums be turned in to party headquarters at once so they could be forwarded on as per the request of the State Executive Com-

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<sup>1</sup> Referendums B and C of 1919 were the party elections of the National Executive Committee and the vote for International Secretary.

mittee; also, that the Secretary write the State Executive Committee, requesting that these branches be allowed to join our local, providing they purchase their dues stamps from us.

In connection with the above, the Secretary reported that the Lithuanian Branch did not vote on the two referendums; that he had written the South Slavic Branch June 12th, 19th, and June 26th, requesting them to turn in their ballots, but no reply had come in on any of the three letters. That he had also written the branches as to the action of the Executive Committee, inviting them to join us and buy their dues stamps direct from our local; no reply to this communication.<sup>2</sup> Received and concurred in.

That the vote on National Referendum "D" was carried by a vote of 135 in favor and 50 against. Received.

On the communication received from the State Executive Committee, calling upon us to make nominations for four delegates to the National Convention, the communication also informing us that the nominations would close June 18th, your Executive Committee, considering the fact that this would give us but three days' time in which to make the nominations, decided to take up the question in making nominations, which they did, and S'Renco, Proske, Braun, and Brandt were nominated.

Communication from Beebe, Arkansas, requesting our local to endorse a resolution condemning the action of the National Executive Committee in revoking the charter of Michigan and suspending the seven language federations; your committee recommends that we go on record as regretting and disproving the hasty action of the National Executive Committee. Received and non concurred in.

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<sup>2</sup> Branches affiliated with the Foreign Language Federations of the Socialist Party purchased their dues stamps through the parallel Federation apparatus, not from the State Office via their local. The parallel apparatuses were a legacy; most Language Federations began as independent entities with their own national and regional structures which only later affiliated themselves with the SPA.

## **Entertainment Committee Report.**

A verbal report in reference to our July 4th picnic was given, to the effect that a good crowd was present, and an audited report will be made at a later date. Received as progress.

## **Communications.**

From Comrade Aldrich, offering a plan of organization. Received and referred to Executive Committee.

From the State Executive Committee, authorizing us to allow the Lithuanian and South Slavic Branches to affiliate with our General Committee The Secretary [Brandt] reported that immediately upon the receipt of this communication, he had sent a letter to each of the two branches, inviting them to affiliate with our General Committee. No reply had been received from either to date. Received and action of Secretary concurred in.

From the State Secretary [=???], notifying us that the referendum ballots for the election of four delegates to the National Convention had been forwarded us; also 800 special fifty cents assessment stamps to defray the expense of the convention had been forwarded. Secretary [Brandt] state that both the stamps and the ballots had been received. Communication received and filed.

From Comrade Waddell, reviewing the party controversy. Received and filed.

From the Eighth-and-Ninth Ward Branch, notifying us that they had endorsed the left wing movement. By unanimous vote received and motion made and carried that our General Committee disapproves of their action.

From the North Branch of the 27th Ward, disapproving of the action of the General Committee in but allowing one ticket to be sent out to the party members by the YPSL for their April Dance, and also requesting that a more united effort be put forward to help the young folks. Received and sentiments endorsed.

From the State Secretary of the New York Socialist Party [Walter Cook], acknowledging receipt of our statement and commending our position and asking us to quote prices, as they desired to send a copy of the statement to all of their party members. Received and Secretary [Brandt] instructed to answer to the effect that the National party should be requested to print the statements and they should get a copy from them.

From the Gravois German Branch, inquiring why *St. Louis Labor* and *Arbeiter-Zeitung* did not publish Lenin's "Letter to the American Workers," also why the papers did not give information of the expelling of 40,000 members, and further requesting that in the future the emblem of the International only be printed on party matters.

Considerable discussion was held upon this communication before final action was taken, [editor] Comrade Hoehn stating that our papers practically every week were publishing matters in defense of Soviet Russia, and if anything had been overlooked, all that was necessary to be done was to call his attention to the same and it would be published. Secretary Brandt called attention to the fact that there were less than 28,000 members suspended, not 40,000; that our papers had received any number of communications bearing on both sides of this controversy, but had not published either side, taking the position that it was better to keep the controversy among the party members and not among outsiders. A motion was finally made and carried that the communication be received and filed.

## **New Business.**

Hoehn called the delegates' attention to the fact that July 21st [1919] the French and Italian Socialists and trade union movements would call a general strike in protest against the war and blockade of the Allied countries and their associates against Soviet Russia and Hungary; that the British trade union and socialist movement would hold mass meetings July 20th in protest, and advocating industrial action; and that he had written a statement on this matter, addressed to the National party, requesting them to take similar action to the British action, and that he would recommend we hold a meeting here in St. Louis on July 30th. Unanimously adopted.

Motion made and carried that the details for the meeting be left to the Executive Committee; also, that 30,000 of the statements be printed and distributed Sunday morning, June 20th.

A roll call was then taken and the delegates representing the branches as noted put in the following tentative order:

Ward 1 — 1,000; 2 — 2,000; 8-9 — 4,000; 10 — 2,000 ; 11 — 2,000; 12 East — 1,000; 13 North — 3,000; 14 — 2,000; 15-16 — 1,000; 19-20 — 2,000; 22 — 500; 23 — 2,000; 24 — 2,000; 27 North — 3,000; Gravois German — 1,000; S. S'Renco [Jewish] — 3,000.

Comrade Jurkovich was granted the floor and stated their branch [South Slavic] had received the several letters sent them by the Secretary [Brandt], and he was authorized to give a verbal answer on the two propositions in question: (1) On the matter of their branch becoming affiliated with our General Committee he stated that the branch had decided to reject the proposition and they will stick to their language federation; (2) On the proposition of turning in their individual members' ballots on referendums "B" and "C," this could not be done as their secretary reported they could not be found. Received.

## Delegates Present.

*June 23.*

Ward 1 — Kosman & Wieger; 2 — Mueck, Fluck, & Unger; 6-7 — Skoven; 8-9 — Stutz & Witkay; 10 — Brandt & Pfister; 11 — Hoehn, Dorn, & Boelling; 12 East — Proske; 12 West — Hoefele; 13 North — Mueller; 14 — Guerdes & Wagner; 15-16 — Duerkop & Hellweg; 19-20 — Hendler & Tourville; 22 — Aldrich; 23-25 — Grimm & S'Renco; 24 — Patterson, Braun & Messmer; 26 — Seifert; 27 South — Long & Ungerer; 27 North — Koch & Hoffmeister; Jewish — S'Renco; Gravois German — Hadwich, Mink, Dittrich, & Hellberg; German Women — Forbeck & Hiller; YPSL [Circle] #1 — Lennerth, Eckhoff, Cornell, & Kisslinger; YPSL [Circle] #2 — Manes; Longwood — Ebner; Maplewood — Meier.

*July 7.*

Ward 1 — Shepard & Kosman; 2 — Bachman; 3-18 — Boettcher; 6-7 — Skoven; 8-9 — Witkey & Stutz; 10 — Brandt, Telthorst & Pfister; 11 — Boelling, Dorn, & Hoehn; 12 East — Proske; 13 North — Schmidt & Mueller; 14 — Gerdes & Wagner; 15-16 — Duerkop; 19-20 — Tourville; 22 — Aldrich; 23 — S'Renco; 24 — Patterson, Messmer, & Braun; 27 South — Long & Ungerer; 27 North — Koch & Hoffmeister; Gravois German — Mink, Hellberg, & Dittrich; Bohemian — Jetensky; Scandinavian — Larson; YPSL [Circle] #1 — Eckhoff; YPSL [Circle] #2 — Manes.

Meeting adjourned at 11:15 pm.

***W.M. Brandt,***  
Secretary.

ST&BU  
14188  
WB/MP

*Edited with footnotes by Tim Davenport*

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