

APPENDICES

I

PLATFORM OF THE SOCIALIST PARTY

THE Socialist Party of America, in national convention assembled, reaffirms its adherence to the principles of international socialism, and declares its aim to be the organization of the working class and those in sympathy with it into a political party, with the object of conquering the powers of government and using them for the purpose of transforming the present system of private ownership of the means of production and distribution into collective ownership by the entire people.

Formerly the tools of production were simple and owned by the individual worker. To-day the machine, which is but an improved and more developed tool of production, is owned by the capitalists and not by the workers. This ownership enables the capitalists to control the product and keep the workers dependent upon them.

Private ownership of the means of production and distribution is responsible for the ever-increasing uncertainty of livelihood and the poverty and misery of the working class, and it divides society into two hostile classes—the capitalists and wage-workers. The once powerful middle class is rapidly disappearing in the mill of competition. The struggle is now between the capitalist class and the working class. The possession of the means of livelihood gives to the capitalists the control of the Government, the press, the pulpit, and the schools, and enables them to reduce the working men to a state of intellectual, physical, and social inferiority, political subservience, and virtual slavery.

The economic interests of the capitalist class dominate our

entire social system; the lives of the working class are recklessly sacrificed for profit, wars are fomented between nations, indiscriminate slaughter is encouraged, and the destruction of whole races is sanctioned in order that the capitalists may extend their commercial dominion abroad and enhance their supremacy at home.

But the same economic causes which developed capitalism are leading to socialism, which will abolish both the capitalist class and the class of wage workers. And the active force in bringing about this new and higher order of society is the working class. All other classes, despite their apparent or actual conflicts, are alike interested in the upholding of the system of private ownership of the instruments of wealth production. The Democratic, Republican, the bourgeois public ownership parties, and all other parties which do not stand for the complete overthrow of the capitalist system of production, are alike political representatives of the capitalist class.

The workers can most effectively act as a class in their struggle against the collective powers of capitalism by constituting themselves into a political party, distinct from and opposed to all parties formed by the propertied classes.

IMMEDIATE DEMANDS

While we declare that the development of economic conditions tends to the overthrow of the capitalist system, we recognize that the time and manner of the transition to socialism also depend upon the stage of development reached by the proletariat. We therefore consider it of the utmost importance for the Socialist Party to support all active efforts of the working class to better its condition and to elect socialists to political offices, in order to facilitate the attainment of this end.

As such means we advocate:

1. The public ownership of all means of transportation and communication and all other public utilities, as well as

of all industries, controlled by monopolies, trusts, and combines. No part of the revenue of such industries to be applied to the reduction of taxes on property of the capitalist class, but to be applied wholly to the increase of wages and shortening of the hours of labor of the employees, to the improvement of the service and diminishing the rates to the consumers.

2. The progressive reduction of the hours of labor and the increase of wages in order to decrease the share of the capitalist and increase the share of the worker in the product of labor.

3. State or national insurance of working people in case of accidents, lack of employment, sickness, and want in old age; the funds for this purpose to be collected from the revenue of the capitalist class, and to be administered under the control of the working class.

4. The inauguration of a system of public industries, public credit to be used for that purpose in order that the workers be secured the full product of their labor.

5. The education of all state and municipal aid for books, clothing, and food.

6. Equal civil and political rights for men and women.

7. The initiative and referendum, proportional representation, and the right of recall of representatives by their constituents.

But in advocating these measures as steps in the overthrow of capitalism and the establishment of the cooperative commonwealth, we warn the working class against the so-called public-ownership movements as an attempt of the capitalist class to secure governmental control of public utilities for the purpose of obtaining greater security in the exploitation of other industries and not for the amelioration of the conditions of the working class.

II

PLATFORM OF THE SOCIALIST LABOR PARTY

The Socialist Labor Party of the United States, in convention assembled, reasserts the inalienable right of all men to life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness.

With the founders of the American republic we hold that the purpose of government is to secure every citizen in the enjoyment of this right; but in the light of our social conditions we hold, furthermore, that no such right can be exercised under a system of economic inequality, essentially destructive of life, of liberty, and of happiness.

With the founders of this republic we hold that the true theory of politics is that the machinery of government must be owned and controlled by the whole people; but in the light of our industrial development we hold, furthermore, that the true theory of economics is that the machinery of production must likewise belong to the people in common.

To the obvious fact that our despotic system of economics is the direct opposite of our democratic system of politics, can plainly be traced the existence of a privileged class, the corruption of government by that class, the alienation of public property, public franchises, and public functions to that class, and the abject dependence of the mightiest of nations upon that class.

Again, through the perversion of democracy to the ends of plutocracy, labor is robbed of the wealth which it alone produces, is denied the means of self-employment, and, by compulsory idleness in wage slavery, is even deprived of the necessaries of life.

Human power and natural forces are thus wasted that the plutocracy may rule.

Ignorance and misery, with all their concomitant evils, are perpetuated, that the people may be kept in bondage.

Science and invention are diverted from their humane purpose to the enslavement of women and children.

Against such a system the Socialist Labor Party once more enters its protest. Once more it reiterates its fundamental declaration that private property in the natural sources of production and in the instruments of labor is the obvious cause of all economic servitude and political dependence.

The time is fast coming when, in the natural course of social evolution, this system, through the destructive action of its failures and crises on the one hand, and the constructive tendencies of its trusts and other capitalistic combinations on the other hand, shall have worked out its own downfall.

We, therefore, call upon the wage-workers of the United States, and upon all other honest citizens, to organize under the banner of the Socialist Labor Party into a class-conscious body, aware of its rights and determined to conquer them by taking possession of the public powers; so that, held together by an indomitable spirit of solidarity under the most trying conditions of the present class struggle, we may put a summary end to that barbarous struggle by the abolition of classes, the restoration of the land, and of all the means of production, transportation, and distribution to the people as a collective body, and the substitution of the cooperative commonwealth for the present state of planless production, industrial war, and social disorder; a commonwealth in which every worker shall have the free exercise and full benefit of his faculties, multiplied by all the modern factors of civilization.