

Platform

of

The
committee
of
48

COMPOSED OF MEN AND
WOMEN OF THE 48 STATES

Unanimously adopted at the
First National Conference
St. Louis, Missouri,
Dec. 9-12, 1919



Together with
Supporting Argument, Resolutions
and Methods of Political Procedure

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Platform and Statement of Aims

Adopted by the National Conference of the Committee of Forty-eight at St. Louis, December 11, 1919, and now submitted to the people for discussion:

"To the American People:

"The purpose of this Conference is to formulate and present to the American people a program of political action that is honest, workable and fundamental. Such a program must be economic in its nature, since the ills from which the country suffers are largely economic. Reforms in the political machinery itself will not meet the need.

"WE PROPOSE A PROGRAM"

"The failure of the government to reduce the high cost of living, the fact that great numbers of American citizens live in want or fear of want, in spite of the country's immense wealth, the growing control of basic resources and industries by trusts which disregard both the rights of their employes and of the public, these together constitute a denial of the right to life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness which is the heritage of all American citizens. Hence, there is profound unrest, and the conviction in the minds of earnest citizens that there can be no relief except through real constructive measures.

"There is a growing realization, also, that such relief cannot be hoped for through the two old political parties. It has long been a fact, and is now beginning to be recognized, that there is no real difference between these two parties; that both are controlled by the same economic forces; that these economic forces thus constitute an invisible government, not representative of the people, and that our present two-party system leaves the country with no adequate political opposition. The country in fact is governed by a political monopoly.

"GOVERNED BY A POLITICAL MONOPOLY"

"In this situation, it is fair to say that we have reached a deadlock of democracy. We seek, therefore, to open up new channels through which the fundamental demands of the popular will may find expression in political action, so that the economic contest may not pass into another and more serious phase.

"With a view to such political action, we submit a program in the interest of all, irrespective of class, race, sex or creed, in the hope that it may serve as a means by which the various groups of citizens who have already united in different parts of the country for independent political action, and others who feel as we do, may come together next year in a new and great successful party."

THE PLATFORM

PUBLIC ownership of transportation, including stock yards, large abattoirs, grain elevators, terminal warehouses, pipe lines and tanks. Public ownership of other public utilities and of the principle natural resources, such as coal, oil, natural gas, mineral deposits, large water powers and large commercial timber tracts.

NO LAND (including natural resources) and no patents be held out of use for speculation to aid monopoly. We favor taxes to force idle land into use.

EQUAL economic, political and legal rights for all, irrespective of sex or color. The immediate and absolute restoration of free speech, free press, peaceable assembly, and all civil rights guaranteed by the Constitution. We demand the abolition of injunctions in labor cases. We indorse the effort of labor to share in the management of industry and labor's right to organize and bargain collectively through representatives of its own choosing.

ARGUMENT IN SUPPORT OF THE PROGRAM

For generations the American people were blessed with vast opportunities in the form of natural resources. Farming and grazing lands, mines, water powers and timber tracts were easily accessible to the public, to labor and to capital. There was general prosperity. Poverty and squalor were almost unknown. But the people did not realize that this prosperity was due to the country's natural wealth, and not to the political democracy which they also enjoyed. They did not see that the right to vote does not of itself insure the prosperity of the public and an equitable division of the product of labor and capital.

As time went on, the conditions of the country changed. Our natural resources were monopolized. Coal, iron, copper and other mineral deposits, our stores of oil, our big timber tracts, water powers and large holdings of farm and city lands passed into the control of fewer and fewer people. Every ten years the census shows a larger percentage of men who are tenants upon the farms or who do not own their own homes in cities. We have begun to reproduce on this continent the ominous condition of great wealth on the one hand, and great poverty on the other, which has characterized and cursed the civilizations of the Old World. Today the dreadful poverty of the slums in our cities, and the consequent suffering, especially in winter time, has become so much a part of our civilization that it excites little comment. About every twenty years we have a financial panic which disorganizes industry, ruins many business men and inflicts great hardship on the poor. On the other hand, immense fortunes have been piled up in the hands of

a few, menacing democracy by their autocratic power over our national life.

No one seriously denies the substantial accuracy of these facts. Every thoughtful man must admit that wealth is power, and that therefore liberty and such an inequality in the distribution of wealth as now exists cannot permanently endure together.

The problem that confronts this country is to devise such changes in the law as will increase the production of wealth and secure its more equitable distribution among those who contribute to its production. Private monopoly and privilege must be destroyed, not only to check the rising cost of living, but to bring about the gradual disappearance of the tremendous concentrations of wealth which, on account of their economic and political control, threaten the liberties and perhaps the life of this republic.

It is obvious that this problem can be solved. The factors of production are land, which includes all natural resources; labor and capital. Capital is the surplus wealth resulting from the application of labor to land. There is no lack of either of these factors. Although almost all of the tillable or usable land in America is now in private hands, at least one-third is held out of use for speculation or for monopoly, and is not devoted to the production of wealth. This land is situated in every state in the union. In New York state alone there are millions of acres of such land. Texas is as large as Germany, and if properly used could support as large a population.

There is therefore sufficient land. There is sufficient labor, and sufficient capital. Indeed, in hard times our problem is how to utilize the surplus labor; and at such times our banks are flooded with capital, which the owners are either afraid or lack opportunity to invest.

NO NEED FOR WANT.

Even with the present amount of production no one would be in want if the wealth produced were equitably distributed. And it is clear that if we can arrange our system of production and distribution intelligently there will be an abundance for everyone able and willing to work. Our task is to bring about such a condition through the orderly methods of American democracy, not by the destructive process of revolution.

The obligation of all true Americans to undertake this constructive work is especially plain now. We have emerged from a war in which millions of our soldiers fought for the ideals of democracy; millions more toiled unselfishly in factory and on farm, hoping and believing that the cause was worth limitless sacrifice, because its triumph would bring in the new world that was so lavishly promised us by our leaders. It is now the privilege of all of us to join in a common effort to make reality of the vision for which our sons and brothers worked and died.

AN ECONOMIC PROGRAM

The program we present is essentially economic. We believe in improvements in political machinery, but we realize that the people cannot reap substantial benefit from such improvements until economic reforms have been made. We have, accordingly, devoted the majority of our program to an analysis of economic conditions and to such definite constructive recommendations as can easily be enacted into law.

THE TRUSTS.

Let us consider trusts. The control of the markets by our leading trusts is not due to either their efficiency or size, but to the possession of special privileges, natural or artificial, which are denied to their competitors.

THE STEEL TRUST.

Of all the trusts the Steel Trust has been most successful in exploiting the public. Its rate of profits for the first ten years of existence was estimated by McRae, expert accountant for the Stanley committee, at 40 per cent of the actual cost of production on all products. Since that time the rate has probably been considerably higher. In 1918 the net profits actually reported were almost half a billion dollars. During the war the Steel Corporation did not hesitate to take advantage of conditions produced in Europe by the German submarine warfare. The Allies were in dire straits for steel with which to replace ships sunk by the submarines. And, although our government fixed as a fair price representing a fair profit \$63 to \$65 a ton, the Steel Corporation sold enormous quantities to Ally shipbuilders at \$180 to \$200 a ton.

The Steel Corporation's treatment of labor has been notorious. Lawless suppression of constitutional rights, denial of organization, collective bargaining and a living wage, and the induction of foreign labor from countries where the standard of living is low have been the policy of the Steel Trust from the day of its organization. A great lawyer, who is now a member of the United States Supreme Court, and who in 1911 and 1912 made an exhaustive study of the Steel Trust, summed up its policy before the Congressional Investigating Committee, as follows:

"I say these are conditions which have driven out American labor; and the most important thing I want to impress upon you in regard to that is not merely the long hours or the low wages, but it is that it has been and is attended with conditions of repressing, the like of which you cannot find, I believe, this side of Russia."

How did the Steel Trust get its power to do these things, i. e., to exploit the public and oppress labor? It got control of the best iron ores and the coal best suited for steel making. It acquired these resources partly for use, but largely to prevent competition. At the same time it bought or obtained control of the main ore-hauling railroads and ore-carrying lake boats, so that, according to Judge Gary, it acquired a transportation advantage over its competitors of more than \$2 on every ton of metal produced. This is but a small part of the peculiar advantage which control of transportation and raw materials give the trust. Under such circumstances competition becomes clearly impossible; the trust is able to dictate the price of steel, and an immense economic power is built up which holds labor and the public helpless. The relation of the trust's profits to the cost of living is evident when we remember that steel is used in almost every process of production and distribution. Monopoly in any essential of civilization strikes directly at the public's pocket.

THE OIL TRUST.

The Oil Trust was originally built up by illegal and secret railroad rebates. This monopoly was further strengthened by the acquisition and construction of great pipe lines for the transportation of oil. Railroad favors and

advantages, and the control of the pipe lines plus the acquisition of oil wells, are the basis for its mastery of the market.

In an opinion of the Interstate Commerce Commission this vital relation between transportation control and the price-fixing power is described as follows:

"The possession of these pipe lines enables the Standard to control the price of crude petroleum and to determine, therefore, the price which its competitors in a given locality should pay. In any industry, whoever controls the avenues of transportation of either the raw material or the finished product, can speedily drive all competitors out of business."

THE BEEF TRUST.

The Beef Trust also possesses special privileges in railroad transportation. The freight cars designed for the transportation of the packers' products are owned almost entirely by the trust. If any independent desires to compete with the Beef Trust, and the railroads have no proper equipment for the transportation of his product, it is obvious that the trust has a special privilege in transportation and that thereby any effective competition is prevented. The Federal Trade Commission has pointed out that this transportation privilege is so effective that the Beef Trust constantly uses it to invade and control the trade in many other articles of our food supply besides meat.

Another advantage enjoyed by these concerns is their ownership or control of the principal stock yards, abattoirs, cold storage and other warehouse facilities in various parts of the country, which in effect are nothing but freight stations designed for the handling of perishable or special freight. To permit such facilities to remain in the hands of the Beef Trust is to give it a monopoly of exactly the same nature as if the general freight station in any city were put under the private control of some particular firm.

The Federal Trade Commission, in a recent report to President Wilson, August, 1919, directly charged that the Beef Trust concerns receive from the railroads advantages equivalent to rebates which are denied to competitors. The report says:

"Formerly in the shape of direct rebates, these advantages are now usually in expedited service to the big packer cars; in favorable mixing rules, which include all their diversified products and even many articles not related to the packing industry; by allowances paid to some of the big packers by carriers for a part of the transportation service, by favorable arrangements and lease of stockyards by the railroads to some of the big packers, and by the sale to the railroads of bumping posts manufactured by a subsidiary of one of the Big Five.

"The small independent packer's cars are misused and diverted, frequently being out of service for extended periods—in several instances as long as six months. In 1917 the cars of the Big Five and their subsidiary companies maintained an average of 80.8 miles per car per day, while the average of cars of their competitors, the independent packing companies, was only 54.5 miles."

THE MILLING TRUST.

Exactly the same reasoning applies to the so-called Milling Trust, which controls the principal grain elevators which are merely freight stations for the reception of grain. Competition by independent millers is

controlled, and the latter are deprived of a free market, as they can sell only to the trust; and the general public is overcharged for the staples of life. The farmers have shown that the trust's elevators impose unearned charges for handling and other processes and grade their wheat falsely, buying their wheat from the farmer at a low grading and selling it to the public at a high grading, thus injuring both farmer and consumer.

THE COAL TRUST.

Similar railroad privileges are enjoyed by the Coal Trust. The Interstate Commerce Commission has made an investigation of the anthracite coal trade. This disclosed the fact that a few concerns, controlled by the same financial interests which controlled the coal-carrying railroads, had secured a practical monopoly of this trade. By using their power over the railroads to prevent an independent from getting sufficient cars to provide for prompt and continuous transportation of his products, the trust was able to ruin such an operator, or compel him to sell out, or to do business according to the trust's terms.

But in the Coal Trust another element of monopoly is involved besides the railroad advantages. Practically all of the land containing merchantable hard coal has been acquired by the trust. These holdings constitute not only the mines that are actually worked, but large tracts containing anthracite which will last hundreds of years, and which were acquired by the trust, not for the purpose of mining the coal, but for the purpose of preventing competitors from opening up new mines. Even if by public ownership of the railroads we take away from the trust the power to discriminate against competitors through transportation advantages, the trust will still possess the great bulk of the anthracite deposits, and thereby will have possession of a natural monopoly which will enable it to control the trade and extort monopoly prices.

The same principles apply to the Bituminous Coal Trust and the Lumber Trust.

The only possible way to break up these monopolies is for the public to own the railroads and the oil pipe lines, and to acquire and open upon equitable leases to all competitors the natural resources owned by these trusts, such as coal, iron and copper lands, oil wells and large commercial timber tracts.

If we open all mining lands upon equitable leases to all who desire to develop them, the power of monopoly to exact an exorbitant price will also be destroyed. Prices will fall; consumption will be greatly enlarged, and the resulting increase in production will so increase the demand for labor that there will be more jobs than men. Labor will then be able to secure its full reward, even without resorting to the expense and suffering involved in strikes, which, under monopoly control of industry, is labor's only weapon.

The public should own, as a part of the railroad service, all private cars of every kind, the leading stockyards, abattoirs, cold storage and other large terminal warehouses, convenient grain warehouses, cotton warehouses and compressing plants. For the same reasons the government should acquire the greater water powers of the country, which should be developed either directly by the government or under equitable leases, insuring the sale power to all applicants upon equal terms and at fair rates.

PATENTS.

There are also the so-called Harvester Trust, the Electrical Trust, the Shoe Machinery Trust, and others, which depend largely upon patents for their monopoly control of the market.

Our patent law was designed to stimulate invention for the public good. The purpose of the law, however, has been so perverted that a great number of extremely valuable patents have been acquired and kept out of use by the trusts; and the public is denied the benefit of them.

The patent law should be remodeled to prevent this privilege. The law should provide that anyone may use, manufacture or sell any article, process or device covered by any patent, upon the payment of a reasonable royalty, to be fixed by the government. This would end monopoly based upon patents; prices would fall, and the inventor's reward would correspond to the use made of his invention.

This program does not propose to make war upon business because it is big, or attempt to reverse the wheels of progress, go back to small units of production, or to destroy individual initiative. It aims only to destroy unjust privileges which tend to monopoly control of industry with the intolerable evils which flow from it.

Under the conditions here proposed the United States Steel Corporation, for instance, would be unable to get its raw material in the shape of iron or coal upon any better terms than any competitor. It would be unable to transport such raw material to its mills, and the finished product from the mills to the market, at any less cost than its competitors. If by reason of its size, or of the efficiency of its management, it can actually mine iron and coal cheaper than competitors, and if it can produce the finished product by greater skill as manufacturers at a price cheaper than its competitors, it will obtain the share of the market due to the possession of such ability.

If, on the other hand, these concerns owe their control of the market to the privileges which have been here named, with these privileges removed, they will shrink to the size which experience under just conditions demonstrate to be the most efficient for profitable production.

THE RAILROADS.

The facts herein cited would amply justify the public ownership and operation of the railroads even if public operation were less efficient and economical than private operation, which we deny. The railroad service is a monopoly and no monopoly can ever be safely entrusted to private hands. Our transportation system is one of the two chief strongholds of undemocracy and wealth's exploiting power. It is not an exaggeration to say that he who controls the transportation system controls the nation itself. Public ownership of railroads during the war has not failed, as is claimed, for we did not really have public ownership. We had a nominal operation by the government, but actually the management was in the hands of former railroad officials, whose interest was to make government operation appear a failure. The so-called "deficit" from government operation is due to the large increases in the salaries of employes and shorter hours, and to the exorbitant rentals paid by the government, and to the use of the railroads primarily for war purposes, instead of for profit.

Moreover, many of the railroads the government used during the war had previously been well-nigh wrecked by private ownership. They were run down, sucked dry by profiteering directorates; they were hulks which the government had to repair at large public expense in order to keep them together. It is admitted that the owners of the railroads cannot now operate these roads at the present rates and with the present wages and pay dividends equal to the rentals paid by the government. The deterioration in service is due to the withdrawal of experienced employes, to war conditions. It is no more marked in government controlled corporations than in those remaining in private hands.

The government, even under its present limitations, has saved millions of dollars by shortening routes, discontinuing competitive trains, and consolidating ticket offices, agencies, law department and repair facilities. But the present arrangement does not permit of the enormous saving that would be possible under public ownership by abolishing the numerous companies which now own the roads. Under public ownership every car in the country would belong to the government and it would be possible to dispense with the costly army of tracers who check and locate the property of each individual company. Swarms of clerical officers are now employed to keep books, not only of the great systems, but of the numerous subsidiary corporations of which each system is composed. Even the Pennsylvania Railroad Company is operated through fifty-one subsidiary companies, and each of these companies checks, audits and reports for itself.

Public ownership would also make possible an immense saving by the proper co-ordination of rail and water facilities, which has been prevented by private ownership.

The argument is advanced that public ownership would bring these great services into politics. Our experience with the postal service, with police and fire departments, public schools and other public services is a sufficient answer to that argument.

We declare also in favor of public ownership of all public utilities. Public utilities are monopolies, and should be run for service, not for profit. Nearly all the privately owned public utilities in America have been overcapitalized and are attempting to exact from the public charges sufficient to pay a return upon fictitious capitalization. Private ownership of railroads and public utilities is the most powerful corrupting force in politics. The power to issue and pay dividends on watered stock, and to manipulate inflated securities results in such great profits that there is irresistible temptation to use a part of them to elect state and federal officials who will protect these monopolies and their profits. And the elimination of this corrupting force would be worth the excess cost, if there were any, involved in public ownership and operation.

THE LAND QUESTION.

The fact that many of our trusts control the market through ownership of natural resources, together with the generally admitted fact that putting idle men upon idle land is at least a partial solution of our economic problem, brings us face to face with the land question. And permanent solution of our economic problem must obviously include a change in our land policy. If we

do not change our land policy, most of the benefits from lower prices due to public ownership, the destruction of the trusts and other reforms will be absorbed in the constantly increasing price of land and rents, which in turn will be reflected in constantly increasing prices of all commodities. Even a successful application of the farm loan policy, or of the co-operative movement would, by making farming more profitable, raise the price of farm land and make it harder to buy a farm, unless we change our land policy. The Cleveland 3-cent trolley fare caused a corresponding rise in real estate and rents in the section served by the trolley. Henry Ford's increase of wages to \$5 a day caused an immediate jump in Detroit land values and rents.

All wealth in the last analysis comes from the land. It supplies the sources of all energy and the raw materials of all production. The same reasoning that proves the injustice of allowing a few people to hold out of use great quantities of land containing anthracite coal, applies with equal force to holding out of use for speculation large tracts of farm and city land. There is no difference in principle between lands that produce coal, iron or oil, and land that produces food or that is used for building purposes.

Colonel Roosevelt voiced a fundamental American doctrine in his Paris speech, when he said: "When property rights conflict with human rights, property rights must give way." No plainer application of this principle can be found than the proposition that the right of the owner to hold his land idle must give way to the human right of unemployed or underpaid men to go upon that idle land and produce the things that the people need.

The principle upon which we should work is that it is against public policy to allow any land to be held out of use for purposes of speculation or monopoly. If we can gradually bring into use the unused land in every part of the country, it will become easier for the average man to obtain a home or own his own farm, and this will result in decreasing tenant farming, increasing home owners, and drawing off upon the land large numbers of industrial workers, thus relieving the congested labor market. It will also lower rents by encouraging building. These results can be obtained by the use of taxing and police powers of the government.

There are other important questions now before the public, many of which has been pressed upon our attention.

The industrial problem is a complex one, and cannot be solved all at once. We can only hope to fix and hold the public attention upon a very few definite ideas. If we try to do too many things at once we will create discord among ourselves, scatter our energies and accomplish nothing. We have therefore endeavored to confine this declaration to a few fundamental and easily understood principles, upon which we are substantially agreed.

If we succeed in carrying out these principles, there will come into the public life of nation and state men who represent the people instead of the special interests, and who will therefore be in active sympathy with every really democratic idea and every practicable project for the common good. Under such conditions

all suggestions for improving political and economical conditions will be taken up and considered on their merits. This is the only way to make progress.

In 1909, when Lloyd George, then chancellor of the exchequer, introduced before the house of commons his famous budget, the principle feature of which was taxation of unearned increment and idle land, he said: "This is a war budget. It is for raising money to wage implacable warfare against poverty and squalidness. I cannot help holding and believing that before this generation has passed away we shall have advanced a great step towards that good time when poverty and the wretchedness and human degradation which always follow in its camp will be as remote to the people of this country as the wolves which once infested its forests."

This is the great purpose which our program embodies. It is the spirit in which we must attack the problems of our generation. But to bring justice to our people by enacting such a program into law is not an easy task nor the work of a moment. It is the most tremendous undertaking ever conceived by the people of any country. Victory will require time, patience and courage. We will be opposed by the selfish, the foolish and the blind. All the relentless foes of progress will be arrayed against us. But the battle must go on and the victory won, for only through victory will come the realization of America's ideal.

METHODS OF POLITICAL PROCEDURE ADOPTED BY THE CONFERENCE

1. For the promulgation and achievement of the program adopted by this conference, and for the perpetuation of the unity of the men and women who have been working together on the Committee of Forty-eight. That the National Organization of the Committee of Forty-eight be made a permanent body.

2. That the present system of organization through the formation of committees in each state, county, town, borough, or other local unit, is approved and continued, with the executive committee empowered to draw them together into more central organizations, and when in their judgment, or in the judgment of the membership of the states, seems best.

3. A national convention of the Committee of Forty-eight shall be held not later than July 1, 1920.

4. That until said organization is perfected and until otherwise ordered by the next National Convention, the National Organization of the Committee of Forty-eight shall consist of:

(a) The present executive committee, with power to add to its number. With the general executive direction of all national affairs of the organization. Acting with the assistance and advice of the National States Committee.

(b) The National States Committee shall be composed of the state chairman of each of the forty-eight states. It shall be an advisory, not an executive committee, except—that it has the initiative power of petition, with the added power to enforce its demands, should conditions warrant, as follows:

That upon a written request by any twelve state chairmen as members of the states committee, to the executive committee for certain national action by that committee, should the executive committee fail to comply with the request or call a national convention to settle the matter, within thirty days from the date of filing the paper, the states committee, as represented by the twelve chairmen who signed the petition or any other twelve chairmen of the committee, have the power and authority under the circumstances to call a national convention, with all the power as to

that convention nominally belonging to the executive committee.

5. The copies of the minutes of all executive committee or of states committee meetings held shall be sent to every member of the two committees who were not present at the meetings in question. This means that each committee shall have reports of the other committee's meetings.

6. That membership in the Committee of Forty-eight shall be contingent only upon the endorsement of its aims and objects as named in the organization rules and the endorsement of the platform adopted by this conference.

7. That the state organization shall be free to provide for their necessary financial support in whatever way they may decide, but that this shall not be construed as in any way restricting the executive committee in soliciting moneys, either as monthly pledges, contributions or otherwise for the support of the national work. Nor shall it be construed as relieving the executive committee from the obligation of contributing to state organizations and organization work whenever and wherever necessary and possible.

8. That the executive committee shall be empowered, and they are hereby directed, to confer at the earliest possible time with similarly empowered committees of other organizations having the same general objectives, with a view of agreeing, if possible, upon a common channel through which they may all co-operate and function together politically. The executive committee is empowered and authorized hereby to make all necessary arrangements relative thereto, subject to the approval of a national convention.

9. We recommend to the executive committee for the purpose of rapid organization a division of the country into approximately five organization zones, with zone managers in charge under the direction and supervision of the executive committee.

The extension to be made as fast as the work can be absorbed by the expanding organizations and satisfactory men secured for zone managers.

10. The Committee of Forty-eight approves the proposal to use the popular initiative to bring to a direct vote in November, 1920, in the sixteen states where this is possible, a uniform state law under which the states may instruct the members of Congress by direct vote on national issues.

11. The executive officers are authorized to seek and accept opportunities to co-operate to this end with the representatives of other organizations.

RESOLUTIONS ADOPTED BY THE CONFERENCE

WHEREAS, It has come to the knowledge of this Conference that there is immediate danger of the passage by the United States Senate of the Railroad Subsidy Bill, and

WHEREAS, The spirit and purpose of this Conference are opposed to the class of legislation represented by the Cummins and Esch bills for subsidizing and returning the railroads to private control until a settled policy of the transportation problems of the nation can be determined. Now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED, That it is the sense of this Conference that no legislation such as is represented in the Cummins and the Esch railroad bills, should be enacted at this time; and be it further

RESOLVED, That we protest against the same, and that the railroads should not be returned within two years from January 1, 1920.

WAR REFERENDUM.

RESOLVED, That Congress should not declare war or the existence of a state of war unless authorized by vote of the people; except in case of invasion by force, and we recommend the immediate provision by Congress of legal means for determining the sense of the American people in such a contingency.

UNIVERSAL MILITARY TRAINING.

RESOLVED, That the spirit of militarism should not be fostered by subjecting our people to universal military training.

RUSSIA.

RESOLVED, That the economic blockade of Russia should be lifted at once and all military forces of the United States withdrawn forthwith from Russia.

POLITICAL PRISONERS.

RESOLVED, That political prisoners and all imprisoned in violation of their constitutional right of free speech, should be immediately released.

UNIVERSAL DISARMAMENT.

RESOLVED, That our government should make every effort to secure universal disarmament by international agreement.

A WORD OF HISTORY.

At a gathering of men and women interested in public affairs held in New York City in January, 1919, it was decided that some definite effort should be made to discover the opinion of the people concerning fundamental national issues.

The Committee of Forty-eight was the result of this meeting.

At a later and larger conference, it was decided to issue a Call for a National Conference. The name "Committee of Forty-eight" was adopted as representative of the national union of forty-eight states.

The committee stated its purpose in what is now known as "A Call to Americans" which was first published as an advertisement on March 22d in four liberal journals.

This initial announcement met with instantaneous response, the volume of which grew as the purposes of the committee became more widely known.

On September 22d the committee fixed the date and place for the National Conference as follows: December 9th, 10th, 11th, and 12th, St. Louis, Missouri. Some 300,000 copies of this announcement, "The Call to a National Conference," were distributed throughout the nation and on the date set over 500 citizens from thirty-eight states met and adopted the platform and resolutions contained in this booklet.

While the two "Calls" recited some of the problems which confront the people of the nation, no solution was even suggested. It was the thought of the initiators of the movement that the delegates to the conference should come with open minds free to formulate any program on which they might after thorough discussion agree.

The platform and program adopted by the conference is now presented to the American people for discussion with the hope that popular discussion will create a demand for a political convention attended by representative delegates. Such a convention would be free to change or modify our program according to the will of the delegates.

In affiliating yourself with the Committee of Forty-eight, you become one of a large group of people who are organizing the popular discussion of issues in which the people are interested enough to take the initiative in their solution.

DO YOU AGREE?

If so, sign a membership blank and mail to the National Headquarters.